

POLICY Paper

Johnson Shoyama
Graduate School of Public Policy



Well-woven or frayed? Community ties across Saskatchewan

By Milton Friesen

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Context

- Relationships and trust are critical for prosperity
- Physical and human capital are key ingredients to growth
- Social capital, our connections to each other, is necessary to build trust
- Research shows that public trust has been declining in Canada
- Issue is the need to build social capital if we are to strengthen trust

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Considerations

- Studies have found some counter-intuitive results on social capital
 - Too much social bonding can actually be an impediment to innovation
 - A strong network of people can be resistant to change
 - We live in a time when the trend is to fewer, more intense relationships
- Physical (things) and human (skills) are critical to progress
- But cannot produce benefits when severed from social capital
- Need relational connections and trust to get full benefit of skills and resources
- Example of familial ties
 - Lack of social capital transfer when ties between parents and children are weak

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Questions

- What are the causes for a loss of trust in institutions?
- Do you believe Saskatchewan lacks sufficient social capital?
- What are the reasons for your conclusions?
- How can policy help build and strengthen social capital?
- Is this a public policy or a societal issue beyond the scope of government?
- What is the role of personal responsibility versus government policy?