

Appendix

Literature Review

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INTRODUCTION

Small, rural and remote regions around the world are transforming due to forces outside of their control such as globalization, neoliberalism and climate change. While often characterized as being in a state of decline due to dwindling populations and employment opportunities, this literature review reveals that numerous small communities are finding ways to capitalize on these forces of change. The review focuses on regions similar to the Magdalen Islands – situated in the western world, shaped by colonial powers, and relatively well off. The common pattern found among the successful cases is a development approach that is internally focused, builds on existing assets (human, physical and intangible) and is scale appropriate with results that are, therefore necessarily unique to each community. These cases all include senior government support, especially in the form of funding, and in some instances, capacity building, that allows community members to carry the torch and take up the work of revitalizing their community in the ways they deem appropriate.

This literature review begins with an overview of various concepts, theories and practices found in the development arena for small and remote communities. This is followed by a set of recommendations. An addendum of case studies and resources accompanies the literature review. Literature on small island and rural regions are weaved together throughout.

DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Development in and of itself is a very broad field under which we find numerous theories, varying philosophies and a long list of models. What this review attempts to do is clarify the common concepts that emerge from the literature. These include small island economies, resilience, sustainability, social capital, volunteerism, place based and asset based community development, climate change and tourism.

Small island economies

“Tensions between autonomy and dependence take on new significance for microeconomies in the process of globalization. The structural openness of small island territories, the equally structural dependence on ‘externalities’ is a fact of life” (Baldacchino, 2000, p. 74).

“Finding the balance between stubborn adherence to traditional norms and acceptance of the best that the rest of the world has to offer – termed “glocalization” by Robertson

(1995)- is a common conundrum that successful island(er)s learn to master” (Novaczek, p. 148).

Island economies, and especially small ones, exhibit a wide range of economic structures and strategies, only a few of which fit conventional notions of ‘economic development’. Successful island economies generally do not reflect to economic attributes such as diversification and economies of scale. Rather they tend to specialise in one or a few industries that are often natural resource based (Baldacchino, 2000; Bertram and Poirine, 2018). This common model found among successful small islands is referred to as “flexible specialisation” in the literature, highlighting the importance of the island’s ability to focus its limited resources, but also to be adaptable. The thinking is that while reliance on a narrow set of economic activities does create vulnerability, the gains in trade and scale make it worth it. Findings also suggest that “flexible specialisation” is more easily achieved the smaller the population and the greater amount of cultural and social cohesion. These modern economic structures are shaped by unique historical paths and are therefore not easily replicated or standardized. They tend to be highly interrelated with and benefit from their relationship with a larger, central, metropolitan, patron state which may or may not hold jurisdiction over the island territory (Bertram and Poirine, 2018). Small island societies are generally thought of a places that quickly adopt and replicate new modes of development due to their small size and networks. Novaczek (2015) suggests that being on the fringe of large scale industrial activity can be beneficial as it allows for a focus on nurturing cultural and ecological integrity that people from all over the world may be willing to pay a premium to experience.

Some island territories in recent decades are successfully implementing even more unconventional economic structures. These involve some form of community ownership over their resources and/ or local industry, resulting in more autonomy and less impact of globalisation such as mass tourism, sky rocketing housing prices and displacement of existing residents. According to Clark and Kjellberg (2018) these strategies in essence resist what conventional development would suggest are the only two ‘false policy choices’- disinvestment and decline or reinvestment in the form of gentrification, known to result in displacement. Communities who are bucking this trend have created non-profit community development corporations, community land trusts, and/ or heritage trusts to protect land and cultural resources from both market forces and the whim of current governments. In effect, they are exercising the right to counter gentrification (Clark and Kjellberg, 2018; Jennings, 2015). Examples of these strategies (Eigg, North Harris, Samsø, Shetland, and Skagaströnd) can be found in the case study addendum.

Leading Island Studies scholar Godfrey Baldacchino has authored numerous papers and books on concerns of small islands with a focus on their economic development. In his recent chapter “Placing Identity: Strategic Considerations for Rebounding Peripheries”, he outlines four strategies for communities “struggling to break out of the downward spiral induced by the “double whammy” of globalization and neo-liberalism, and hopefully succeed in replacing it by a virtuous mix of select visitations, in-migration, and economic activities that generate employment and high local value added, and a general pride in place” (2015, p. 41). The strategies are evident throughout the case studies and are as follows:

- “Develop an ecologically and culturally friendly tourism industry that appreciates local and small-scale assets, engages with the local community, and respects the cultural and natural ambiance of place” (p.43) (See case studies on Cape Breton Island, Chiloé, Evangeline, Fogo Island, Gravelbourg, Húsavík, Prince Edward Island, Shetland and Skagaströnd).

- Pursue second-home residents and urban refugees seeking to escape the rat race; such as artists, professionals and retirees. This attraction is enabled by electronic connectivity which allows them to maintain connections and in some cases employment elsewhere while keeping residence in a peripheral community (See case studies on Cape Breton Island, Gravelbourg and Shetland).
- “Production and promotion of well-branded, good quality, high-value added and locally sourced products, services and natural assets geared for niche export markets, including the tourists and new residents” (p.43) (See cases studies on Fogo Island, Prince Edward Island, and Shetland).
- “Injection of new investment: a phoenix-like, resurgent flagship industry possibly replacing a moribund or redundant one” (p.44). These are often controversial as given the capital investment required, they often involve non-local owners, but where successful, the community transformation can be tremendous (See case studies on Fogo Island, Skagaströnd, Slemon Park and Unst).

Here and in other works, Baldacchino speaks to the importance of cultural development for economic development. He concedes that there is a lack of research on the relationship which in his opinion is because it is difficult to measure. Regardless he and numerous other authors demonstrate the link through their case studies. Jennings (2015) for instance states unequivocally that cultural events promote tourism, stimulate investment, and enrich lives.

While modern information and communications technology (ITC) has revolutionized connectivity, it does not replace physical experience and relationship with people and the environment and has perhaps placed a higher value on those items as people now seek to escape the demands of a connected life. At the same time, ITCs contribute to the rebirth of some remote areas by enabling marketing (of place and products), tele-commuting, and education (Vodden et al., 2015).

Lastly, consistent throughout Baldacchino’s (2000, 2005, 2015). decades of work is the clarity that societal resilience in small, remote territories is predicated on the society’s responsiveness to threats and opportunities while remaining true to their unique cultural identity and maximizing (or creating) some aspect of jurisdictional authority (eg. tax regime, land use regulations) (see case study for Shetland)

Resilience, vulnerability, sustainability and adaptive capacity

“Embracing change makes island communities able to continue island life; that is, change makes them resilient” (Kelman and Randall, p. 354).

“No matter how and how much resilience and sustainability are sought, major environmental and cultural changes will be foisted on islanders in the coming years and decades. These changes may be comparable to the island changes experienced due to the arrival of Christianity, the motor car, air travel and the internet” (Kelman and Randall, p. 354)

“The basic sustainability requirement [of islands] is the social capital – people (including diasporas), institutions, and collective willingness to adapt – that underpins effective collective response to strategic opportunities, and adaptability in the global arena” (Bertram and Poirine, p. 222)

Resilience and sustainability are terms now used regularly to convey goals that communities and organizations ought to strive for. Volumes have been published on both concepts to the point that they “could mean virtually anything to anyone, depending on how they are (mis)applied in any specific context” (Kelman and Randall, p. 353). Numerous critiques of all of these concepts exist. In the most general terms, these concepts are challenged because the definitions of both sustainability and resilience often imply the notion of a stasis – either to be maintained (sustainability) or returned to (resilience). This begs the question of what is to be maintained, for who, at what cost and who get to decide; thus highlighting the absence of these frameworks to address pre-existing power structures and inequalities. Island studies scholars argue that the notion of stasis flies in the face of empirical evidence that successful societies, island and otherwise, are achieved not through their ability to withstand change, but rather through their ability to change (Bertram and Poirine, 2018; Clark and Kjellberg, 2018; Kelman and Randall, 2018).

Definitions of resilience abound across disciplines from psychology to education and disaster management to engineering. In terms of its application to the future of communities, we look to the definition from the field of social- ecological systems or coupled human and natural systems as they are both concerned with the basis and interaction of the systems that support human life (Kelman and Randall, 2018). “Resilience in resource-based coastal communities, as coupled social-ecological systems, is characterized by a capability to learn to live with uncertainty and change” (Peach Brown et al, p. 169). This resilience is said to be strengthened through diversity which allows for reorganization and renewal, different types of knowledge and the opportunity to self-organize. Scholars who combined insights from resilience in social-ecological systems with those from psychology and mental health found that strong connections between people and place, shared values, social networks, and engaged governance along with the ability to self-organize, among other factors, were found among communities considered to have greater resilience (Peach Brown et al., 2017). Further studies indicate that the process of dealing with change and adversity itself builds resilience (Rich et al., 2017; Slawinski et al. 2019).

The most widely referenced (and critiqued) definition of sustainable development comes from the 1987 report *Our Common Future* commissioned by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). It is as follows, "Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Chapter I.3.27). Thirty years on, we find sustainability used virtually ubiquitously with initiatives at the organization, community and nation level. Criticisms of the movement centre around the conflict between sustainability and a growth mindset which the report suggests could both be achieved if the developed world slowed its progress and diverted resources to developing countries. Therefore, pursuit of equality across communities and generation is foundational to the accepted principles of sustainability, however these often are over taken by the promise that economic growth will raise the tide for all (Du Pisani, 2006; Seghezze, 2009).

While all communities and nations around the world are facing threats that arise due to unsustainable development (Nagarajan, 2006; Nath, 2018) there is a body of academic literature that suggests small islands are relatively more vulnerable to these threats. Again, there are various definitions of vulnerability across fields. Generally, vulnerability is related to the degree to which an entity is able to adapt whether reactively or proactively (Ford, 2007; Kelman and Randall, 2018). Common reasons cited for island specific vulnerability are “small but growing populations, limited natural resources, insularity, remoteness and isolation, vulnerability to natural disasters and other external shocks, and biologically diverse but fragile ecosystems” (Ratter, p.6). At the same time there are others who suggest islands are not inherently vulnerable (Baldacchino, 2000; Baldacchino, 2006; Baldacchino & Bertram, 2009;

Prasad, 2004). They contend that islands societies are resilient due to their strength in social capital, flexibility and openness to migration and world markets. By way of evidence, small island economies are found to have significantly higher per capita income than others in their region while those with close political linkages to former colonial powers now exhibit among the highest levels of economic prosperity (Baldacchino 2005; Bertram and Poirine, 2018).

A quick note here on adaptive capacity which appears in the literature on resilience and on climate change. Adaptive capacity is the ability to adjust to change and limit risk within local conditions as well as broader socioeconomic and political realities. This capacity includes “economic wealth, technology, information and skills, infrastructure, institutions, social capital and equity” (Peach Brown, et al., p 169). Building adaptive capacity can be facilitated by community members themselves or by external change agents, using well-known approaches in community development like building on strengths and relationships (Berkes and Ross, 2013).

Social capital

“The OECD defines social capital as “networks, together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within and among groups” (Brian, 2007,p. 103).

“Cross-fertilization among sectors within as well as beyond community can be surprisingly limited, and a purposeful effort may be required to strike a balance between the bonding characteristics of many small- scale societies and the bridging that opens them up to innovation and external sources of expertise” (Novaczek, p. 149).

Social capital is a concept that is found throughout the disciplines in social sciences. It has been analysed from an individual perspective, notably by Bourdieu (who informed much of Corbett’s work found in the section on education) and from a collective perspective most cited by Putman whose theory is reflected in the definition by the OECD. This work was followed by Agder who delineated types of social capital between bonding, e.g. friends and family relationships, and bridging, e.g. memberships in clubs and associations. Baldacchino (2005) asserts that democracy and good governance themselves cannot explain economic success. Rather they may be the effects of ‘deeper forces at work’; namely, social dynamics.

The value of social networks and collective action is particularly found in the promotion of community resilience and response to extreme events, as well as in the context of social-ecological systems dynamics and on small islands, making it particularly relevant to this project. The theory suggests that groups high in social capital are more resilient and exhibit characteristics such as high rates of participation in community organizations projects and collective action for the public good. Scale, boundedness, homogeneity and strong sense of place and collective identity are characteristics associated with small islands as well as social capital (Baldacchino 2005; Thomas, 2017). It is important to note that small doesn’t necessarily constitute social capital. Small communities can also be fraught with rivalries and divides that can undermine collective capacity (Baldacchino, 2005).

Even though the key role of social capital in both individual and community development is evident throughout the literature, the development of tools to measure social capital is described as ‘ongoing and highly unstandardized’ (Besser, 2016; Petzold, 2015).

Volunteering and community involvement

The literature suggests that social capital and volunteerism are positively correlated (Besser, 2016); one is an indicator of the other, as well as fuels the other. Bringing people together for a common purpose increases trust, reciprocity and sense of belonging. At the same time, where this exists, there tends to be more volunteering. Volunteering has also been shown to benefit the individual volunteer through skill and network development, as well as improved health and well-being. Many factors influence an individual's choice to volunteer including early childhood experiences, existing social network, marital status, education, and income (Turcotte, 2015).

Trends in volunteerism and community involvement have changed in recent decades. While there is little community level data to draw on for analysis, the national data from the 2013 Volunteering and Charitable Giving in Canada report (Turcotte, 2015) may offer some insights:

- Women were slightly more likely to volunteer than men (45% versus 42%)
- Older seniors aged 75 and over were the least likely to volunteer (27%), followed by those aged 65 to 74 (38%). Younger people aged 15 to 19 were, by far, the most likely to do some volunteer work, as two thirds participation (66%). (Many students are required to perform community service to fulfill the course requirements needed to graduate from high school.) Forty-eight per cent of people aged 35 to 44 volunteered in 2013, second highest after youth.
- Overall the volunteer rate declined four percentage points to 44%, with the largest decline in persons aged 35 to 44
- Older volunteers are less likely to volunteer but contributed the most hours. They were more likely to sit on a committee or board, provide health care or support such as companionship. They are less likely to teach, educate or mentor, or to coach, referee or officiate.
- University graduate volunteers were more likely to teach, educate and mentor or sit as members of a committee or board

There appears to be scant current scholarly literature dealing with encouraging volunteerism. There is plenty in the grey literature on the tenants of good volunteer engagement practices such as advertising, having clearly defined roles, showing appreciation and recruiting through existing networks (Imagine Canada). However, the prevalence of volunteerism among a group is of a deeper, perhaps even systemic, nature. The authors of the 2016 study "Understanding and encouraging volunteerism and community involvement" by Stukas et al., published in the *Journal of Social Psychology*, contend that there is reason to be optimistic about the prospects of building an engaged society and even of recruiting those who are currently resistant. Their study, among other previous works on the matter, finds that modelling by parents and opportunities for youth to get involved go a long way to fostering altruism. Also, that volunteers are often recruited from their social networks indicating that a level of social capital is already in play.

Of particular noteworthiness in their findings is that a sense of community (where it is not already strong) can be created or promoted by bringing people together in small groups and working with them to create a shared sense of community. Cases of participants in workshops and information sessions were shown to have increased willingness to get involved after these experiences with fellow community members; especially, where the subject matter of the engagement is related to improving the welfare of the group. Further, they found that communities may be easier to build when they are homogeneous and promote ingroup helping (Stukas, et al. 2016).

Additional novel information on this subject is found in Besser's study of 99 small towns in Iowa. While the narrow geographic scope of the study makes the findings non-transferable, I feel they provide good prompts for consideration. Besser found that towns with higher overall income had lower rates of community involvement and he postulates that perhaps the community organizations are similarly better off and in less need of volunteers. Also residents in these communities are likely to be more involved in the workforce than communities with lower income levels and therefore have less time for community involvement (The Canadian statistics do not account for income levels.) Based on his literature review, Besser thought he would find that towns with greater numbers of local businesses would have more volunteerism, but instead he found that communities with greater numbers of small farms had more social capital and engagement. Finally, contrary to the broadly held theory that volunteers rates are declining because the "civic generation" is aging, he found there is less social capital in towns with a greater proportion of seniors in the population (Besser, 2009). In other words, a younger demographic could be associated with higher rates of community engagement and social capital which is also reflected in the Canadian trends of high rates of youth and adult (parents) participation in community work.

Place based development

...place and place attachment continue to flourish, and even to be renewed, in many peripheral areas...these ties can be a valuable resource that can be harnessed to improve quality of life for residents, to create and sustain vibrant cultures, and to boost socially and environmentally resilient local economies...As with any resource, however, place – and more specifically, place-based identities and sense of place- can be squandered and mis-managed (Vodden et al., 2015, p. 16-17).

"In the field of rural development, and insular development in particular, it is often considered a truism that if isolated areas adopt a policy to harness their creativity and unique culture they can successfully develop their economies" (Jennings, p. 157).

Current literature increasingly advocates for place based development for rural, island and remote regions due to the failure of top-down, uniform policy measures, and in some cases a lack of state intervention, in addition to increased mobility and globalization (Baldacchino, 2015; Markey, 2010; Vodden et al., 2015). As defined by Markey, "Place-based development, in contrast to conventional sectoral, programmatic or issue-defined perspectives, is a holistic and targeted intervention that seeks to reveal, utilize and enhance the unique natural, physical, and/or human capacity endowments present within a particular location for the development of the in-situ community and/or its biophysical environment" (2010, p.1).

The importance of place is found in research on innovation, the knowledge economy, competitiveness and sustainability (Vodden et al., 2015) and is prevalent throughout island studies scholarship. That is not to say the debate on top-down versus bottom-up development is over, as according to Baldacchino (2015, p. 42) it 'rages' on. In the book *Place Peripheral: Place-Based development in Rural, Island and Remote Regions*, there are numerous examples of concrete and successful place-based development strategies, as well as cases where conflicts over traditions, commodification of place and inauthentic approaches have added tensions and new challenges for communities to overcome (Vodden et al., 2015). That being said, increasing relevance of place within rural development is established by numerous scholars including Massey whose work 'recognizes that combinations of assets, populations, histories, and circumstances' specific to a place; shape worldviews, actions and outcomes (Markey, p. 1).

These development philosophies are similar to Kretzmann and McKnight's groundbreaking work in the 1990's that advocates for adopting an asset based approach to development rather than the common deficiency or needs oriented policy approach that creates silos, results in a client-service model and undermines community capacity. An asset based approach focuses on what a community has instead of what it needs, and draws on the wisdom of the community and builds capacity (1996). This approach is described in more detail below.

The 'new economy' is also a driving force of place based approaches. According to Market Business News, the new economy "is a buzzword that describes the new, high-growth industries with state-of-the-art technologies that are the driving force of GDP growth" (2019, para. 2). It marks the transition from a manufacturing-based to a service-based economy. In response to the new economy, rural development proponents have been calling for changes to policy and planning; namely, a more holistic approach, referred to as territorial which allows for integration of 'economic, environmental, social, cultural and political dynamics in planning at a manageable scale' (Markey, p. 3). Markey posits three prominent features of place based development: greater consideration of culture, the environment, and community; more demand on local capacity; and an increase in governance regimes. This type of development ultimately shifts authority and control from central powers (Markey, 2010). Vodden et al. (2015) would add that tourism and the arts are crucial dimensions of the new rural economy as well.

Asset Based Community Development

Asset based community development theory was developed in the 1990's by Kretzmann and McKnight laid out in great detail in their book *Building Community From the Inside Out*. As described earlier, the thrust of the approach is a move away from deficiency based policy to one that invests in the particular knowledge, skills, physical assets and institutions that are unique to a given community. In a summary of the book they highlight three interrelated characteristics. First, that strategy starts with what is present in the community- capacities of residents and employees, associations and institutions. Second, the process is internally focused; focused on the 'agenda building and problem-solving' capacities of local residents, associations, and institutions. This is not to disregard the role of external actors, but to stress the importance of 'local definition, investment, creativity, hope and control' (1996, p. 27). As a result of number one and two, the process is therefore dependent on relationships. Community builders thus ought to be focused on building and rebuilding relationships among local residents, associations and institutions if they are to be successful deploying an asset based approach (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1996).

P.L.A.C.E

The products of regeneration often are, themselves, generative, in part because regeneration is not merely an outcome. It becomes a way of thinking and managing, thereby continuing to grow community well-being. (Slawinski et al. 2019, p. 15)

Fogo Island, Newfoundland has gained notoriety for its recent resurgence of economic and community outcomes. A group of researchers studied the case over a period of six years and identified a model they feel may be helpful to other small, remote communities (Slawinski et al. 2019). The model has been organized using the acronym P.L.A.C.E shown in the table below (Adley, 2019). It shares many attributes with place based and asset based theories and goes a bit further in offering specific strategies community organizers can use to help gain buy-in and momentum.

| | |
|---|--|
| P | Promote community champions; people who really care and want to make a difference . |
| L | Link insiders and outsiders. When you bring these groups together knowledge-sharing happens, new expertise is built, and new inspiration develops. |
| A | Assess local capacities or assets. Communities take stock of what they have and figure out what is special about where they live. Do not try to imitate other places and create direct competition. |
| C | Convey compelling narratives. Come up with positive, true stories about the place that resonate with people in the community. Repeat them so they become a foundation of inspiration and confidence. |
| E | Engage "both/and" thinking. Don't dismiss opportunities that might seem opposed to each other; find a way to engage with both. |

Climate change

Gradual and incremental changes to the status quo alone will be insufficient in the face of future climate. Meaningful and successful climate change adaptation for the Island will require coordinated, collaborative, complementary, and parallel approaches by the different leads and collaborators identified by this report (e.g., sectors, Provincial Government, municipal governments, individuals, etc.). To achieve this, a clear vision of sustainability, the willingness to disrupt the status quo, a commitment to work together, and the urgency to act swiftly are needed from everyone. Planned adaptation takes time and the work must begin immediately. It is insufficient to “prioritize” climate change adaptation; adapting to climate change must be considered a normal way of life (Arnold & Fenech, p. XV).

There is also growing anecdotal evidence from several European countries that, when an island starts taking some innovative approaches to developing sustainable economic activities and utilising the latest environmental technologies to combat climate change, then there is a corresponding upsurge and celebration of cultural awareness. These jointly create an even stronger identity and sense of place. This positive spin-off often leads to a complete turnaround in the fortunes of an island that was facing terminal decline due to out-migration and other adverse socio-economic factors (Robertson, p. 416).

Climate change is seen as one of the greatest threats posed to the future of humankind and the world. The changes predicted include rising global temperatures, increase/ decrease in precipitation (depending on region), more severe weather events, sea level rise, less sea ice, and reduced air quality. The exact timing and degree of these impacts is not well defined and vast amounts of research are ongoing. However, changes can already be observed in most regions. These changes may seem small, but they can have significant impacts for communities. Most policy measures to date have focused on climate change mitigation (reducing greenhouse gases). While these measures can lessen future climate chaos, a certain level of change is going to unfold due to carbon levels and warming already in place.

This makes climate adaptation critically important today. Climate adaptations are measures that reduce negative impacts or take advantage of emerging opportunities (Arnold and Fenech, 2017).

Much like the community development approaches presented in this literature review, effective adaptation requires coordinated efforts including individuals, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and governments and should be grounded in a solid understanding of a community's capacities and vulnerabilities. When it comes to climate policy and planning, having the best available science for the region is also important (Arnold & Fenech; Ford, 2007; Petzold, 2016). Social capital, as outlined earlier, also has a huge role to play in climate adaptation because it is a key enabling a community to tackle any threat or opportunity (Ford, 2007; Petzold, 2016). According to Ford (2007) who has done a lot of work on climate adaptation in northern Canada, it is crucial to understand a community's vulnerabilities which he suggests doing by examining past climate variations and the responses to them. Through this exercise you can identify risks, characterize how communities respond, determine ability, identify opportunities and constraints and appropriate policies to introduce (Ford, 2007).

When you dig into the plethora of climate adaptation recommendations, regardless of the angle you take, you will find the recommendation for all policy and planning measures to integrate climate change factors in recognition of its far reaching impacts. This implies that considering climate mitigation and adaptation measures in any community development effort would be wise. There can also be financial incentive. The 'green' economy is now estimated to be one of the fastest growing sectors in Canada and according to a recent report there is much more room for growth (Pittis, 2019). There is caution presented in the literature, however to avoid climate change development regimes that emphasize climate change and overlook or underinvest in pressing issues such as health, education and basic needs, as has been found in some locations (Baldacchino and Kelman, 2014). Numerous examples of innovative adaptation and mitigation efforts on islands around the world are showcased on the Global Island Partnership website¹ as well as throughout scholarly and grey literature. According to Robertson (2018) who has reviewed and written about many of these cases, they illustrate that there is a great deal of voluntary time and effort required from communities and they involve lengthy bottom-up, iterative processes. Development of renewable energy sectors (wind, solar, biofuel) and establishing designated, protected areas are among the most common strategies found in the literature.

A cursory search of grey and scholarly literature on climate action in the Magdalen Islands indicates that the focus is on sea level rise, erosion and compromised ground water. A review of Quebec's *2013 – 2020 Climate Change Action Plan* finds two mentions of the Magdalen Islands. One is to recognize that electricity for the island is being supplied from diesel-fired power plants and the other commits the province to undertake research on road infrastructure and seawalls to protect against coastal erosion (Government of Quebec, 2012). The Ministry of Environment's associated webpage² makes reference to a Green Fund that 'supports companies, municipalities and private citizens in transitioning to a low carbon world'. However this, and much of the reference material linked from the website seem to be available only in French. Hydro Quebec's website indicates that they are looking into transitioning the Magdalen Islands to greener forms of energy through a gradual transition to renewables such as solar and wind, coupled with energy conservation behaviors (Hydro Quebec, n.d.).

¹ <http://www.glispa.org/bright-spots>

² <http://www.environnement.gouv.qc.ca/changementsclimatiques/plan-action-fonds-vert-en.asp>

Given the importance of the fishing industry to English speaking Magdalen Islanders, I will provide an overview of the forecast for that industry. Small islands around the world have a much greater dependence historically, socially and economically on marine territories and marine life; therefore, they stand to be impacted disproportionately by threats to our oceans (Ratter, 2014). Climate estimations suggest that in ten to fifty years the Gulf of Saint Lawrence will experience temperature and oxygenation changes at three times the rate of global trends (Claret, et al., 2018). The possible impacts of this are numerous and the outcomes uncertain (Arnold & Fenech, 2017; Claret, et al., 2018; Le Bris, et al. 2018). A scan of the scholarly literature on the topic of climate impacts on the American lobster illustrate some important findings and the need for further study on dynamics, such as, the impact of temperature and oxygen levels, ocean currents and predation (Quinn, 2017; Wahle et al., 2013). In the short-term we can expect downward pressure on the economics of the fishery due to reduced availability of bait and extreme weather that will interfere with harvesting (Arnold & Fenech, 2017). We do know that warming generally improves performance of life processes of lobster and is contributing to the current abundance of stocks. However, excessive warming can reduce performance and cause death (Lebris et al., 2018; Steneck et al., 2011). Quinn (2017) found that in the 10–50 year range American lobster larvae may experience temperatures up to 30 °C which may be lethal. American lobster stocks in southern New England declined by 78% in 1999 after sixteen years of increasing abundance and they have not yet recovered. After an unseasonably warm summer, a shell disease broke out decimating the stock (Lebris et al., 2018; Steneck et al., 2011). Recommendations call for greater flexibility in regulations and increased involvement of communities in decisions regarding the management of these resources (Arnold & Fenech, 2017; Steneck et al., 2011).

When a community consultation process was undertaken on climate adaptation by the University of Prince Edward Island Climate Lab in PEI, they found:

“...common barriers to action included: uncertainty, lack of funding, insufficient incentive, lack of guidance, requirement for high levels of coordination, and gradual nature of climate change. Potential solutions include collaboration with experts, data gathering, long-term financial planning, demonstrations of successful approaches, and interdisciplinary collaboration” (Arnold & Fenech, p. XV).

The authors of the report underscore the importance of recognizing climate change as a shared problem and that everyone - individuals, businesses, institutions, non-governmental organizations, all levels of government – must take significant action; status quo will result in high risk scenarios for all.

Tourism

Islands must constantly innovate to maintain and grow their position in a changing global marketplace. Islands have the opportunity to reinvent themselves and to utilise technology and innovation to assist in inventing and reinventing themselves as sustainable destinations in ways that encompass their limits to growth (Graci and Maher, p. 257).

Travel and tourism has become one of the fastest growing industries world-wide and island and remote regions in particular are receiving a great upswing in visitors and economic activity as a result (Graci and Maher, 2018; Mitchell & Hall, 2005; Vodden et al. 2015). This has come with a mix of positive and negative effects. “Living standards and quality of life can be raised by income; new employment and educational opportunities can be gained; and improved international understanding can be the result of tourism initiatives (Graci and Maher, p. 249). On the downside, tourism can come with a significant

environmental footprint including increased pollution and changes to the landscape, monetisation of cultures and traditions, and disruption to traditional livelihoods. These issues have given rise to the call for ‘sustainable tourism’ which advocates for tourism development that is authentic to communities and done at a scale that does not compromise the environment (physical and human) (Graci and Maher, 2018).

Some broad considerations on tourism development emerged from the literature. It is a highly competitive industry where destinations can find themselves facing sudden and significant declines due to saturation, bad publicity or global events such as weather or financial crises. Creating a sustainable industry requires ongoing monitoring and renewal efforts to stay abreast of changing market trends. Fairly sophisticated marketing is required to attract travellers and a significant amount of cooperation among the destination community to develop synergies and support this marketing effort is important (Mitchell and Hall, 2005). Finally, it is recommended that communities have well- developed, integrated tourism plans if they that want to create a long-lasting, locally- benefitting industry. Support from governments, NGO’s and university researchers is generally required to support the industry (Graci and Maher, 2018; Mitchell and Hall, 2005).

Besides offering nice places to stay, good food to eat and nature to be enjoyed, there are niche market trends in travel and tourism. As mentioned earlier, visiting remote and isolated places is on the rise, within which, cultural tourism dominated the literature. This can include history and museums, culinary delights and festivals, and local art and artisans. Case studies in the addendum showcasing cultural tourism include Gravelsbourg, Prince Edward Island, and Shetland among others. The findings show that by focusing on products that meet needs of both locals and visitors a community can build a year round industry and offers tourists what they crave – authenticity (Novaczek, 2015). In addition, the pursuit of these options can “strengthen public infrastructure and the supporting environments and build social capital, creativity, sense of place and community cohesion” (Graci and Maher, p. 147).

Another area of growth in tourism known as ecotourism is defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education” (The International Ecotourism Society, 2019). One common ecotourism strategy found among island case studies is to seek internationally recognized designations such as UNESCO Biosphere Reserve or a Marine Protected Area (see Cape Breton in addendum), which can be leveraged for marketing and visibility and draws in a segment of tourists that the region previously did not attract (Graci and Maher, 2018; Robertson, 2018). Within ecotourism, and of particular interest perhaps for Grosse- Ile, is birdwatching tourism. This is a niche that is growing in many places throughout the world including Canada, United States and Europe. Bird watching tourists are characterized as affluent and typically stay for only a few days and spend all their funds in the local community, not venturing far from the birdwatching location. Birdwatching often takes place outside of the typical tourists’ season, thereby extending the season (Connell, 2009; Kordowska and Kulczyk, 2014).

In the case study of the French Acadian village of Evangeline, Prince Edward Island (see addendum), authors put forward four stages of cultural rural tourism development. At first, a few residents recognize tourism related opportunities and integrate them into their plans. From there, community groups plan and implement tourism strategies as part of economic development. In the next stage, we find community partnerships developing and formal tourism bodies at work. In the final stage, centralized, cooperative, and long-term planning and marketing of tourism occurs (MacDonald and Jolliffe, 2002).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The timing seems excellent for CAMI to engage their community in revitalization. It is ideal because there is a level of concern among community members regarding depopulation and dwindling school population. Also because the lobster finishing industry is presently lucrative, community members have financial resources to draw on. As any seasoned fisherman knows, this will not always be the case, and given the impacts of climate change, future cyclical declines in the fishing industry have the potential to be catastrophic. These types of challenges and opportunities are a galvanising force for community engagement and community development initiatives; a platform for discussion and action.

A key recommendation repeated in the literature is that development be done from the inside- out if it is to be long- lasting and effective. The literature suggests we resist the urge to identify and address vulnerabilities, but rather to create an inventory of assets and build from there. Community members know their weaknesses and concerns, what they often overlook is their inherent capabilities. Place based development aligns with this adage through its focus on leveraging a community's natural, physical and human, attributes for development purposes. Following this approach can lead to a number of outcomes apparent in the case studies. Firstly, scale is a central concern for small islands. By focusing on in-situ assets, the chance of undertaking an initiative beyond the limits of the community and environment's capacity is lessened. However, that is not to say that communities ought not consider strategies that engage external investors. These 'phoenix like' investment opportunities can indeed be transformative but tend to come with the added tension of playing host to external players and their priorities. There are numerous cases in the addendum where communities have done very well through external investment and in these cases the investors display a desire to achieve development that is within the scale limits of the territory, respectful, if not encouraging, of local culture, as well as built from infrastructure that is already in place and not being used.

Secondly, these inside- out or bottom- up approaches build on and extend local skills, knowledge, identity and social capital all of which are important resources for communities in dealing with opportunities and threats. Whether it's for the purpose of responding to climate change or bringing more vibrancy, exploring and celebrating the community's history offers the benefits of receiving lessons that can be applied to the future, and perhaps more importantly, the process itself can have the effects of strengthening identity and social capital. Approaches that produce this affect were seen most often in the case studies that invested in local arts and culture development with the involvement of community members and was also found in the education literature review. Some of the effects include new connections across generations, attention to local traditional knowledge and craft, and a new vibrancy that not only engages and retains citizens, it attracts visitors, new residents and investors.

Thirdly, governments and governance are strong themes in the literature. The role of senior government is critical. Without funding and resources for capacity building, most small communities simply would not have the internal resources to undertake meaningful community and economic development. Further, governance via local community groups and associations are key resources in devising and implementing development plans. This through their local knowledge and ability to engage and coordinate volunteers for community projects. In some cases governance can involve rather unique arrangements like trusts that enable a community to take ownership of key assets and shape the business model to reflect their particular values.

The English speaking community of the Magdalen Islands has many assets to draw on. The strong connection to place and tradition, tight- knit community, and love of the pristine environment are evident through the photo essays on Discover Grosse Ile website and throughout the 2015 *Portrait of*

the English-speaking Community of the Magdalen Islands. A number of community organizations stand out as well. CAMI for its many projects that are already building social capital such as the photo essays and seniors' outreach. The Little Red School House is a living homage to the community's history and pioneers. Some social enterprises exist, such as the Cap Dauphin Fishermen's Co-operative and a recently formed social enterprise. Based on the information found on Cap Dauphin Fishermen's Co-operative's website, this organization exudes innovation and sustainability; an energy and brand that could perhaps inspire and enable other community initiatives. Pointe de l'Est National Wildlife Area and Old Harry Beach are points of community pride and could be leveraged to expand the local tourism in ways that are appropriate to scale and culture. Being the nesting grounds for multiple bird species including two species at risk, makes the area a draw to bird watchers, a growing segment of the ecotourism market that is well developed in terms of international networks and marketing platforms that can be tapped. The Government of Canada website for Pointe de l'Est National Wildlife Area indicates there is support available for NGO's and municipalities for projects that would promote the area³. Gaspésie is a leader in wind energy. Given its proximity, the Islands may be well positioned to forge partnerships that might result in local wind energy production; perhaps even consider a community owned energy sector as a number of European island communities are doing with government support. According to their website, Canada Economic Development would support projects like that⁴. Diaspora are also an asset among which you would find return visitors, second home owners, retirees and potential investors.

In addition to building on existing assets in the community, there were a number of new measures that showed up in the case studies that are worth highlighting. Various forms of artist-in-residence programs were evident in many of the case studies looking at community vibrancy and cultural tourism. In Gravelbourg, an Economic Development Officer position was created that became ground-zero for much of their strategies and plans, enabling and supporting existing community groups. Finally, festivals and events were created in many communities which strengthened community cohesion and pride, as well as attracted visitors and economic activity. A final consideration based on the review would be that consistently it is found that a local tourism industry does not generate enough economic activity to fuel an entire community; a more substantial economic engine is often present. Working as a community to create an inventory all the many assets, hidden and in plain view, and engaging some 'fresh eyes' from the outside to do so, appears to be a very promising starting place.

³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/national-wildlife-areas/locations/pointe-est.html>

⁴ <https://www.dec-ced.gc.ca/eng/resources/articles/2018/06/50-gim.html>

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Education overview

“Schooling was not a source of pride; it was a site of irrelevance, boredom, and earnings deferred for uncertain reason”(Corbett, 2004, p. 459).

“...these expert systems that works to disembed and mobilize young people rather than engage them in a process of learning how to live well and carefully within a place” (Corbett, 2004, p. 466).

“A rough life in a known community among family and friends may look better to many youth than taking a very expensive shot at an educational journey that represents an expensive, unproven, and uncertain path” (Corbett, 2005, p.65).

INTRODUCTION

There is congruence in the literature regarding the relationship between education and rural and coastal communities. The basis of this relationship is the relevance of the formal education to the available opportunities – formal education is typically suitable for opportunities in larger and urban centres, not in fishing and many other blue collar professions associated with rural labour markets. The literature also establishes the existence and impact of the strong place attachment of rural residents including youth. The research suggests that the well- established recommendations for place- based education, place-based development, accessible vocational and post- secondary education, women’s development and early childhood development, are likely suitable strategies for CAMI’s community. Ultimately these strategies are integrative and self- reinforcing.

Understanding the specific dynamics at play in the community will help determine the paths of least resistance into these domains. As the literature illustrates, each stakeholder (including institutions) have a worldview and set of values shaped both by tradition and modernity that will come into play. Studies on small, coastal communities were found in the literature that can be used to inform and possibly hasten the visioning and planning stages for CAMI and their community members. Below is an overview of the tensions, challenges, opportunities and recommendations found in the literature on education and schooling in today’s small, coastal communities.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND OUT- MIGRATION

Michael Corbett’s work is particularly salient in the field of rural education and out-migration and is regularly referenced by academics internationally. Corbett is a professor at Acadia University in Nova Scotia and has been studying the formal education dynamics in a rural, fishing community of Digby Neck in Southwest Nova Scotia (NS) since the late 1990’s. Much like Grosse-Ile, many youth in this community, especially male, leave formal education early to begin working in the lucrative inshore lobster fishery. His findings are numerous beginning with the well documented notion that in rural, northern, and coastal communities, education and out-migration are intimately linked (Corbett, 2004; 2005; 2007). It is suggested that the current education system shaped by neoliberalism is designed to ‘select and sort’ rural youth for out-migration and ‘dis-embed’ them from their local traditions and culture. This is done in formal ways such as the preoccupation with standardized testing as well as use of curriculum written about foreign locations be strangers. This is also done informally through attitudes and worldviews that favor careers and lifestyles that exist in more urban settings (Corbett 2004; Johns, et al., 2000; Petrin, Schafft & Meece, 2014; Prince, 2014; Schafft 2016; Smith, 2002).

“Rural youth are implicitly encouraged to accept an education that is presented as the only “ticket” out of the community’s economic and social trouble, and to educate themselves into other places” (Corbett, 2004, p. 453).

Contrary to this modern path to a ‘better life’ afforded by formal education, accounts of life and learning in rural places demonstrate that what counts as success in a rural community does not align with measures of school performance. What is found in rural, Canadian communities is young white men working in resource extraction industries, living lives defined as successful by local standards, which works well for the males, but may be harder on the females (Corbett 2004; 2005; Lowe, 2015). Corbett found in Digby head that the males in this study understood their skills and know how to be of little value outside the fishery, and they understood the risks involved in the fishery. However, they also understood how difficult and risky it was to take a chance on education which would involve severing local ties (Corbett 2005). The importance of relevance and practicality in youth education and employment decisions is reinforced by Lowe’s findings that youth in Alaska were well aware of the risk associated with the lack of economic diversity in their hometowns. Leaving for education and therefore opportunity, becomes necessary, but not necessarily desirable (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015; Corbett, 2004; 2007; Lehmann, 2007; Lowe, 2015). In short, educational attainment is driven by its relevance to available lifepaths and out-migration; therefore, is fueled by opportunity elsewhere.

Leavers vs stayers

A large portion of youth populations leave their rural hometowns (70% in the case of Digby Neck), all are reluctant to leave and many that do leave take up residence in nearby centres. Moving farther was positively associated with increasing levels of formal educational. Conversely, most men and a minority of women who remained in or near their home community had not graduated from high school. In communities where viable employment options do not require high school completion, dropout rates remain high (Corbett, 2004; Richardson, 2015). Numerous studies on out-migration refer to two groups – leavers and stayers. In the core studies we are drawing on for CAMI’s community, greater nuance is described within these populations that I think is important for policy consideration. These studies provide a better understanding of the complex and conflicted nature of youths’ education and employment decisions.

There is consensus that only a minority of youth actually want to move, but most all understand the need to move. Those that want to move are drawn to the financial and lifestyle options available in urban settings. The majority however leave reluctantly or don’t leave at all (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015; Corbett, 2004). This difficulty in leaving was found by many authors to be related to place attachment; primarily to family and relations, but also to the landscape and the culture or lifestyle in the rural setting (Bauch, 2001; Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015; Corbett, 2004; Lowe, 2015). Additional influences include social-economic status of parents and relatives, choice of life partner, having children, relationships with teachers and support with career planning (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015; Rerat, 2014).

The studies also demonstrate that of those that do leave, most hope to return into employment in their chosen field but are often willing to take other employment if it means being able to live in or near their home community (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015). In fact, most youth who did move, didn’t move far and those pursuing post-secondary education often returned home without completing their education due not to poor academic performance, but to difficulty adjusting and ‘fitting in’ (Lehmann, 2007). For those that decide not to leave, place attachment and perceived suitability for existing opportunities outweigh other conceivable possibilities (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015; Corbett, 2004; Prince, 2014) . Therefore,

local employment opportunities and/ or one's ability to imagine or create opportunities locally influence youths decisions to leave or stay.

It is worth noting that there has been a body of scholarship that suggested that the "best and brightest" youth from rural areas leave. Studies in addition to Corbett's have found that the highest-achieving rural students are among those with the greatest community attachment and it is their perceptions of local economic conditions that have great bearing on their decision to stay or leave, not specific attention or extra resources deployed by schools to high performing students which has been suggested by other scholars (Petrin, Schafft & Meece, 2014).

Women and out- migration

Consistently across the rural communities studied it is found that young women leave rural communities at a much greater rate than males due to the lack of local economic opportunities for them in the traditional, gender- biased, local economies (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015; Corbett 2007; Lowe, 2015). Some findings suggest that schooling is thought to be 'woman's work' and suited for those with aspirations beyond the local community. In these communities, higher rates of high school and post-secondary completion are found in the female population. Among the group that remained in Digby Neck, men outnumbered women by more than two-to-one (Corbett, 2007).

In his (2007) paper Corbett challenges the generally accepted ideas that economic success is predicated on educational success, and, the idea that the girls are doing well because of their superior academic achievement. Rather he contends that on the coast of NS, females face more pressure to leave (and don't want to) and that they are destined for economic disadvantage. He provides statistics indicating that the women in his study were earning about half of that of their male counterparts. Further, a gendered resource sector combined with service industry jobs continues to disenfranchise women (Corbett, 2007).

How these rural women use their education locally to benefit their family units and their communities is an area that deserves further research according to Corbett. The stereotype in rural villages suggests that economic productivity and community stability are enabled by the work of men. The work of social capital building done by women may nonetheless be more important for community survival. He referenced one study in the US that found women were better able to transition in a community after the collapse of an industry (Corbett). In a study on women's roles in the PEI fishery Novaczek et al. (2010) found several cases of women's, often indirect, influence playing a very important role even though they did not have a 'seat at the table' when it came to formal decision making. This may be changing in PEI as recently more and more women are buying fleets and captaining their own fishing enterprises (Ramlakhan, 2016).

Kids today

In addition to place attachment and the tensions between relevance and practicality that profoundly affect the choices youth make regarding education, employment and residency, there are numerous global trends and characteristics of modernity that shape their imaginations and future possibilities as well. Like natural habitats, social habitats are significantly compromised, particularly in rural places. Climate change, population and pollution forcing us to deal with complexity. We live in a world where the local is transformed and enhanced by the global and traditional either/or thinking is being replaced by both/and mindsets. It seems everything is fraught with risk, including the academic path of the carefully reared middle class child. Connectivity through Improved highway travel and communication

technology has exploded changing our ability to both experience the exotic as well as remain connected to “home”. We can, and must, live in many places at once. The youth in Lowe’s study referred to the “real world” as the one beyond the borders of their communities. Modern societies are organized around consumption rather than production driving the population decline in rural places, while increased leisure time, discretionary income and global unrest are all facilitating an increase of new residents, often seasonal. Our fascination with self and identity has exploded while allegiance to institutions continues to decline (Corbett, 2009; Crouch, 2016; Lowe, 2015; Richardson, 2015).

Most youth understand they have to leave to get higher education and opportunities outside of the community. This causes anxiety and complicates formation of self-identity. Identity is now less about achieving stability than it is an ongoing and endless round of self-creation, reflection, re-creation and choice. Most youth from what might be called working class or low SES families are pressured to ‘get serious’ and to do it quickly. For those whose families’ are entrenched in local networks, apprenticeship and less formal ways of transferring knowledge and resources, the world of higher education has been understood as an ‘irrelevant’. The fear of making a wrong, costly decision may force youth to make tough decisions quickly or to defer the decision. Ultimately, given the strong place attachment of many youth, most decision making strategies may be about remaining close to home. The expansion of the low-wage service economy in nearby rural centres provides something to do in a known place with established networks, providing a measure of stability if not comfort (Corbett, 2009).

Drugs and alcohol

In Corbett’s 2007 study he found it common for both parents and students to comment that young people are growing up too fast and are being lured into adult pleasures at too early an age; specifically drug and alcohol use. He suggests that early engagement in work leading to money and mobility, leads to early immersion in the party culture of the community. The ability of particular individuals and families to protect their children from early initiation is in part linked to the way that families understand good parenting. He adds that families that can support an extended adolescence can help avoid this early initiation (Corbett, 2009).

Parenting

The need for formal education has been created by the same global forces that are seen to be jeopardizing the traditional way of life; therefore, education and other state interventions may be seen with skepticism in some communities. Corbett (2009) suggests that rural residents' support for schools may have more to do with supporting community survival than supporting contemporary schooling. Also, it has become increasingly clear that parenting is at least as important as what happens in school in terms of influencing and informing choices youth make (Cook, Mann, & Burns, 2015; Corbett, 2009; Rerat, 2014; Smith, 2002).

Parents have to balance the tension between protection and exposure for their children in a context of chronic uncertainty and ambivalence which has come to characterize modernity. Further it may be virtually impossible for parents not to imagine a future for their children that mirrors the world they presently know, in effect, narrowing potential outcomes for their children (Corbett, 2009). In his exploration on child-rearing and education- employment prospects for children, Corbett suggests that parents that employ a pragmatic child-rearing frame (typical in blue collar families) put emphasis on making ‘correct’ and ‘relevant’ decisions in regard to what kids ‘what you want to do’ and this may actually lead to weaker academic performance and a narrowing of educational possibilities. On the other hand, parents that deploy looser exploratory and entrepreneurial child-rearing frames understand that achieving something worthwhile takes time and is a creative process that involves personal growth.

The youth who experience these looser frames appear to be less focused, practical and serious, but also appear to be more likely to explore a broader range of educational, lifestyle and mobility options.

While parenting definitely influences children's approaches to life decisions, Corbett contends that schools can also do things to help students achieve broader perspectives. He believes that inclusive, public schools typical of rural communities are better positioned than specialized, urban schools to provide the new cosmopolitan space for kids to be both local and global as described in the following quote:

“What I have found rather is that school success appears to be marked by both academic engagement and also by a flexibility and openness to new ideas, people, spaces and places, effectively a cosmopolitan sensibility focused on difference, diversity, space and mobility rather than similarity, continuity, homogeneity and place” (p. 175).

Schools and teachers

Schools have become less accountable to the communities they serve and more accountable to state defined measures of success over the past number of decades. Whether or not they can equip young people with the skills to think and act critically, pragmatically, and collaboratively within a world that presents increasingly complex challenges remains largely in question (Corbett, 2009; Schafft, 2016; Smith, 2002). Understandably then, in our case study communities, the roles of teachers and administrators are characterized as containing tensions. They understand the priorities of the education system (standard curriculum and testing) and the inapplicability of their outcomes to many of the students (especially male) in the local community. They are aware of issues facing the community, they love their community and at the same time may be unclear about their role in changing the community (Corbett, 2004; 2005; Smith, 2002).

Numerous scholars, including Corbett and Smith advocate for place-based education for rural locales. In an email exchange with Corbett on April 19th of this year he indicated that there isn't a best practice in education that can be suggested for communities like Grosse Ile and Digby Neck. In cases where there is a tension between the education system and community building (i.e. relevance to local livelihoods), as well as a lucrative local fishery creating the so called 'boy problem', he offers the following, "...place based education is probably the best set of ideas we have to deal with things. But ultimately, I think, it comes down to strong principals and teachers who are open to listening and acting on community values and social practices." This is aligned with his published recommendations. There is significant scholarship on place-based education (PBE) which at its simplest is a curriculum based on local phenomena designed through student input and community involvement (Smith, 2002).

In an email exchange with Dr. Rose Fine-Meyer, Senior Lecturer in the Master of Teaching program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, she had the following to say on linkages with PBE and rural communities, "I would suggest to you that there are many links: First in terms of integrating Indigenous knowledges, in addressing eco-justice, in incorporating local stories and links between people and land, and, I believe, supporting students in greater civic engagement. (treaties, access to resources, land uses and control, landmarks, pollution, to name a few)."

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy considerations

Policy makers ought to carefully consider the nuanced linkages of education- employment decisions of youth being influenced significantly by place attachment and a sense of belonging, as well as various effects of modernity and not simply economic influences as most often happens (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015, Corbett, 2004; Rerat, 2014). The literature points to a number of areas of specific policy consideration that honour local youth and promote stronger communities. These include place- based education, place- based development, accessible vocational and post- secondary education, women’s development and early childhood development.

Most predominant is local economic development. It is clear that most youth would like to either remain in or return to the coastal communities where they grow up and where their families remain (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015; Corbett, 2004; Lowe, 2015; Rerat, 2014). It is possible for education and development policies to be integrated and self-reinforcing through enhanced school-community relationships that not only retain youth, but also strengthen local economies and broaden the imagination of young people in regard to the possibilities of life in their home communities (Prince, 2014; Schafft, 2016). Schafft in particular notes that rural development debates have some striking parallels with rural education debates, in particular their lack of academic interest and clarity of policy direction. Place-based education has much to offer on these issues and is discussed further in the following section.

Investing in specific and relevant skills training via vocational and post-secondary avenues was suggested by the youth in the Alaskan study and is found to be associated with employment growth in rural areas (Cook, Mann & Burns, 2015; Lowe, 2015). Delivering this through distance education has been shown to increase youth retention significantly (Bjarnason & Edvardsson, 2017; Bjarnason & Thorarinsdottir, 2018).

Giving youth a voice in community affairs and policymaking is also a theme in the literature and again was recommended by youth. It helps to retain youth and improve numerous community outcomes by creating future community leaders and stewards (Lowe, 2015; Prince, 2014; Smith, 2002).

There may be a significant and underutilised set of community assets in the women in coastal communities due what appears to be generations of systemic disenfranchisement (Corbett, 2007). Due to their higher levels of educational attainment, females in the community may already have skills in communication, organization and administration (Corbett, 2007; Novaczek, et al., 2009). Further investigation on successful approaches for women’s development is recommended.

The influence of parenting on children’s life trajectories is well documented and surfaced in this literature review as well. Whether it is related to educational attainment, employment choice or drug and alcohol use, parents have an critical role to play here (Corbett, 2009). Investment in nutrition and nurturing of children is established as a key factor in community development as well (Bollman, 1999) and strategies found under the umbrella of the ‘first one thousand days’ may be relevant.

Overall, policy makers need to be aware that successful efforts will be deeply reflective of local opportunities, needs, and constraints, and therefore necessarily deeply dependent upon local knowledge and locally developed initiatives which take time. Generic or prescriptive approaches are known to be ineffective (Lowe, 2015; Schafft, 2016; Smith, 2002).

Place Based Education

One of the strengths of place based education is that it can adapt to the unique characteristics of specific places and in this way can help overcome the disconnect between school and children's lives. Valuable knowledge for most children is knowledge that is directly related to their own social reality; knowledge that allows them to engage in activities that are of service to and valued by those they love and respect (Smith, 2002). PBE gets students and teachers out of the classroom into the community to learn and contribute in meaningful ways that also achieve curriculum outcomes. It connects students to experts in, from and around their community opening up possibilities of their future self (Kydd, 2004; Schafft, 2016, Smith, 2002) in turn, communities benefit from the insight and enthusiasm that students can bring to local issues (Bauch, 2001). Because PBE is based in the community, it will deeply reflect the community, and as such, there are no generic models of the approach. However, there are common elements; namely, local phenomenon as the basis of curriculum, students as creators of knowledge rather than consumers of knowledge, students playing a central role in determining what is studied, teachers as co-guides and brokers of community resources and learning possibilities, and the wall between school and community being crossed frequently (Smith, 2002).

There is a girth of literature on PBE; Smith's (2002) presentation provides a helpful, high-level overview along with numerous examples. He identifies the following five patterns of PBE in practice: cultural studies, nature studies, real-world problem solving, internships and entrepreneurial opportunities and induction into community processes. I will provide some detail on the last three for illustration purposes and because I feel they may be the most relevant to CAMI's community.

In real-world problem solving students are engaged in identifying school or community issues they would like to investigate and address. The problem identification and solution are student led. The teacher facilitates the process, links it to curriculum and resources and troubleshoots as needed. The experience leads not only to greater understanding of the specific issue for students, but also of the interconnectivity of aspects of the community and instills a sense of ownership and responsibility of the issue. Examples would be fixing up a playground, building gardens, implementing water conservation strategies, or looking at hunger in the community (Smith, 2002). In some instances these projects can be multi-layered and multi-year. In one such project, students took on the task of raising trout to stock local streams during which they learned about water-quality assessment, ecological systems, and environmental remediation. It involved construction of an outdoor science laboratory, including an aquaculture operation. This project had environmental outcomes and resulted in youth employment opportunities as well as multiple relevant, hands-on opportunities for instruction and training in STEM education, natural resource and water-quality management, and environmental protection (Schafft, 2016).

To provide students with chance to think through the relationship between vocation and place, the internships and entrepreneurial opportunities approach links school learning to local occupational opportunities and provides confidence and initiative to remain in their community and be of service. Examples include summer internships, helping students meet neglected community needs via small business start-up, taking on responsibility for a community enhancing initiative such as publishing school or community newspapers. Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning (REAL) Enterprises (www.realentrepreneurship.org) is a program that has been running in the US for over 30 years that does this and has numerous resources (Smith). There is also a body of educational practices collectively referred to as "farm-to-school" under which there are PBE approaches that inspire the growth of community-based agriculture and food production (Schafft, 2016).

Turning schools and their students into resources that local governments can tap to help solve community issues also gives students a chance to make a difference and contribute to the well-being of others. In doing so, young people are likely to develop skills and dispositions associated with civic engagement. This type of PBE is what Smith called induction into community processes. He shared cases where a local parks department worked with a class to design a new park, a fire department worked with students to survey residents about changing smoke alarm batteries, and in another case, a math class collected data on environmental impacts such as erosion. All of these would include presenting findings to a decision making body such as municipal council or school board.

Education leadership and partnerships

Rural school renewal is not the imitation of urban reforms, but the joining together of schools and their local communities in the creation of something new that has meaning and understanding for students in rural school settings. This of course is not without its challenges. Governance and providing the community with opportunities to share in decision making will be a factor. Leadership is required for any type of community change including school renewal (Bauch, 2001; Johns et al., 2000). Bauch suggests this work requires the type of leader who can deconstruct old myths and assumptions and construct new meaning and understanding. It requires the type of person who is driven by a sense of moral purpose, rather than institutional constraints and bureaucracies.

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