ANSERJ

Canadian journal of nonprofit and social economy research /
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OSBL et l'économie sociale

Volume 5 Number 1 / Numéro 1
Spring / Printemps 2014

www.anserj.ca

Official journal of the
Association of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER)

Revue officielle de
l'Association de recherche sur les organismes sans but lucratif et l'économie sociale (ARES)

ANSERJ

Vol. 5, No. 1
Spring / Printemps 2014
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Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OBSL et l'économie sociale

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ÉDITORIAL / EDITORIAL

Comparaison internationale des modèles d'entreprises sociales

International Comparison of Social Enterprise Models (ICSEM)

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Plusieurs chercheurs canadiens, dont plusieurs membres d'ANSER-ARES, ont participé au congrès « 4th EMES International Research Conference on Social Enterprise » en juillet 2013 à Liège en Belgique. Leur participation était positive car, en plus des conférences intéressantes, il y a eu le lancement d'un projet de recherche international sur les entreprises sociales.

« International Comparative Social Enterprise Models » (ICSEM) est un projet d'envergure internationale visant une meilleure compréhension des entreprises sociales. Ce projet vise à développer les connaissances à propos des différents modèles d'entreprises sociales, autant celles émergentes que

It was fortunate that a significant number of Canadian researchers, many of whom are members of ANSER-ARES, attended the 4th EMES International Research Conference on Social Enterprise from July 1 to 4, 2013, in Liege, Belgium—fortunate because it was a very worthwhile conference of dedicated social enterprise researchers from around the world, and also because attendees were on hand to be part of the launch of a five-year project to map social enterprise models around the world and to measure the extent of their institutionalization.

The International Comparative Social Enterprise Models (ICSEM) Project (2013-2017) aims to build knowledge about emerging or already well-established social enterprise models across the world, following common guidelines so as to foster international comparative analysis. This worldwide research project is based on a

celles bien établies. Le projet international est un partenariat entre le réseau européen « EMES European Research Network » et le pôle belge « Interuniversity Attraction Pole on Social Enterprise » (IAP-SOCENT). Bénéficiant d'un financement de cinq ans jusqu'en 2017 par le Bureau de la politique scientifique de la Belgique, le projet est coordonné par les professeurs Jacques Defourny (CSE – Université de Liège) et Marthe Nyssens (CIRTES – Université catholique de Louvain). Le projet implique plus de 190 chercheurs provenant de plus de 50 pays. En adoptant une méthodologie commune, ceux-ci pourront aborder cette étude dans une perspective de comparaison internationale véritable, tout en conservant les particularités nationales ou régionales.

partnership between the EMES International Research Network (www.emes.net) and an Interuniversity Attraction Pole on Social Enterprise (IAP-SOCENT, www.iap-socent.be), funded by the Belgian Science Policy Bureau over five years and involving four Belgian universities. Two Belgian scholars, Jacques Defourny (Centre for Social Economy, University of Liege) and Marthe Nyssens (CIRTES, Catholic University of Louvain) act as coordinators of the ICSEM Project, which now involves over 190 researchers from some 50 countries all over the world.

Les objectifs du projet ICSEM sont:

- d'identifier et de dépeindre les principaux modèles d'entreprises sociales dans les différents pays et régions (champs d'activité, mission sociale, clientèle, modèle opérationnel, parties prenantes, cadre légal et règlementaire);
- d'analyser les relations entre ces modèles et les principaux facteurs externes qui pourraient expliquer leur développement (politiques publiques, organismes de soutien, incubateurs);
- d'examiner les rôles et contributions spécifiques des entreprises sociales dans le paysage socioéconomique global.

The objectives of the ICSEM Project are:

- to identify and characterize major models of social enterprise in the various countries and regions according to their fields of activity, social mission, target groups, operational model, stakeholders, legal framework, etc.;
- to analyze the relations between these models and major external driving or supporting forces that are likely to explain and shape their development: public policies fighting unemployment or promoting social services through quasi-markets; foundations setting up new philanthropic tools, incubators and development agencies; supporting structures, etc.;
- to examine the specific roles and contributions of such social enterprises in the overall socioeconomic landscape.

Voici les étapes permettant d'encadrer la recherche comparative dans chaque pays:

- effectuer la revue la plus exhaustive possible de la documentation sur les entreprises sociales ou les organisations pouvant être considéré comme telles;
- essayer d'établir une classification préliminaire des principaux groupes et catégories d'entreprises sociales, fondée soit sur une typologie existante ou sur l'intuition;
- identifier les principaux indicateurs ou

The ICSEM Project aims to create a worldwide database on social enterprises. To characterize major social enterprise models (Objective 1), the ICSEM Project relies on the hypothesis that data on three major dimensions would serve to highlight the diversity of such models: *the nature of the social mission or social aims, the type of economic model* and *the governance structure.* From such a perspective, a field survey has been prepared that will enable the creation of a large international database on social enterprises.

variables exprimant les caractéristiques prédominantes des différentes catégories d'entreprises sociales;
- identifier l'information manquante et effectuer une collecte de données dans chaque pays ou région pour les différentes variables identifiées;
- établir une typologie plus précise des principaux modèles d'entreprises sociales en documentant leurs caractéristiques particulières.

More precisely, every identified social enterprise model will be illustrated and analyzed through a few emblematic cases of social enterprise, which will be studied on the basis of a common set of questions focusing on the three aforementioned dimensions, to be addressed to the social enterprise's manager or a high-level staff member.

La base de données internationale des entreprises sociales sera développée en tenant compte notamment de la nature de la mission sociale, des modèles économiques et financiers, et des structures de gouvernance.

The collected data, especially on the financial structure of the social enterprise, will be used without mentioning the name of the enterprise, unless the latter has explicitly allowed the use of its name. Without such an explicit permission, all collected data will be treated anonymously.

Plusieurs chercheurs canadiens participent au projet et certains d'entre eux animeront d'ailleurs une table ronde sur les progrès accomplis au prochain congrès annuel 2014 d'ANSER-ARES. Le coordonnateur canadien est J.J. McMurtry de l'Université York. La première phase s'articule autour d'études de cas et de développements dans chaque province et territoire et tient compte des particularités au Canada, notamment celles relatives aux Premières Nations.

The ICSEM research project will rely on the participation of a large number of researchers from all regions. Canada is no exception, and a group of Canadian researchers from all parts of the country is now a part of this research project, coordinated by J.J. McMurtry of York University.

Nous espérons que ce projet ambitieux attirera des financements au niveau canadien, autant que cela se produit en Belgique. Cela permettra aux chercheurs canadiens de s'impliquer davantage dans cette communauté internationale de chercheurs.

A roundtable at the upcoming ANSER Conference will explore how the Canadian team of researchers is proposing to undertake this social-enterprise mapping exercise in Canada, following the general requirements of EMES, while also taking into account the regional, provincial, and First Nations nuances of the Canadian social-enterprise experience.

Obtenez plus d'information sur le projet au: www.iap-socent.be/icsem-project . Ou encore, assistez au congrès ANSER-ARES et apprenez directement ce qui se passe ici au Canada.

Interested in getting involved or knowing more? Please visit the ICSEM website: http://www.iap-socent.be/icsem-project . Better still, attend the ANSER conference and learn firsthand what is going on here in Canada.

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Locating a Window of Opportunity in the Social Economy: Canadians with Disabilities and Labour Market Challenges

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the labour force participation of working-age adults with disabilities, and proposes nonprofits and community agencies as sites for employing disabled Canadians. It documents employment trends over the last 15 years and how they compare to those for people without disabilities. The employment reform agenda of the Canadian disability movement is outlined as two broad approaches: distributional improvements and structural innovations. Inclusive and gainful employment is regarded as an essential part of economic and social citizenship. The challenges of labour force participation for adults with disabilities are then related to recent reports on Canada's aging population and to Harper government policies on employment for Canadians with disabilities. Finally, it explores applying a disability inclusion lens to the operations of social economy organizations.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article porte sur la participation active des adultes en âge de travailler ayant des incapacités et propose la possibilité d'organismes sans but lucratif et des organismes communautaires comme un site d'emploi pour les Canadiens handicapés. Il documente les tendances de l'emploi au cours des 15 dernières années et comment ils se comparent aux personnes non handicapées. Le programme de réformes du travail du mouvement des personnes handicapées est décrite et approches de la réforme sont dites de diviser en deux grandes catégories : des améliorations et innovations structurelles. Travail rémunéré et inclusif est considéré comme une partie essentielle de la citoyenneté économique et sociale avec le préposé aux droits et responsabilités. Les défis de la participation de la population active pour les adultes ayant une déficience sont ensuite liés aux rapports publics récents sur la population vieillissante du Canada et aux décisions prises par le gouvernement conservateur Harper sur l'emploi pour les Canadiens ayant une déficience. Apprentissage politique et connaissances transfert peut se produire en appliquant une lentille d'inclusion des personnes handicapées aux activités des organisations d'économie sociale.

Keywords / Mots clés : Disability movement; Harper government; Population aging; Public policy / Mouvement des personnes handicapées; Gouvernement Harper; Vieillissement de la population; Politiques publiques

INTRODUCTION

Canadians with disabilities are among the most marginalized individuals in the country. The labour market realities in Canada that working-age adults with physical and mental disabilities confront are daunting: they have a lower level of labour force participation and a higher level of unemployment than Canadians without disabilities, and considerable underemployment; they are more likely to experience social barriers and workplace discrimination; and they have a higher level of poverty and greater dependence on welfare than other citizens. In 2010, the labour force participation rate for people with disabilities was 57.1 percent compared to 80.5 percent for people without disabilities; and among those in the labour force, people with disabilities experienced a higher level of unemployment (11.4 versus 7.0 percent). Too often, Canadians with disabilities are segregated in sheltered workshops or day programs (Prince, 2009). They also generally lack access to the mainstream employment programs and support measures that would allow them to participate more fully in the workforce and achieve better social and economic results. Where persons with disabilities do have access to mainstream employment programs, they are also marginalized. Mainstream programs are tailored to abled individuals, and service providers desire individuals who can pass through their training in a straightforward manner, increasing their numbers of clients and, subsequently, their funding. Disabled Canadians are not getting the support they need to realistically consider gainful employment in the labour force—whether the traditional mainstream economy or the social economy—as a viable option. There is both a real urgency and an opportunity to explore new approaches for enabling hundreds of thousands of adults with disabilities to work in accessible, inclusive, and rewarding places of employment. Insofar as the current architecture of labour market policy for Canadians with disabilities is ineffective and in need of a redesign, what role can the social economy play in providing meaningful and gainful employment to persons with disabilities? Social economy is understood in broad terms to encompass alternative businesses, community economic development, social enterprises, cooperatives, and voluntary-based and community nonprofit agencies (Mook, Quarter, & Ryan, 2010; Shragge & Church, 1998; Vaillancourt & Tremblay, 2002), some of which are disability organizations that include service agencies or community businesses serving psychiatric survivors.

The primary purposes of this article are to examine the challenges of labour force participation confronting working-age adults with disabilities; and to propose and explore the possibilities of the social economy as a site of employment for disabled Canadians. The discussion is based on an analysis of federal government policy documents and reports by national disability organizations, a review of academic literature, and a reflection on 20 years of participant observations in the disability sector.[1] In broad terms, the focus is on linking the issue of Canada's aging population to recent federal policy developments on disability with nonprofits and social economy organizations. This is a topic generally unexamined in the Canadian context, so by necessity this article is in part exploratory in nature. Accordingly, the objectives of the article are to understand disability as a concept, a lived reality and social policy issue; to examine current political thinking about population aging, labour markets, and people with disabilities; and to offer some lines of research for future inquiries. The intention is to better connect research on nonprofits and the social economy with research in the field of disability studies.

To set the analytical context that follows, a number of premises and propositions can be identified. Disability is a fluid, diverse, and complex phenomenon as is the world of work and labour markets. The scope, nature, and potentiality of employment for people with disabilities are as much a political question as a matter of economic

policy. Employing people with disabilities in inclusive and rewarding work remains a large challenge and unrealized objective of economic and social policy in Canada. It will be suggested that a policy window of opportunity appears to be opening in Canada on this issue. Certain community economic development organizations—credit unions, co-operatives, nonprofits, and other social economy organizations—already play a role in employing people with disabilities, though at times, it must be acknowledged, in ways problematic to realizing real work for real pay. Thus, more can be done in research and in public programming to advance the employment of disabled Canadians in the market economy and the social economy, specifically in ways that extend and deepen the continuum of labour force participation opportunities.

The rest of the article is organized in five parts. The first introduces the concept of disability and provides some overview information on who are the disabled people in Canadian society. The second part examines labour market realities for people with disabilities—specifically employment trends over the last 15 years—and how they compare to those for people without disabilities. This part also describes the disability community's employment policy reform agenda. The third part relates the challenges of labour force participation confronting working-age adults with disabilities to recent public reports on Canada's aging population and to decisions made by the Harper government regarding employment for Canadians with disabilities. The fourth part explores the possibility of a window of opportunity, as well as a responsibility, within the social economy sector in hiring and retaining people with disabilities. It also identifies research questions that could serve as an agenda for future research collaboration between disability studies and social economy studies. The article closes by offering general observations.

CANADIANS LIVING WITH DISABILITY

In social surveys conducted by Statistics Canada, disability is often defined in terms of people with a physical condition, a mental condition, or with health problems that reduce the amount or nature of activities they can do at home, at work, at school, in transportation, in recreation and leisure, or in other community endeavours. This sort of definition represents a functional limitation or biomedical model of impairment (Neufeldt, 2003). A social environment perspective, in comparison, generally emphasizes public attitudes, built environments, service delivery systems, and social structures. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which Canada ratified in 2010, refers to people with a disability as people with "physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" (United Nations Enable, 2007, p. 2). This statement blends the functional model with a social environment perspective and the core idea of social equality or parity (Lord & Hutchison, 2007; McCreath, 2011; Rice & Prince, 2013).

A recent statement by the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) nicely conveys the diversity, and thus universality, of disability as well as something of the intersectionalities of disability with other markers of social identity.

> We are women and men, boys and girls, moms and dads, children and seniors, workers and the unemployed, students and teachers, leaders in our communities and recipients of services. We are long-time citizens and new Canadians, we are members of visible minority communities and Aboriginal and First Nations Peoples and we are people with disabilities. (2013, p. 1)

Human rights advocates, and some human rights commissions across the country, interpret disability in broad and flexible terms by taking into account not only the functional condition of an individual but also discrimination based on perceptions, stereotypes, and social constructs (Prince, 2009; Stienstra, 2012). In an intimation to aging, the CCD adds that "at some point in our lives we all will use services built and designed to make Canada more accessible and inclusive" (2013, p. 1). In this context, then, issues of disability are seen as having to do with all Canadians.

As the focus of this article is on labour force participation, this overview of disability focuses on working-age people with disabilities; that is, as typically defined in social survey research, people between the ages of 15 to 64. In 2006, people with disabilities made up 16.5 percent of the adult population (15 years and older) in Canada or nearly 4.2 million people.[2] Some 55 percent of adults with disabilities are women and 45 percent are men, compared with 51 and 49 percent, respectively, of people without disabilities. In the working-age population, people between the ages of 15 to 64 years, there were nearly 2.5 million working-age people with disabilities compared to 18.9 million working-age people without disabilities. People with disabilities represent 11 percent of the overall working-age population and, even among non-seniors, the working age-population with disabilities is a comparatively older group than those adults without disabilities. Most adults with disabilities report having three or more disabilities. The most common types of disability are pain, agility, and mobility, followed by learning, hearing, seeing, and speaking, and then psychiatric, memory, and developmental disabilities. The main causes of disabilities are an accident, collision, or injury; a disease or illness; and, then, work conditions (Furrie, 2010). In terms of severity, a majority of Canadians with disabilities report a mild (34.8 percent) to moderate (25.4 percent) disability, while a sizeable minority report a severe (26.6 percent) or very severe (13.2 percent) disability. In 2006, of the 2.5 million working-age adults with disabilities, 20.5 percent lived below the poverty line compared to 10.2 percent of people without disabilities. In fact, for disabled Canadians who are poor, social assistance, the last resort safety net program, is the primary source of income. Not surprisingly, people with a disability are far less likely to be in poverty if they are employed all year round and especially if they have full-time work. Precarious employment, however, is a common situation for many people with disabilities (Furrie, 2010; Wilton, 2006).

LABOUR MARKET REALITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In both absolute and comparative terms, people with disabilities are a significant unrealized pool of workers for the Canadian economy. The participation rate of people with disabilities (57.2 percent) is notably lower than Aboriginal peoples living off reserves (75.0 percent), recent immigrants (77.1 percent), and less-skilled Canadians with high school or less (79.0 percent), (Canada, 2012). Other labour market realities for people with disabilities include: a lower rate of labour force participation for people with disabilities compared to people without disabilities (57.1 versus 80.5 percent in 2010); a higher level of unemployment (11.4 versus 7.0 percent); more widespread underemployment; fewer weeks employed in a year (26.8 versus 39.7 in 2010); and lower average employment income than that of people without disabilities who have similar levels of education (Spector, 2012). For people with cognitive and developmental disabilities, the world of work is a community day program or sheltered workshop detached from mainstream employment. Employment preparation of a rudimentary kind may take place in adult day programs and activity centres, where the emphasis is usually on social services, recreation and leisure, and life skills training. Vocational training and support services can take place in ability centres and sheltered workshops and local employment service agencies may facilitate work experience placements for clients with disabilities. Employment continues to occur in sheltered workshops even

though the federal government ended funding for such activities more than a decade ago, to the chagrin of many in the disability community (Canadian Association for Community Living, 2012; Nova Scotia, 2008).

Furrie (2010) has looked at the employment effects of those people with disabilities in the labour force who report having experienced occasional or frequent limitations at work due to their condition. Effects included changing the amount of work done, changing the kind of work done, changing jobs, working part-time because of the condition, and being unemployed for a period. In addition, the single most common type of complaint as reported by federal and provincial human rights agencies tends to be disability related and employment related; in particular, complaints by disabled people already with a job in the workplace (see, for example, Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2012). Perceived discrimination in the workplace encompasses being refused an interview, refused a job, refused a promotion, given less responsibility, or paid less than co-workers. Other forms are being denied accommodation and denied work-related benefits. This points to challenges of negative public attitudes and actions (Burge, Ouellette, Kuntz, & Lysaght, 2007; Canada, 2013; McCreath, 2011), barriers to employment searches (Cohen, Goldberg, Istvanffy, Stainton, Wask, & Woods, 2008), unequal power relations (Chouinard & Crooks, 2005), unmet needs for job accommodations, and other policy and practice hurdles at workplaces facing people with disabilities (Church, Frazee, Panitch, Luciani, & Bowman, 2007).

Recent employment trends

In the recession of the early 1990s, the employment rate gap between people with disabilities and people without disabilities widened from 30.7 percent in 1991 to 34.8 percent in 1996. As economic growth resumed and continued through the later 1990s into the mid-2000s, the employment rate gap between adults with disabilities and adults without disabilities narrowed, declining from to 23.1 percent in 2001 to 20.5 percent in 2006. The participation rate of people with disabilities grew more over that period than that of people without disabilities. Full-time, year-round employment for people with disabilities generally increased over this period as well. In 2007 and 2008, the full-time, year-round employment levels of people with disabilities began to decline, while those for people without disabilities did not (Crawford, 2012). For employed persons with disabilities, the number of weeks worked in a year dropped from a high of 28.3 weeks in 2006 to 26.8 weeks in 2010. By comparison, for employed people with no disability, the number of weeks worked in a year was unaffected over this period, holding at 39.7 weeks in 2010. Furthermore, the number of hours worked by people with a disability dropped by 2010, reversing the gains made in the period before the most recent recession (Spector, 2012).

There is also a gender dimension to these employment patterns. “From 1999 to 2006, the proportion of men with a disability employed throughout the year grew more (from 48 to 56 percent) than the proportion of men without a disability (73 to 75 percent). For women with a disability, the increase (39 to 46 percent) was slightly more than for women not reporting a disability (61 to 65 percent)”(Garlarneau and Radulescu, 2009, p. 7). In short, some Canadian men and women with disabilities certainly did benefit from economic growth, in terms of an overall increase in the labour participation and employment rates and an accompanying decline in the unemployment rate. Research indicates that the full-time, year-round employment levels for people with disabilities began to decline in 2007 and 2008, but not for people without disabilities (Crawford, 2012).

To summarize these employment trends over the last few decades: in the economic expansion of the late 1990s to about 2006, people with disabilities made notable gains. At the threshold of the major recession and during the Canadian economy’s subsequent fragile recovery, the overall gains made by people with disabilities in the labour force were eroded. During the same period, there was no parallel decline in weeks worked in a year for people without disabilities (Spector, 2012).

The disability movement's employment agenda

Like other modern social movements, the Canadian disability movement includes service agencies, overall interest associations, and wider socio-political coalitions with policy agendas that address various concerns and express certain positions on public issues (Prince, 2009; Quarter, 1992; Quarter, Mook, & Armstrong, 2009). As is apparent from the analysis so far presented, employment issues of central concern to the Canadian disability movement are threefold: first, the *disabling* attitudes, built environments, public policies, and professional practices; second, the high proportion of people with disabilities receiving exclusionary day programs or activity services that do not offer employment supports and authentic employment placement options; third, the long-term unemployment and the chronic and pervasive poverty experienced by most adults with disabilities. Disability movement leaders worry that without more sustained and robust public policy actions, the Canadian labour force could well become more exclusionary, not less, driven by technological developments and such practices as outsourcing work, which sees a corresponding decline in common networks of employees. For most working-age adults with disabilities, however, there is a profound refusal to accept structural exclusion as a dismal fact of life.

The employment vision for people with disabilities is captured in the slogan "real work for real pay." As outlined in Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, this means work on an equal basis with others in the community; work freely chosen or accepted in the labour market; work in open and inclusive settings with reasonable accommodations in the job and/or workplace when and where required. Other international and national documents speak of decent and productive work for everyone in equitable conditions that promote choice, security, and human dignity. That is to say, work that is meaningful to the individual, valued by others, and remunerated at the industry or sector standard; work where employees with disabilities enjoy the same rights as other employees and are equally protected by legislated employment and safety standards.

For many Canadians with disabilities and their allies, gainful employment is regarded as an essential part of economic and social citizenship with its attendant rights and responsibilities, including the right to take responsible risks. Of course an earned income is a cherished result, but employment for people with disabilities, as for other Canadians, is about more than getting a paycheque. At its best, the workplace is viewed as a site of making contributions, having a routine, and connecting with other people, combined with experiencing a sense of belonging and positive sense of self. The workplace can also be a place of learning and of teaching others about issues of disability and, as a result, about shifting attitudes and reformulating relationships (Canada, 2013; Church, Frazee, Panitch, Luciani, & Bowman, 2007).

For the disability movement in Canada, the workplace is a target of politicization; an arena for contesting the pattern of prevailing employment practices and the relative absence of other preferred employment options. Disability activists and supporters are critical of volunteer placements and unpaid work experiences counting as employment in provincial government labour programs; they are also critical of the continued reliance on sheltered workshops and work enclaves, and of the underinvestment in supported employment measures (McCreath, 2011; Wilton, 2006). Employment options preferred by the disability movement include so-called open or competitive employment in the market economy, customized employment, supported employment, and self-employment (Canadian Association of Community Living, 2012; Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society, 2013). Supported employment is paid and meaningful work in the labour market obtained and maintained with appropriate supports, such as equipment or job coaching assistance.

Social economy organizations, broadly understood, also provide positive employment opportunities for people with disabilities. "Removing Barriers to Work," a study by Marcy Cohen, Michael Goldberg, Nick Istvanffy, Tim Stainton, Adrienne Wasik, and Karen-Marie Woods (2008), provides insights into seven social enterprises in BC that employ people with disabilities. Three of the social enterprises employ people with mental illnesses, that is, mental health consumers; two enterprises employ people with developmental disabilities; and two employ a mixed disability population, largely people with undiagnosed mental illness and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The oldest of these social enterprises was established in 1990, while the others were formed between 2001 and 2005. Cohen and her associates found that, "most were founded by small groups of dedicated individuals who were determined to move beyond service provision to a social enterprise business model in order to provide paid employment to their clients" (2008, p. 35).[3] Most of the employees work part-time and in 2006 earned $8 to $10 per hour. The nature of these businesses include lawn and property maintenance; demolition and snow removal; a café, catering, and contract meals; flyer collation for a local newspaper; and janitorial services. Most of the enterprises are affiliated with a larger organization, such as a local foundation, community services society, or a disability or mental health association. These affiliates provide support with human resources and counselling services for employees. The study frankly notes a limitation of the social enterprise sector in the employment of people with disabilities: "The stated social purpose of some social enterprises may be the generation of revenue for social programming provided by an affiliated agency or organization. These social enterprises are more likely to employ workers from the mainstream labour marker who can work full-time, full-year and who do not require significant accommodations or social supports due to a disability" (Cohen et al, 2008, p. 60).

Employment policy reform approaches divide into two broad types: *distributional improvements* and *structural innovations*. Distributional improvements are about increasing labour force participation rates, augmenting training opportunities, and improving the wage levels and occupational benefits for workers. A number of the social enterprises examined by Cohen (2008) represent this approach, offering employment opportunities for seven to 57 people with disabilities, along with general manager and site supervisor roles. In comparison, structural innovations are about changing prevailing beliefs about and attitudes toward people with disabilities and their work capacity, in addition to constructing accessible and inclusive workplaces in the mainstream and social economies. Within the mental health recovery and psychiatric survivor movement, social economy organizations administered by individuals who consume mental health services, consumer-run organizations in other words, are examples of structural innovation creating spaces of democratic engagement and solidarity (Shragge & Church, 1998).

In a submission to a federal parliamentary committee, the CCD advances an employment agenda that encompass both distributional and structural reform ideas (Council of Canadians with Disabilities, 2013). The CCD recommends as a priority that new government investments be directed at youth with disabilities, those between 18 to 30 years of age, in transitions from school to work. In addition, for people with more complex needs, for example those with multiple and very severe disabilities, a range of longer-term supports must be provided. The CCD further recommends that the federal government lead by example as a model employer, which would include ensuring appropriate accommodations are in place for people with disabilities; taking more action with respect to human rights complaints; and considering affirmative action measures, such as wage subsidies and tax credits for employers in order to create stronger employment incentives for hiring and retaining workers with disabilities. The message here is that any employment strategy for people with disabilities must focus not only on expanding participation in the mainstream labour force but also enhancing innovation in workplace cultures and practices.

RECENT POLICY THINKING ON CANADA'S AGING POPULATION, THE LABOUR FORCE, AND DISABILITY

Canada's population is aging; it will continue to do so for the next several decades and will soon accelerate. This demographic trend means a number of things for the general issue of people with disability, as well as particular issue of people with disability participating in the labour force. There is the haunting question in the minds of aging parents of fully-grown children with an intellectual disability, a severe physical impairment, or who are deemed medically fragile: who will care for our children? There is the epidemiological reality that with age, the prevalence and severity of disability rises. As the population ages, the working-age share of the population will shrink. An aging work force, in addition, likely means the number of people that become disabled while working will increase. This raises questions about job retention—staying at work following the onset of impairment or a condition—and questions about job re-entry—returning to work after a disability-related absence. What is recent policy thinking at the national level on these sorts of issues?

A federal government report, "Economic and Fiscal Implications of Canada's Aging Population," states that according to projections by the federal government, the overall labour force participation rate has already peaked and will decline over the next thirty years (Canada, 2012). This report is primarily a macro-level economic analysis on issues of productivity and public finances, though with some traces of social policy considerations. Labour shortages are predicted to occur most likely in varied ways in different sectors and locations and at different times. However, shortages may specifically develop, and policy analysts see people with disabilities as a significant unrealized pool of workers for the Canadian economy. This report recognizes that increasing the workforce participation of these underrepresented groups has the capability to boost Canada's labour force growth in the coming years (Canada, 2012). This report acknowledges that there is room for improving Canada's workforce participation rate and that government can play an important role, especially for groups underrepresented in the labour force, through programs that support skills development and training. While it is assumed that most of this labour force growth will take place in the market economy, the social economy can make a contribution although, in the current policy orientation of the Harper government, it is uncertain how significant a role.

In a similar fashion, another federal government study, "Rethinking disAbility in the Private Sector," observes that despite an aging population and impending labour shortage, the talent pool of people with disabilities is being ignored (Canada, 2013). This report, crafted by a panel of four representatives from business and non-governmental organizations, was directed at Canadian private-sector employers. The report points out that there are about 795,000 working-aged people with disabilities who are not working and who want to work, and that of these people, 340,000 have some level of post-secondary education. The report makes a business case—perhaps the most explicit to date by the federal government—for employing people with disabilities. Benefits identified for business firms include an educated and talented group of workers; improved company culture and reputation among the public; greater employee loyalty and commitment; lower turnover rates, thus reducing costs of training new employees; and more effective marketing to customer demographics of people with disabilities. That employers are not already doing this on a widespread scale, is an indication of present challenges and shows that attitudinal changes are still required. It also suggests that legislated change may be required to break through these barriers.

In "Rethinking disAbility in the Private Sector," mention is made of social enterprises and nonprofits, not as employers, however, but rather as community partners in helping Canadian businesses plan for hiring people with disabilities. This approach reflects the fact that in most communities in Canada there is no single agency at the local level to assist employers in navigating employment service provider systems. There tend to be multiple disability groups and agencies in urban communities, which certainly present a complex and fragmented landscape. Consequently, private-sector employers do not have a good idea of who to contact or where to send job postings if they wanted to recruit from a pool of qualified people with disabilities. At times, huge gaps exist between what employers expect from an applicant and what a person with a disability can do on the job, particularly if there are not supports readily available at the workplace.[4]

Federal government measures on disability and employment

So far, this discussion on policy thinking has looked at two reports as illustrations of the ideas and analyses being expressed by the federal government in regards to Canada's aging population, labour force, and disability. We now turn to recent federal government initiatives announced by the Harper government, specifically a set of measures relating to people with disabilities and employment. On a suggestion coming from the "Rethinking disAbility in the Private Sector" report, the Harper government affirmed in the 2013 federal budget a one-time investment of $2 million to support the creation of a Canadian Employers Disability Forum "to bring greater private sector attention to the employment needs of Canadians with disabilities." Also in the 2013 budget, the government stated that**:** 1) $7 million is earmarked for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for research on disability and work; 2) the Enabling Accessibility Fund to improve the physical accessibility of community facilities is to become an ongoing program of $15 million per year as of 2013–2014; and 3) the Opportunities Fund, an employment preparation program for people not eligible for services funded under the Employment Insurance system, is also to be an ongoing program with $40 million per year as of 2015–2016. The government indicated that the program design of the Opportunities Fund will be adjusted to provide more demand-driven training service in order to be more responsive to local labour market needs.[5] A real challenge facing disability organizations and others in the social economy and voluntary sector of Canada**,** however, is their capacity to deliver innovative labour market programs. As Mario Levesque (2012) shows in a study of Canadian disability organizations in five provinces between 2005–2010, these organizations often lack the human, financial, and technological resources, and, most crucially, the core operating funds to undertake innovative employment programming.

Furthermore, in 2014–2015 the Harper government is introducing a new set of Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities, a cost-shared program of approximately $222 million per year with the provinces. With no new federal money added to the agreement, the Harper government's stated aim to better ensure that the employment needs of businesses are met under these intergovernmental agreements seems problematic, especially in view of a history of funding constraints (Graefe & Levesque, 2010). The 2014 federal budget announced a few targeted and modest measures on employment for certain categories of people with disabilities; specifically, $11.4 million over four years to support job training for people with autism spectrum disorder, and $15 million over three years for initiatives to connect employers with youth and working-age adults with developmental disabilities. These measures indicate a modicum of political will exercised by federal policy makers, a robust vision of full participation for all Canadians with disabilities is still absent (Levesque & Graefe, 2013).

In these federal reports and in other studies (Askari, Bartlett, Cameron, & Lao, 2013; Ramlo & Berlin, 2006) we see evidence of demographic aging as a "guiding paradigm" in the thinking of Canadian public policy advisors

and decision makers (McDaniel, 1987). More than that, demographic aging is framed in large part as a threat, with projected dangers of labour market shortages, diminished productivity, and increased burdens on public finances. At the same time, people with disabilities and other groups underrepresented in the workforce (Aboriginal peoples, youth, and new immigrants) are identified as an untapped pool of human resources for the market economy. In recent measures by the Harper government, the stated goals are a mix of general ideas and specific aims, and the definition of the issue of employment for people with disabilities emphasizes the demand-side of the economy, addressing the needs of businesses and the immediate requirements of the competitive labour market. (A supply-side approach to labour market policy tends to focus on the long-term unemployed, and targeting assistance on disadvantaged groups by investing in their employability and drawing on community-based resources as well as business firms.) The policy instruments deployed by the Harper Conservatives through the Canadian Employers Disability Forum are mainly procedural in nature**,** and involve minimal incremental spending commitments. In sum, these initiatives by the federal government only address the goals of the disability community in Canada to a very modest extent.

A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY FOR THE SOCIAL ECONOMY

Nonprofits, social enterprises, and other third-sector organizations are of great consequence in the lives of many Canadians with disabilities, supporting them materially through the provision of vital goods and services, enabling social connections, and promoting a measure of well-being in rural and urban communities across provinces (Friesen, Alasia, & Bollam, 2010; Rice & Prince, 2013; Vaillancourt & Tremblay, 2002). Some nonprofits and social enterprises are also important places of employment for people with disabilities (Cohen et al., 2008; Lee, 2013; Mader & Conn, 2003; IRIS 2013). However, it must be conceded that many nonprofits, charities, and community service agencies reproduce paternalistic and medical models of disability, limiting a human rights discourse and an agenda of equality and full citizenship for people with disabilities (Lord & Hutchison, 2007; McCreath, 2011; Prince, 2009; Wilton, 2006). In any case, there is good reason to look at the social economy as a site for greater employment opportunities for disabled Canadians.

In the context of recent policy reports on the Canadian labour force and disability, along with program funding announcements by the Harper government, there appears to be a window of opportunity for the social economy. To be precise, there appear to be openings for nonprofits and social enterprises to participate in various ways and at various levels in the design and delivery of the new Canadian Employers Disability Forum, the Enabling Accessibility Fund, the Opportunities Fund, the SSHRC funding for research related to the labour market participation of people with disabilities, and possibly the new generation of Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities. Opportunities for third-sector engagement in this sector of policy and governance could be in both the co-construction of policy and in the co-production of programs and services. Questions of strategy for disability organizations and for social economy organizations therefore arise: How to shape issue definitions? Which proposals to put forward to gain the attention of policy makers? Where to focus time and energy, and how to decide which issues to focus on? Such questions offer a space of shared interests and a potential coalition-building opportunity for disability and social economy researchers and practitioners.

The case for social economy organizations employing people with disabilities can be made on several grounds or types of logic. These include growing the economy; promoting progressive cultural change and policy learning and diffusion; and building social capital. The economic argument, which is the line of reasoning in the federal reports discussed earlier in this article, relates to expanding the employment opportunities for underrepresented groups in the labour market. The intended outcomes are to boost the incomes of Canadians with disabilities and to improve productivity growth of the market economy. There is no reason that this basic

argument cannot be extended to refer to social enterprises and other social economy organizations that engage in the production and exchange of goods and services. Our thinking on employment for people with disabilities must extend beyond the conventional opportunities in the competitive market—which do not offer adequate accommodations and supports—and the segregated sector of sheltered workshops and job enclaves. Consumer-run businesses, community-based nonprofits, and local social firms are places where people can develop their human capacities and function as co-operative producers of the material means of life (Macpherson, 1985; Mook, Quarter & Ryan, 2010; Vaillancourt & Tremblay, 2002).

Other arguments for social economy organizations employing people with disabilities include the critical task of dispelling myths and unwarranted concerns about the limitations and risks of hiring persons with a disability, at root, ableism. Elsewhere, I have written on the prevailing sentiment in Canada on disability as one of ambivalence, with an odd mixture of positive and negative attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, experiences, and behaviours.

At a systemic or personal level, ableism can encompass silencing, segregation or exclusion, marginalization, denial, neglect, violence and abuse, and poverty based on one or more disability. Power, prestige, and privilege in society—all features central to social stratification, are distributed based on prevailing notions of ability and normalcy, thus downgrading the status of persons with disabilities. (Prince, 2009, pp. 70–71)

Social economy organizations usefully participate in the project of enabling citizenship when they deconstruct the dominant image of the "disabled person" as someone with a visible, long-term physical impairment, and they pluralize the image with the realities of diverse forms of disablements and capacities. Employment in forward-thinking social enterprises offers skills development, on-the-job training, mentorship, and perhaps employment assistance and counselling (Lee, 2013; Mader & Conn, 2003). Such activities undoubtedly contribute to social capital, as well as human capital, through the forging of ties and networks of trust and support. Nurtured are the core human values of "self-respect, being esteemed by one's fellows, having some control over one's own life and choices, and the sense of belonging to some community with a shared sense of value" (Macpherson, 1985, p. 50). As Eric Shragge and Kathryn Church have observed of community economic development practices in Montreal and Toronto: "Community businesses are a site for learning, participation, and solidarity. Employees acquire new skills, broader interests, and coping strategies. They act as decision-makers in business management and become connected to a social movement. Many were moving for the first time from virtual isolation into positive association with others who shared their life experience" (1998, p. 42).

Among networks of nonprofits, community-based agencies, and co-operatives, policy and practice learning on employment can be encouraged. To ensure that social economy organizations are an advance over sheltered workshops, and do not become another form of enclave employment for some people with disabilities, certain questions need to be fairly debated and openly addressed. At a local level, what do the activities of individual nonprofits say about disability? Do their actions provide inclusive spaces and positive images around disability and diversity, or reproduce traditional attitudes and barriers? At the sectoral level, what is the responsibility of the social economy as a sector for fostering the access, participation, and human rights of people with disabilities? Information and experiences on issues, solutions, and the results of hiring and retaining people with a disability can be shared, along with lessons and promising practices. More systematic policy learning and knowledge transfer can occur by applying a disability access and inclusion lens (Prince, 2009) to the operations of social economy organizations. A disability lens prompts several questions: How accessible is the workplace of a nonprofit, for example, physically and attitudinally? Is there a policy on inclusive practices concerning

accessibility, disability, and equity and, if so, on what matters? How do such policies actually work and are they monitored to ensure effective implementation? Are there organizational processes in place for regular reviews and discussions on these policies and practices? At the provincial or national level or in a given sector of the social economy, what mechanisms and processes are in place, or might be envisaged to be established, to foster the adoption of effective inclusive practices for employment and other aspects of governance?

CONCLUSION

This article has argued for the idea that social economy sector organizations can become a more significant pathway to gainful employment for many Canadians with disabilities. A preliminary exploration has been made of the relationship of people with disabilities to the labour market and the social economy. In today's world of work, there are several labour markets for people with disabilities (and other disadvantaged groups in Canada); some are more accessible and desirable than others. Those labour markets most available are often less than desirable, and those most preferred are often the least available, especially to people with severe disabilities. Compared to Canadians without disabilities, we know that Canadians with disabilities are less likely to be employed, less likely to work full-time or to work year-round; and that Canadians with disabilities are more likely to have lower pay and fewer promotions, and are more likely to experience discrimination at work and to live in lower-income households. Evidence presented indicates that gains made by Canadians with disabilities in the labour market outcomes in the 1990s and early 2000s were largely lost due to the 2008–2009 economic recession.

Employment in today's capitalist market economy is not possible for all persons with disabilities, nor is it necessarily the labour market of choice for many people with or without disability.[6] This article has shown that the Canadian disability movement has preferences for certain work environments and misgivings about others. The 165,000 or more nonprofits and other social economy organizations in Canada represent an important employment option for many people living with disabilities. In recent public policy reports and disability policy announcements by the Harper government, the social economy is insufficiently recognized as a valuable sector or partner (Rice & Prince, 2013). Nonetheless, links between social economy research and activities and disability studies and advocacy can be strengthened to mobilize on shared interests and reform ideas. Nonprofits, co-operatives, and social enterprises are one option along a spectrum of strategies for enhancing the labour force participation of Canadians with disabilities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article is based on a keynote address to the Association of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research at the 2013 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences held at the University of Victoria on June 5, 2013. I thank Peter R. Elson and Jack Quarter for the opportunity to present and for their encouragement in converting that set of speaking notes into an academic article. I also wish to acknowledge the thoughtful suggestions of the three reviewers, which greatly improved the article.

NOTES

1. My involvement in the Canadian disability community is largely with the community living movement and the disability rights movement, along with participation in academic programs and research institutes in

universities. I do include "mental illness" and the mad movement as part of "disability." For research available from that community see LeFrançois, Menzies, & Reaume (2013). The term "mad studies," "embrace[s] the body of knowledge that has emerged from psychiatric survivors, Mad-identified people, antipsychiatry academic sand activists, critical psychiatrists, and radial therapists" (LeFrançois, Menzies, & Reaume, 2013, p. 337). This growing and reclaimed body of knowledge "is critical of the mental health system" while generally approving of the psychiatric survivor and mental health consumer movements.

2. In this article, when discussing disability in Canada, we are usually talking about people who have self-identified as such in a Statistics Canada survey (2008). The main source used here is the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, which was conducted after the census in 2006.
3. Community businesses may follow similar patterns of formation. Shragge and Church describe psychiatric survivor-run community economic development entities as follows: "Community businesses are started very simply, by getting a few people together to learn about each other's skills and generate ideas. Development proceeds through practical problem-solving; organizational structures are sufficiently flexible to accommodate employee needs. Survivor-run businesses make use of peer rather than professional training and skills development. ... Participatory management is a key feature, accomplished through board membership (at least 50%) and affirmative hiring" (1998, p. 40).
4. These remarks are based on confidential interviews and conversations, as well as on participant observations.
5. The Opportunities Fund does have limitations. While important, the monies are very small. Any projects funded need to include at least three provinces, which largely negates applications from smaller groups in a single province. Moreover, the criteria for its focus on innovative projects means that renewed funding for the same project is not possible, which is difficult for persons with disabilities given that their programs are not mainstream to begin with. I thank one of the reviewers for this insight.
6. Shragge and Church conclude: "Community economic development by itself cannot replace macro-economic and fiscal policies as tools to address the crisis of jobs and poverty" (1998, p. 43). They are optimistic, though, that economic development can be redefined "as a public rather than a private process—one in which the community sector should have a voice." Since making this observation both Shragge and Church have made significant contributions to the study of community economic development in numerous publications. Gainful employment of whatever kind is not the full or universal solution, certainly for people with severe, multiple, and complex impairments. Other forms of belonging and contribution must be nurtured. Policy actions on income benefits and personal supports, among other measures, are critical for reducing the disproportionate poverty of Canadians with disabilities (Prince, 2009).

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ANSERJ
Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OBSL et l'économie sociale

Vol. 5, No 1
Spring / Printemps, 2014
pp. 21 – 40

De la vision à l'action : la performance dans les enterprises d'insertion du Québec

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RÉSUMÉ

Les entreprises d'insertion, nées au début des années 1980, sont des acteurs d'économie sociale ayant une mission d'insertion socioprofessionnelle de divers groupes (jeunes et femmes notamment). Dans cet article, nous exposons les enjeux de gestion de la performance et illustrons comment les entreprises d'insertion sont amenées à une hybridation de la performance, tentant d'assurer la productivité tout en respectant leur mission sociale, soit celle de formation et d'insertion professionnelle. La recherche repose sur des entretiens menés auprès des responsables et employés de neuf entreprises d'insertion au Québec.

ABSTRACT

Work integration social enterprises (WISE), born in the 1980s, are actors in the social-economy field whose mission is the socio-professional integration of various groups (youth and women, notably). In this article, we present the challenges of performance management for such organizations, which have to realize a sort of hybridization, as they have to simultaneously ensure production and productivity while fulfilling their social mission, which consists of training and professional integration. The research for this article was based on interviews with the managers and workers of nine social enterprises in Québec.

Keywords / Mots clés : Économie sociale; Entreprises d'insertion; Formation professionnelle; Performance / Social economy; Work integration social enterprises; Vocational training; Performance

INTRODUCTION

Les entreprises d'insertion sont des acteurs d'économie sociale avec une mission d'insertion socioprofessionnelle. Nées au début des années 1980, elles se sont multipliées et ont développé encore plus leurs activités dans les années 1990, quand une nouvelle génération d'entreprises, de nature plus technologique, est apparue dans des secteurs nouveaux.

Les entreprises d'insertion répondent à des besoins de formation et d'accompagnement de personnes en sérieuses difficultés d'intégration au marché du travail et très touchées par des phénomènes tels que la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale. Elles sont envisagées comme entreprises « passerelle » pour offrir aux (jeunes[1]) travailleurs en formation un parcours d'une durée moyenne de 26 semaines, « qui leur permet d'acquérir des habiletés et des connaissances spécifiques et transférables, tout en leur apportant un soutien et un accompagnement dans leur démarche d'intégration sociale et professionnelle » (http://www.collectif.qc.ca/). Ainsi, en plus de transferts de connaissances techniques, elles offrent aux participants un accompagnement psychosocial.

Ces initiatives, développées initialement à l'échelle des communautés locales, souvent de manière spontanée, ont été au fil du temps accréditées et reconnues par l'État, notamment par Emploi Québec. Pour être reconnues comme entreprises d'insertion, il faut satisfaire sept critères établis par le Collectif des entreprises d'insertion et reconnus par le gouvernement du Québec[2]: mission d'insertion sociale; caractéristiques des participants en difficulté; statut de salariés pour les travailleurs en formation; accompagnement personnalisé; formation globale (personnelle, sociale et technique); partenariat avec les acteurs de milieu; statut de véritable entreprise.

Par ailleurs, comme cela s'observe aussi en Europe (Meyer 2009; Austin, Gutierrez, Ogliastri 2006; Crutzen et Mouchamps 2011), outre la gestion et coordination des tâches d'insertion, les entreprises d'insertion interviennent dans le marché du travail « réel » (et non en marge de celui-ci) et se trouvent donc en compétition avec d'autres entreprises de nature plus commerciale. Comme toute entreprise, leurs gestionnaires doivent donc gérer des ressources humaines, matérielles et financières, et commercialiser les biens ou services qu'elles produisent en regard des normes de qualité propres à leur secteur d'activité.

Outre les coûts de formation et d'insertion socioprofessionnelle, pris en charge par le gouvernement (Emploi Québec) à travers des ententes, tous les autres aspects liés à l'activité économique et à l'existence même de l'entreprise doivent être financés par des revenus auto-générés. Pour toutes ces raisons, les entreprises d'insertion doivent aussi être économiquement performantes.

Comme l'ont souligné Nyssens et Defourny (2012) pour le cas européen, l'économie sociale — dont les entreprises d'insertion font partie — est soumise à plusieurs sources de tensions, et ceci vaut pour le Québec aussi. Pour Nyssens et Defourny (2012 p. 19), la première source de tension passe par un conflit entre la mission sociale et la rationalité instrumentale du marché qui vise une maximisation du profit :

> With the increase of contracting-out practices on the part of states for the provision of public services, new or hybrid types of organisation are appearing and are often characterised as social enterprises. The strict regulation and supervision that the state imposes on these organisations explain why the latter are located close to the public sector. However, these organisations also have obvious links with the market, as recent reforms foster market principles and competition, which creates another source of tensions (Hulgård 2010). (Nyssens et Defourny 2012, p. 19)

Une autre tension s'insère, selon ces auteurs, dans la coexistence entre le formel (travailleurs professionnels et salariés) et l'informel (bénévoles).

Pour conclure, comme l'observent Nyssens et Defourny (2012, p. 20), « Those various behavioural tensions tend to give a polyvalent and hybrid nature to social enterprises, which must act under the influence of and are dependent on different logics—this, in extreme cases, resulting in organisational transformation ». Dans cette perspective, nous constatons que se pose pour les entreprises d'insertion un problème de double performance : en fait, elles « répondent simultanément à un objectif de performance économique et sociale. La quête de cette double performance provoque une "tension" qui génère des pratiques managériales originales, notamment dans la gestion des ressources humaines » (Meyer 2009, p. 1).

Dans cet article, nous voulons nous concentrer sur les enjeux de gestion de la performance au sein des entreprises d'insertion. Notre but n'est pas de mesurer ou d'évaluer la performance de chaque entreprise d'insertion, mais plutôt de comprendre la spécificité de leur vision de la performance et le modèle de gestion des ressource humaines, en nous fondant surtout sur la perception des gestionnaires, les liens avec leur pratique et les mesures qu'ils mettent en œuvre afin d'assurer la productivité dans ce contexte particulier, tout en respectant leur mission sociale. Notre objectif est plus précisément de comprendre comment les entreprises d'insertion du Québec arrivent à assurer une performance économique adéquate qui permet la survie des entreprises, alors que leur mission officielle est celle de la formation et de l`insertion socioprofessionnelle et qu'une partie de leur financement y est lié. Étant donné les défis majeurs auxquels les entreprises d'insertion doivent faire face, nous voulons identifier les mécanismes et les actions qu'elles mettent en place pour conjuguer leur double mission d'insertion socioprofessionnelle et d'activité économique, la mission d'insertion ne pouvant être atteinte que si l'entreprise est économiquement performante et donc viable.

Cet article repose sur trois parties principales : tout d'abord un cadre théorique dans lequel nous allons aborder la question de la performance dans une perspective générale et exposer un modèle, celui de l'hybridation, qui pourrait mieux s'adapter à notre cas des entreprises d'insertion. Ensuite, après l'explication méthodologique, une section examinera la réalité quotidienne des entreprises d'insertion, à partir de laquelle émerge clairement ce besoin de conciliation entre une performance sociale typique des entreprises d'insertion et une autre, propre à toutes les activités économiques. Enfin, la troisième partie visera tout d'abord à repérer cette vision de la performance propre aux entreprises d'insertion pour observer ensuite comment celle-ci peut avoir un impact sur les mesures et actions afin d'assurer et améliorer la performance.

LE CADRE THEORIQUE

La performance est une construction complexe qui se définit de différentes façons selon les valeurs, la formation, le statut et l'expérience des évaluateurs (Morin, Guindon, Boulianne 1996). Il n'y a donc pas de définition unique de la performance; plutôt, elle change selon le modèle organisationnel, les valeurs des gestionnaires, le secteur d'activité, etc. Morin, Savoie et Boudin (1994) ont identifié quatre dimensions de la performance : la pérennité de l'organisation, l'efficacité économique, la légitimité de l'organisation en relation aux groupes externes et la valeur des ressources humaines.

En ce qui concerne le premier élément, nous l'interprétons tout simplement comme la capacité de l'entreprise à survivre dans le temps et à pouvoir continuer son activité. Dans le cas des entreprises d'insertion il s'agit donc de mener l'activité de production pour pouvoir aussi continuer l'activité de formation. En fait, comme l'indiquent clairement les gestionnaires, sans une activité économique viable il n'y aurait pas tout le volet de formation financé par l'acteur public.

L'efficacité économique, un concept également lié à la pérennité de l'organisation, est aussi fondamentale et renvoie à la valeur ajoutée qui est un des objectifs majeurs d'une organisation (Morin *et al*. 1996).
Le concept de performance comprend aussi la légitimité de l'organisation en lien avec les groupes externes. Pour les entreprises d'insertion, être reconnues comme des interlocuteurs légitimes et crédibles est en effet un des éléments fondamentaux; elles doivent l'être aux yeux des instances gouvernementales (Emploi Québec), de la clientèle en formation et aussi des clients commerciaux.

La performance dépend en outre de la valeur des ressources humaines et de l'organisation, ce qui englobe les relations humaines et professionnelles. Dans le cas particulier des entreprises d'insertion, gérer les ressources humaines renvoie à un contexte particulièrement complexe. D'un côté, il y a les employés réguliers : les intervenants, les formateurs, les employés non formateurs (impliqués seulement dans la production). De l'autre, il y a les stagiaires en formation, qui sont des travailleurs mais tout d'abord des clients du service d'insertion. Si l'on tient compte de la mission des entreprises d'insertion et des caractéristiques de ses travailleurs, on peut comprendre que la gestion des ressources humaines et le modèle de performance qui en découle soient propres à ce type d'activité.

Il ne faut pas sous-estimer l'influence que le profil des travailleurs peut avoir sur leur performance et sur la production. Ainsi, surtout au début de leur parcours, les stagiaires présentent des caractéristiques peu compatibles avec la recherche de performance (CEIQ 2011), alors que ce critère est généralement nécessaire pour assurer l'existence d'un acteur économique sur le marché. De ce fait, les entreprises d'insertion doivent forcément emprunter des outils de gestion propres au marché classique, mais doivent les combiner et les adapter à leur mission, au profil de leurs travailleurs en formation, comme aux valeurs de l'économie sociale (Meyer 2009; Laville et Nyssens 2001). Il y a donc une forme de cohabitation de valeurs et d'outils organisationnels typiques de l'économie sociale mais aussi des entreprises classiques.

Dans la suite de cette section, après avoir exposé rapidement des visions différentes du concept de performance, telles que celle de l`école managériale classique, le courant des relations humaines et le modèle néo-participatif, nous allons nous concentrer sur la notion d'hybridation des modèles de performance. Celle-ci nous semble utile pour traiter de la performance dans les entreprises d'insertion. Comme l'observent Gadille et Jaujard, « Il convient alors de chercher à comprendre comment ces modèles peuvent se combiner dans la pratique des acteurs de l'entreprise pour mieux saisir les points de tension et de dissonance dans les situations et les collectifs de travail » (2012 p. 17).

Cette notion d'hybridation nous permet d'éviter une conception duale qui oppose d'un côté le pôle marchand et de l'autre le pôle non-marchand. Dans ce sens, les études sur l'économie sociale et solidaire ont largement démontré, au Canada comme en Europe (Caillé et Laville 2007; Defourny 2005; Lévesque et Mendell 2005), que ces organismes représentent une sorte de troisième voie, là où le pôle marchand répond essentiellement au marché (même si aujourd'hui de façon moins exclusive) et le non-marchand fait plus référence aux formes de réciprocité. Le concept d'entreprise sociale « souligne combien l'innovation sociale implique souvent la prise de risques économiques et que l'entrepreneuriat, si important à promouvoir dans des régions en redéploiement, peut s'exprimer dans des formes plurielles » (Defourny 2005 p. 21).

Pour en revenir aux modèles classiques à partir desquels se fait cette hybridation, le premier est celui de l'école managériale classique, pour laquelle l'individu doit s'adapter au poste de travail, à ses tâches et à ses attentes. Il existe donc une « norme » qui permet de juger le travail accompli par chaque travailleur (Bosquet 1969, cité dans Gadille et Jaujard 2012), dans un contexte qui rappelle clairement celui de la production de masse, où le travail à la

chaîne nécessite une comparaison objective pour être jugé. Une variante de cette vision, plus adaptée aux contextes d'innovation, est celle de l'école néoclassique (Drucker 1954; Gadille et Jaujard 2012), qui envisage une gestion par objectifs, ceux-ci ne fonctionnant pas seulement comme des buts, mais aussi comme des limites que le travailleur est invité à dépasser. En fait, ce modèle présente une tension continue vis-à-vis des objectifs, qui mènent le sujet à s'engager avec une prise de risque individuelle, mais en restant dans un fort degré de formalisation et de prescription. En même temps, le contrôle de l'employeur est constant et s'appuie sur des critères plus ou moins standardisés. Il y a dans cette approche une contradiction entre le niveau de standardisation du travail et l'« invitation » pour le travailleur à surperformer (Reynaud 1997). De plus, « La régulation autonome peut être amoindrie par la compétition exacerbée entre individus qui suscite non pas la conformité à la norme, mais la violation des règles dans le but de gagner » (Gadille et Jaujard 2012, p. 15).

En considérant tous ces aspects, on peut comprendre comment ce modèle apparaît très distant de l'économie sociale et en particulier des entreprises d'insertion, soit des acteurs économiques qui, par définition, ont le double objectif de conjuguer la formation et l'insertion socioprofessionnelle avec la production et pour lesquels des situations stables et propices à l'apprentissage sont une condition *sine qua non*. Dans le cas des entreprises d'insertion, un élément qui réduit encore plus la compétition possible entre les travailleurs en insertion est le fait qu'en général elles n'embauchent pas les jeunes au-delà de la période de formation, sans compter le fait que la compétion cela n'est pas du tout encouragée par les gestionnaires de l'économie sociale.

Le deuxième modèle est le néo-participatif, qui s'appuie fortement sur la notion de compétence (Palpacuer 2010). Son objectif est d'améliorer la formation et la qualification des travailleurs pour développer leur autonomie, leur intérêt au travail et leur engagement. Ce courant est fortement axé sur la recherche constante de qualité pour mieux satisfaire la clientèle. Dans cette perspective, contrairement au modèle des « relations humaines » que nous verrons ensuite, ce n'est pas le travailleur qui est placé au cœur du modèle, mais plutôt la qualité. La force de cette approche repose sur la grande compétence et l'engagement des employés. Afin d'évaluer les employés, on prend des mesures de divers processus ou aspects de la production et ce, pour des sujets différents. L'accent est fortement mis sur la compétence et la performance individuelle : « Dans un environnement plus incertain, la compétence va donc nourrir la capacité de réaction et d'adaptation de l'individu » (Cadin, Guérin et Pigeyre, 2002). Elle se comprend comme une interaction dynamique entre savoir théorique, savoir-faire lié à l'expérience et savoir-être qui renvoie aux comportements (Aubret, Pigeyre et Gilbert, 1993; Cadin *et al*., 2002; Rouby et Thomas, 2004). Comme l'écrit Palpacuer, « L'ensemble de ces savoirs va être mobilisé par les individus afin de réaliser les missions qui leurs sont confiées (Peretti, 2001) » (Palpacuer 2010, p. 21). En ce qui concerne les entreprises d'insertion, l'individu est jugé par ses supérieurs directs (formateurs et gestionnaires), mais ce jugement sert essentiellement à faire le point sur son propre parcours général d'insertion socioprofessionnelle, dont la performance productive ne représente qu'une partie.

Le troisième courant est celui des « relations humaines », qui « place la personne au cœur de l'évaluation » (Gadille et Jaujard 2012, p. 15). Pour cette raison, nous estimons que, tenant compte de toutes les limites des modélisations, ce paradigme, même s'il présente des différences fondamentales, est celui qui se rapproche le plus, dans sa version hybride, aux modèles des entreprises d'insertion. Dans cette approche, l'accent est mis sur la motivation individuelle et on porte une attention particulière aux relations entre les individus, ces deux éléments devant être une source de performance (Tremblay et Rolland, 2011). C'est là un élément qui est aussi fondamental dans les entreprises d'insertion mais de manière très particulière. En général, dans les entreprises d'insertion, cette motivation est requise avant tout sur le plan personnel, en exigeant la volonté de l'individu à travailler sur lui-même : l'individu doit exprimer cette motivation/engagement pour être retenu dans l'entreprise d'insertion et il devra par conséquent l'exprimer aussi dans son travail. Au contraire, dans une approche qui donne une forte priorité à la performance productive, la motivation est clairement et tout d'abord orientée vers la production ou le travail en soi.

Cette approche des entreprises d'insertion peut être comparée à celle évoquée par Calvat et Guérin (2011) en lien avec la gestion des « fragilités en entreprises ». Ces auteurs considèrent que les fragilités observées dans le monde de l'entreprise, soit celles liées aux différents publics (qu'il s'agisse des employés, clients, ou prestataires) peuvent en fait constituer un atout pour l'organisation. Ce ne sera le cas toutefois que si elles font l'objet d'une gestion adéquate, et c'est là aussi tout un défi pour les entreprises d'insertion. Calvat et Guérin posent ainsi l'interrogation suivante, tout à fait pertinente pour les entreprises d'insertion : « Et si la productivité n'était pas la bonne mesure de la performance ? » (2011, p. 28). Cela va bien sûr à l'encontre de la vision la plus courante de l'entreprise, toute tournée vers la performance productive, souvent associée à la vitesse de production. Or, comme le notent les deux auteurs (2011), les travailleurs ont besoin de comprendre l'organisation dans laquelle ils évoluent, mais également de se sentir compris par cette dernière, d'où le rôle tout à fait déterminant du gestionnaire comme on le retrouve dans les entreprises d'insertion. A l'instar des séminaires offerts par certaines entreprises afin de valoriser les travailleurs âgés en France, on peut proposer « des alternatives de nature à fluidifier l'organisation en anticipant les problèmes et en permettant aux populations concernées de se réinscrire dans le collectif. Ces approches favorisent l'adhésion au groupe de l'organisation tout en lui donnant un supplément de légitimité » (Calvat et Guérin 2011, p. 115). Cette approche nous paraît tout à fait applicable à des milieux comme les entreprises d'insertion, comme nous le verrons avec les témoignages cités plus loin.

Ce qui est fondamental dans cette approche théorique est le passage d'une vision quantitative à une autre plutôt qualitative du concept de performance ou d'évaluation; la dimension subjective du jugement est alors importante. L'évaluation qualitative se base sur un prérequis : une communauté de valeurs au sein de l'entreprise. Ainsi, le recrutement dans les entreprises d'insertion se base d'abord sur la motivation des individus et, en ce qui a trait aux valeurs communes, celles-ci font partie du « pacte d'apprentissage » et ne peuvent pas être considérés acquises dès le début.

Un des outils fondamentaux de ce modèle est l'entretien individuel, à travers lequel on encourage le dialogue entre le travailleur et un supérieur immédiat. L'entretien individuel (avec l'intervenant mais aussi avec le gestionnaire) représente un instrument fondamental dans les entreprises d'insertion pour agir sur le volet psychosocial des participants, jouant en même temps un rôle dans l'organisation du travail et la production.

Nous avançons donc l'idée que les entreprises d'insertion travaillent avec un modèle hybride de performance, qui ne correspond pas aux divers concepts plus traditionnels de la performance tels que vus plus tôt. Ce genre de modèle peut profiter à la fois aux publics directement concernés, dans ce cas-ci les jeunes qui voient leurs besoins mieux pris en compte, mais il peut bénéficier également à l'image de l'entreprise, à sa réputation, à sa légitimité et à sa compétitivité (certains individus ou organismes pouvant choisir de faire des affaires avec une telle entreprise, d'insertion ou autre du genre, précisément pour cette raison). Ainsi, un tel modèle permet de résoudre ce paradoxe initial entre performance et vulnérabilité : la gestion de l'entreprise peut constituer une véritable occasion de croissance économique à petite et à plus grande échelle, comme le notent Calvat et Guérin (2011). Ici, cela s'observe à petite échelle pour chaque organisation, mais à grande échelle si l'on inclut l'ensemble des entreprises d'économie sociale. Revenons maintenant sur la recherche, en commençant par la méthodologie.

LA METHODOLOGIE

Comme nous l'avons observé dans l'introduction, nous souhaitons dans cet article comprendre la vision de la performance et les logiques et pratiques conséquentes des entreprises d'insertion. Dans cette perspective, nous avons mené des entretiens semi-directifs avec les gestionnaires (directeurs généraux) de neuf entreprises d'insertion sélectionnées grâce à une entente avec le Collectif des entreprises d'insertion du Québec, un organisme

qui réunit la presque totalité des entreprises d'insertion du Québec, dont nous avons interviewé le directeur. Il s'agit donc d'une recherche de type partenariale, avec un fort engagement en termes de temps et disponibilité des entreprises d'insertion elles-mêmes. Nous avons discuté des objectifs, des outils d'entrevue et des modalités de la recherche avec les responsables des entreprises d'insertion. Des échanges et suivis ont eu lieu avec eux, pendant et après la recherche, y compris la phase de diffusion des résultats.

Dans la sélection des cas, nous avons aussi privilégié les entreprises dont on avait, quelques mois auparavant, rencontré les jeunes stagiaires dans le cadre d'une recherche plus vaste sur l'insertion socioprofessionnelle des jeunes en difficulté socioéconomique. Cela nous a permis de pouvoir comparer certains récits des gestionnaires avec ceux des jeunes, sans forcément avoir à remobiliser ces derniers. Ce fut notamment le cas en ce qui concerne les perceptions qu'ont les employeurs du profil et des difficultés de leurs stagiaires. Ces perceptions pourraient rester parfois partielles, de là donc l'importance de pouvoir au besoin se rapporter directement aux expériences des jeunes. En même temps, il faut reconnaître que ces perceptions ne sont jamais sans conséquences et peuvent au contraire avoir une grande influence sur le travail et son organisation.

Pour retourner aux modes de sélection des entreprises, nous avons aussi suivi le critère de la représentativité des différents secteurs, tout d'abord en essayant d'avoir des entreprises soit de services soit de production de biens, mais aussi de couvrir différents secteurs du marché : les secteurs plus traditionnels, comme la restauration ou la charpenterie, et d'autres plus nouveaux ou complexes, comme l'informatique ou la production multimédia (voir annexe 1).

En ce qui concerne la collecte de données, nous avons retenu une approche qualitative, à travers des entrevues semi-directives d'environ une heure trente chacune, pour lesquelles nous avons utilisé une grille flexible afin d'aborder tous les thèmes que nous avions préalablement sélectionnés selon nos priorités de recherche. Tel que souligné par Poupart (1997), l'approfondissement est une caractéristique fondamentale de l'entretien, ce qui amène à utiliser aussi le terme « entretien en profondeur ». Dans ce sens, l'entrevue peut permettre «la meilleure interprétation possible des faits sociaux tels qu'ils sont vécus par les personnes directement concernées, soit les chercheurs et les sujets de la recherche » (Poisson 1991, p. 15, cité dans Martel 2007, p.441). « Finalement, l'intervieweur encourage la personne à parler de ce qu'elle sait : il ne cherche pas à abréger la conversation mais à l'allonger pour en savoir toujours plus » (Deslauriers 1991, p.34). Il s'agit de faire une analyse du discours (Jørgensen et Philipps 2002), grâce aux récits des entrevues. C'est donc dans le cadre de cette approche méthodologique que nous proposons ici de longs extraits d'entrevues. De ce fait nous pensons pouvoir dégager des constats significatifs sur le modèle de performance et sur les actions entreprises pour augmenter celle-ci ou au moins la conserver.

Les entrevues avec les gestionnaires et les jeunes ont souvent été accompagnées par des observations de terrain, qui nous ont permis d'être très présents dans l'entreprise, restant parfois pour prendre un repas et discuter avec les gestionnaires, les formateurs, les intervenants et aussi les jeunes, une fois les entretiens formels et individuels terminés. Nous avons donc pu saisir encore mieux la nature de l'activité des entreprises d'insertion et des relations internes, les routines et le rythme du travail, les difficultés quotidiennes comme la gestion des moments de crise qui peuvent arriver pendant une journée quelconque. L'observation sur le terrain permet de dévoiler encore mieux la complexité, les logiques, pratiques et mesures, et les expériences — de difficulté ou réussite — d'une organisation.

LES ENTREPRISES D'INSERTION : ENTRE MISSION ET PRATIQUE QUOTIDIENNE

Pour mieux comprendre la vision de la performance des entreprises d'insertion, il est utile d'exposer rapidement leur mission, ainsi que leur manière de concevoir les trois différents volets (formation professionnelle et psychosociale et production) sur lesquels s'appuie leur activité. Pour ce faire, nous avons choisi d'utiliser nos données empiriques, soit les récits des gestionnaires des entreprises. Bien que les gestionnaires tiennent compte des trois axes principaux de leur entreprise, l'insertion semble souvent, surtout au début du discours, prendre le rôle premier :

> On fait partie de l'économie, je suis une entreprise manufacturière qui est un sous-traitant industriel d'autres entreprises. Je fais partie du marché, mais ma finalité n'est pas le rendement. (Directeur de l'entreprise C)

D'ailleurs, il devient de plus en plus évident, dans l'évolution du discours, que l'enjeu fondamental consiste à trouver un équilibre :

> Une entreprise d'insertion, il faut savoir la définir. Il y a trois volets à respecter. L'insertion sociale, la formation professionnelle et la production. C'est l'entreprise d'insertion. Si tu n'arrives pas à gérer un de ces trois volets ensemble et au même niveau, tu ne peux pas réussir la mission de l'entreprise d'insertion. C'est la base. Mais bien entendu, tout ce qu'on fait, même la production, est pour notre mission, qui est d'aider les gens à intégrer la société. (Directeur des opérations de l'entreprise F)

Dans la section suivante nous allons traiter de la dimension « insertion » comme spécificité des entreprises d'insertion. Comme nous l'avons observé dans le cadre théorique, les différences entre une entreprise classique et l'entreprise d'insertion ne sont pas toujours si nettes, surtout dans un cadre d'hybridation. En même temps, il est clair qu'une première distinction fondamentale est liée à la mission. Bien que les entreprises traditionnelles visent parfois aussi des objectifs sociaux, elles ont comme premier objectif celui de faire un profit et sont donc davantage portées à mettre en place des stratégies de développement de leur volume d'activité. En revanche, les entreprises d'insertion doivent conjuguer la performance économique avec la performance sociale. De ce fait, elles doivent envisager un développement commercial compatible avec leur mission, mais aussi avec leur public. Rappelons qu'il s'agit d'un public qui ne connaît pas du tout le métier quand il commence son parcours dans l'entreprise d'insertion et qui éprouve en plus des difficultés sur le plan personnel et professionnel :

> Pour arriver au même niveau qu'une entreprise privée du même service, j'ai besoin de beaucoup plus de staff, car ici on commence tout le temps avec des jeunes qui partent de zéro. Donc il y a toute la partie du travail à leur apprendre. (Directeur de l'entreprise B)

En ce qui a trait aux particularités de la mission des entreprises d'insertion et aux différences avec le privé, on voit aussi que dans plusieurs secteurs, surtout les plus technologiquement avancés, les gestionnaires identifient immédiatement un défi important, celui de la concurrence exacerbée avec le secteur privé :

> Notre entreprise est dans un secteur économique qui est très concurrentiel, celui de l'informatique (…). Par rapport aux grandes chaînes, on est donc dans un créneau terriblement compétitif, où les prix sont très bas (...). Les techniciens compétents que nous avons doivent passer leur temps principalement à former, même s'il y en a douze concentrés seulement sur la production. (Directeur de l'entreprise E)

La complexité de certaines activités est aussi ce qui fait la différence entre des entreprises d'insertion. Certaines sont dans des secteurs plus standardisés, comme la manufacture, le recyclage, la récupération ou le nettoyage tandis que d'autres au contraire sont dans des domaines très spécialisés comme l'informatique, l'imprimerie numérique ou l'audiovisuel.

Naturellement, chaque activité présente ses défis, surtout avec des travailleurs sans expérience et un profil très éloigné du marché du travail, où toutes les expériences deviennent significatives. D'ailleurs, s'il y a des tâches plus simples, il y a d'autres activités plus « à valeur ajoutée » :

> Au départ on s'était lancés dans une activité économique où il n'y avait pas vraiment de précédents. On ne savait pas comment faire. Plusieurs nous ont déconseillé ce choix, en disant qu'il s'agissait d'une activité beaucoup trop complexe pour ce public (…). Il y a beaucoup de choses qu'on ne faisait pas au départ et que l'on fait maintenant. Nous avons compris que si tu montes un bon programme, si tu le structures, si tu es clair au niveau des consignes, ils peuvent le faire, même si notre activité évolue constamment. (Directeur de l'entreprise E)

Tel que mentionné par ce gestionnaire, il s'agit encore une fois de trouver un équilibre entre la formation et l'activité de production.

En restant sur les similarités et différences avec une entreprise classique, on voit qu'un élément important est le client commercial. Comme pour toute entreprise, le rapport avec le client demeure fondamental, mais si certains clients peuvent soutenir l'entreprise d'insertion en soi, d'autres considèrent davantage les critères classiques du marché — qualité, prix et délai :

> Il y a des clients qui viennent parce que nous répondons aux trois critères de qualité, de prix et de délai. Ils sont très peu soucieux de ce qui se passe à l'intérieur de nos murs alors qu'il y en a d'autres qui sont très heureux de voir qu'il y a une action sociale qui est portée. (Directeur de l'entreprise C)

Tous les gestionnaires interviewés soulignent l'importance du client commercial; nous pouvons donc comprendre comment tous les critères classiques d'une entreprise (qualité, prix, délai ainsi que suivi) contribuent à structurer la vision de la performance dans les entreprises d'insertion. En même temps, ils n'oublient jamais de souligner dans leur discours que les jeunes constituent la première clientèle des entreprises d'insertion, de sorte que l'activité commerciale doit être articulée à l'insertion. Elle n'y est pas totalement subordonnée, mais doit être bien articulée, et c'est pourquoi nous parlons d'une hybridation de la vision de la performance (économique et sociale).

LA VISION ET L'APPRECIATION DE LA PERFORMANCE

À partir de nos constats sur la mission et les pratiques quotidiennes des entreprises d'insertion, nous pouvons définir, au moins dans des lignes générales, une vision spécifique de la performance qui semble tout d'abord tenir compte de leur mission première : l'intégration socioprofessionnelle des travailleurs en formation.

Le premier point concerne la sélection des travailleurs en formation : il s'agit d'un processus qui ne se fonde pas sur les capacités et la productivité en soi mais vise plutôt les besoins du public et la motivation à progresser, bien que, comme les gestionnaires l'ont clairement souligné, il reste fondamental d'évaluer la capacité du participant de suivre une formation et de pouvoir avancer dans toutes les étapes, incluant bien évidemment la production. La

formation reste un élément fondamental et il est donc nécessaire de pouvoir permettre aux travailleurs en stage de diversifier leurs expériences et d'utiliser différents outils. Ce choix, qui découle directement de la mission des entreprises d'insertion, pourrait probablement être moins commun dans une entreprise traditionnelle qui vise surtout l'augmentation de la productivité. Dans ce contexte, l'avantage serait plutôt de permettre une spécialisation très pointue de la main-d'œuvre, afin d'éviter toute forme de dispersion de temps et de productivité, même sans faire forcément référence au travail à la chaîne.

Au contraire, ce type de gestion des ressources humaines que pratiquent les entreprises d'insertion favorise l'acquisition de connaissances par le stagiaire et augmente par conséquent son employabilité, tout en évitant une segmentation dans les niches trop spécifiques d'un métier. Par exemple, dans une entreprise d'insertion du secteur de la restauration, les jeunes assument plusieurs responsabilités, de la production d'hors-d'œuvre à la pâtisserie. En revanche, dans une entreprise classique, le travailleur en apprentissage se spécialisera soit dans les hors-d'œuvre, soit dans la pâtisserie, deux secteurs qui demandent des spécialisations et compétences très différentes.

La vision de la performance des entreprises d'insertion émerge aussi de leur façon de l'évaluer. Comme elles s'intéressent à l'individu, ces entreprises adoptent généralement une approche personnalisée, qui s'applique d'ailleurs à tout, à la formation comme à l'évaluation/appréciation :

> L'analyse de la performance est modulée en fonction de l'individu. D'un participant à l'autre, je n'aurai pas les mêmes attentes de performance. Et je n'aurai pas les mêmes attentes de performance à la semaine un que je vais avoir à la vingt-cinquième semaine. (Directeur de l'entreprise C)

La capacité à évoluer et à s'améliorer est aussi prise en charge dans l'appréciation du travail. Il s'agit en général d'un parcours de 26 semaines et, de ce fait, les attentes à l'endroit des participants évoluent au fil du temps :

> Dans les débutantes, il y a un programme défini et il y a des temps pour le faire (…). Il y a dix exercices. Si elle peut réussir sur papier en trois jours ou moins, c'est bon. Plus que trois jours, c'est problématique. Ils font plusieurs formes. Après, un deuxième step. Dans les débutantes, il y a aussi l'exercice sur les tissus. Puis, avec les tissus il y a aussi deux temps à faire. Elle doit les réussir (…). Si elle fait le dossier dans un tel temps sans erreurs et sans fautes on la laisse faire. Après ça, si elle réussit son dossier, ça veut dire qu'elle est bonne. Si elle ne réussit pas le dossier on l'envoie vers autre chose, dans notre cafétéria, à la réception. (Directeur des opérations de l'entreprise F)

L'évaluation de la performance ne concerne pas seulement le cheminement personnel mais aussi le produit. En même temps, les vraies évaluations du produit peuvent être faites seulement à un stade plus avancé. Au début, il s'agit surtout de formation et d'exercices; les nouveaux employés peuvent participer à la production, mais soit en termes de volumes, soit en termes de qualité; dans ce cas, l'apport et les attentes ne seront généralement pas trop élevés :

> Dans la première méthode, c'est l'explication du fonctionnement de la machine, mais la deuxième ce sont des petites actions simples à faire comme des dossards. C'est là qu'il y a la notion de terminer son travail à la date d'échéance. Il y a donc les débutantes, les intermédiaires, et les avancées. Avec les avancées, on n'a pas de limites. Elles sont capables de tout faire. Les femmes avancées savent ce qu'elles font. Elles sont là depuis quatre mois et plus. C'est là le défi

> pour la performance. Vous avez demandé avant la différence entre nous et le privé, le privé n'a pas les deux étapes. (Directeur des opérations de l'entreprise F)

En ce qui concerne les critères plus « objectifs », il s'agit en général du temps et de la qualité. Le temps (et l'échéance) est un élément plus standardisé dans la production, alors que dans les services il est souvent plus difficile de le calculer; mais il reste dans tous les cas une référence majeure. Le rapport au temps est un enjeu critique, non seulement comme nous l'avons déjà observé dans la gestion personnelle des temporalités (Alberio et Tremblay 2013) — par exemple l'horaire d'arrivée dans l'entreprise ou les absences — mais aussi dans le cas du temps employé pour terminer une tâche spécifique. Même par rapport à cette dimension, il y a beaucoup de flexibilité dans les entreprises d'insertion et le temps est souvent modulé sur le cheminement individuel et sur les différentes étapes du parcours. En fait, les exigences en fonction de rapidité dans la production ne sont pas les mêmes au premier ou au dernier mois.

Du point de vue de la qualité, il y a plusieurs modalités d'évaluation. Une première est gérée en cours de production au sein du groupe :

> Il y a trois inspections chez nous, une inspection primaire dans le module. Tu es la deuxième, tu inspectes celle avant toi et si ce n'est pas bon, tu retournes la pièce ou tu la mets à côté. C'est au niveau du groupe. Tu vas trouver chaque jour une vingtaine de t-shirts par exemple qui sont à côté. Ça montre à chaque femme combien elle fait d'erreurs. Après, il y a les inspections finales. (Directeur des opérations de l'entreprise F)

Ce type d'évaluation semble être moins traumatisant pour l'individu, mais il reste quand même important et visible pour le travailleur comme pour les collègues et responsables. Une évaluation entre pairs est appliquée aussi dans les services qui ne livrent pas directement un produit facile à inspecter. L'idée générale est celle d'un apprentissage réciproque : un processus qui est fondamental mais pas toujours facile à gérer. Il est particulièrement difficile pour les entreprises avec un public plus jeune, qui vit souvent des difficultés face aux commentaires et aux critiques. Dans ces cas, la supervision d'un formateur et au besoin l'action rapide d'intervenants psychosociaux sont décisives. Une deuxième évaluation est gérée directement par les formateurs/superviseurs pendant la production. Cette évaluation de production n'est pas complètement autonome, étant très liée à une évaluation plus générale (l'attitude au travail avec les autres, avec les supérieurs, etc.).

Comme nous l'avons noté dans une section précédente, le profil et les problématiques expérimentés par ces travailleurs peuvent au fait avoir une influence directe sur leur productivité :

> À la fin des quatre premières semaines, toute l'équipe de formation va se mettre ensemble pour remplir une grille d'évaluation d'une soixantaine de points qui va toucher tous les aspects du jeune. Après ça, l'intervenant va faire une première rencontre d'évaluation où il va reprendre avec le jeune les différentes forces et difficultés qui ont été identifiées dans sa façon de travailler. (Directeur de l'entreprise B)

Certaines entreprises anticipent cette évaluation par une autoévaluation du stagiaire :

> Après la période de probation, ils ont une autoévaluation. La formatrice technique fait le même exercice de son côté. Ensuite on compare les deux; ça permet au participant de voir comment il se voit et comment il est perçu par l'équivalent de l'employeur. Après ça, on lui remet son chandail et la remise de chandail se fait avec tout le monde, c'est une première réussite. Les

> critères sont vraiment au niveau de l'individu. Ça peut être d'arriver à l'heure ou simplement aussi d'être tous les jours au travail. (Directeur de l'entreprise A)

Le concept de réussite pour le travailleur est fondamental et a une implication directe non seulement sur la vision de la performance mais aussi sur le moment d'évaluation/appréciation.

Il y a une grande tolérance pour les erreurs dans la production, bien qu'il s'agisse d'éléments critiques que les entreprises d'insertion essaient de limiter au maximum, grâce à la mise en place de plusieurs actions (voir les mesures décrites dans la prochaine section) et à l'outil de l'intervention psychosociale :

> Après un échec, on essaie de faire un processus de conscientisation. On va s'asseoir avec le jeune, on va regarder ce qui s'est passé et pourquoi ça s'est passé. Généralement ces jeunes-là qui ont eu des pépins vont devenir les mentors des autres du style « attention à ça, parce que moi ça m'est déjà arrivé. » (Directeur de l'entreprise G)

UN APERÇU DES MESURES ET ACTIONS POUR ASSURER LA PERFORMANCE

L'organisation du travail et de son rythme devient un outil fondamental quand il s'agit d'assurer et d'améliorer la performance économique liée à la production. Un tel effort d'organisation est moins évident si nous considérons tous les volets qu'il faut concilier dans l'entreprise d'insertion, notamment le profil des travailleurs en formation.

Un point décisif concerne le développement commercial. Celui-ci peut être intéressant financièrement pour l'entreprise, mais il le devient moins pour les travailleurs en formation qui sont en apprentissage et risquent alors de décrocher du programme. Un autre élément de l'organisation du travail concerne l'accueil des travailleurs. Il y a des entreprises avec une entrée continue et d'autres avec des périodes spécifiques de début ou des cohortes. Les entreprises qui assurent quotidiennement une production très standardisée ont souvent cette entrée continue. Par contre, les entreprises avec des profils plus complexes et une production/livraison de services qui est concentrée dans des périodes spécifiques de l'année (comme par exemple le temps des fêtes ou la période des élections politiques qui demande souvent le recours aux entreprises d'insertion pour l'impression, la préparation d'évènements, etc.) ont plusieurs périodes de démarrage. De là, le besoin d'avoir une main-d'œuvre plus formée disponible à un moment spécifique.

Plus généralement, la grande majorité des entreprises d'insertion ont une organisation du travail assez définie. Nous avons déjà observé que, comme toute entreprise, elles doivent assurer une logistique efficace, la disponibilité continue des matières premières, etc. :

> Depuis quelques années, on est dans un processus d'amélioration continue (…). On a fait un réaménagement complet d'usine, ensuite on a développé une formation sur les 5 S. C'est un concept qui nous vient de Toyota, avec le Kanban. Les règles sont : chaque chose à sa place, on fait du ménage, on jette ce qui n'est pas utile, on améliore l'accès aux outils, on identifie des zones pour faire une économie d'énergie que tu vas déployer lorsque tu es en production. Ce n'est pas parce que je suis de l'économie sociale que je vais laisser les choses traîner. (Directeur de l'entreprise C)

À côté de l'organisation du travail et de son rythme, un deuxième enjeu fondamental concerne la gestion des ressources humaines (employés réguliers et en formation). Comme les retards ou l'absentéisme peuvent avoir un effet important sur l'organisation, il faut s'assurer d'avoir des solutions en cas d'urgence, ce qui se traduit souvent

par davantage de personnel que nécessaire, pour assurer la production ou les services. En même temps, un principe commun à toutes les entreprises étudiées est la mobilisation collective en cas d'urgence :

> Si demain sur les dix jeunes inscrits à la cuisine, j'en ai huit qui ne se présentent pas, il faut que la job se fasse pareil. En cas de besoin je vais mettre le tablier, l'intervenant aussi, et on va aller aider en cuisine. Je ne vais pas utiliser du congelé, on va remonter nos manches et le faire. Sinon ça va avoir un impact sur mon client. (Directeur de l'entreprise B)

Cela nous fait comprendre encore mieux le rôle de la production et de la performance dans une entreprise d'insertion. Comme l'ont souvent souligné les gestionnaires : il n'y aurait pas d'entreprise et donc d'insertion socioprofessionnelle sans une production performante qui puisse au moins permettre l'autosuffisance du volet commercial.

Restant sur la gestion des ressources humaines, il est important de rappeler le rôle des formateurs et des employés réguliers qui sont responsables de la production et du travail de toute l'entreprise. Les employés réguliers sont présents dans quelques entreprises (surtout de production) afin de toujours assurer un minimum essentiel de production. En outre, certaines entreprises peuvent mettre en place d'autres outils organisationnels pour : (a) trouver des ressources supplémentaires, en fonction de main d'œuvre (pigistes et professionnels, surtout dans les secteurs des services); ou (b) en fonction d'organisation du temps de travail à travers la mise en place de quarts de production supplémentaires pendant les fins de semaine. Cette dernière solution envisagée par certaines entreprises de production vaut la peine d'être soulignée, étant assez atypique dans une conception traditionnelle d'économie sociale. Elle nous semble bien illustrer l'application du concept d'hybridation des modèles de performance, sur lequel nous avons fondé une bonne partie de notre analyse.

Comme nous l'avons observé dans la section précédente, la qualité est un critère fondamental dans la performance des entreprises d'insertion. Même si leur volume commercial est réduit comparativement à une entreprise traditionnelle, le défi est d'être extrêmement compétitif en ce qui concerne la qualité :

> En tout cas on ne va jamais justifier un mauvais service sur le fait que ça soit des jeunes en formation, sinon on se tire dans le pied. (Directeur de l'entreprise I)

Les attestations obtenues par des entreprises témoignent de leur niveau de qualité. Diverses entreprises ont des certificats, comme par exemple ISO, et plusieurs ont aussi reçu des prix ou d'autres reconnaissances :

> On a la certification Dupont, et on a gagné la mention de Grand Prix de qualité du Québec. Nous sommes capables de faire des choses très spécialisées avec des salopettes et de ces choses-là. Ce n'est pas n'importe quelle compagnie qui peut le faire, c'est un tissu spécial très difficile (Directeur des opérations de l'entreprise F).

L'innovation est un élément central des entreprises d'insertion. En premier lieu, celles-ci en tant que telles sont considérées comme représentant une forme d'innovation sociale (Bellemare et Klein 2011), non seulement pour leur mission d'intégration mais aussi pour la façon de l'atteindre, qui peut être considérée innovante. En ce sens, le concept d'hybridation des modèles de performance économique est aussi lié à celui d'innovation sociale. En ce qui concerne les objectifs économiques et de performance, beaucoup se joue aussi dans le terrain de l'innovation relative au produit et aux technologies de production :

> Ça faisait un certain nombre d'années qu'on roulait avec le même menu (…). Mais on a offert toute une nouvelle gamme dans les cocktails dînatoires, etc. (Directeur de l'entreprise B)

Dans les secteurs technologiquement complexes et surtout pendant des périodes de crise économique, l'innovation devient un élément pour les entreprises d'insertion comme pour les autres :

> La crise a affecté le secteur de l'imprimerie globalement parce que les entreprises consomment moins d'impressions. Nous, ça ne nous affecte pas parce qu'on est sur une niche d'impression numérique où on est en progression constante depuis cinq ans. On a fait de bons investissements au bon moment. (Directeur de l'entreprise D)

CONCLUSION

Le défi majeur pour les entreprises d'insertion concerne l'équilibre nécessaire entre les trois volets : formation technique, dimension psychosociale et production. Les gestionnaires évoquent souvent l'image de la balance qui doit rester en équilibre. La nécessité de garantir le maximum d'équilibre exige que les entreprises programment bien leurs activités de production, ainsi que la formation technique ou psychosociale.

Comme nous l'avons déjà indiqué, l'organisation et la planification des activités sont des tâches importantes. Il ne faut pas les sous-estimer ou les tenir pour acquises. L'entreprise d'insertion doit souvent gérer des urgences qui ne découlent pas seulement de l'activité commerciale de production et du respect des délais. Elle est beaucoup plus qu'une entreprise classique et doit constamment gérer les fragilités de ses travailleurs en formation. Nous avons mis en évidence le difficile équilibre entre les deux dimensions de la performance (sociale et économique) que doivent maintenir les entreprises d'insertion. Ainsi, ces acteurs doivent quotidiennement « gérer la fragilité » (Calvat et Guérin, 2011) de leur public pour permettre aux jeunes de se réinscrire dans le collectif et de pouvoir s'intégrer au marché du travail.

Comme dans toute entreprise, les urgences concernent bien évidemment aussi l'activité économique. Il arrive d'autre part que cette dernière prenne le dessus, surtout quand l'entreprise est en difficulté financière et son existence menacée. Cependant, comme l'ont souligné les gestionnaires, même si la production et le développement commercial doivent être forcément privilégiés à un certain moment afin de permettre la survie de l'entreprise, les autres volets de la formation et du soutien psychosocial ne doivent et ne peuvent jamais s'arrêter complètement pour de trop longues périodes.

Un stagiaire qui ne reçoit pas de formation technique ne peut pas progresser dans son travail et donc il ne peut pas contribuer non plus à la performance de l'entreprise. Par ailleurs, si on néglige les difficultés d'ordre psychosocial et relationnel, le risque est de se retrouver à gérer ensuite des crises et des conflits, avec des conséquences aussi importantes sur l'activité économique. Dans cette perspective, nous considérons donc l'intervention psychosociale comme un outil qui ne s'oppose pas à la production, mais qui, au contraire, constitue un élément fondamental pour stimuler la performance individuelle et l'aptitude au travail d'un public particulier. Quelquefois, le gestionnaire doit jouer le rôle de médiateur et trouver un équilibre entre la vision des divers acteurs : employés réguliers (qui ne sont pas des formateurs), stagiaires, formateurs et intervenants. Nous avons parfois observé des conflits émergeant entre les responsables de différents volets au sein des entreprises d'insertion. Le gestionnaire joue un rôle fondamental pour maintenir l'équilibre entre toutes les parties qui composent la mission de l'entreprise d'insertion.

Dans la dernière section, nous avons aussi observé les différentes mesures et actions mises en place dans les diverses dimensions de l'activité économique (voir annexe 2) : organisation du travail, gestion des ressources

humaines, contrôle de la qualité. Nous avons pu voir comment le concept d'innovation sociale est à la base de l'existence même de l'entreprise d'insertion mais avec aussi des innovations importantes en ce qui concerne les produits et les technologies. Cette innovation complexe est aussi en lien avec le concept d'hybridation que nous avons utilisé dans notre analyse.

Pour conclure, nous estimons avoir pu montrer que la vision de la performance que l'on retrouve dans les entreprises d'insertion est fortement empreinte de la mission sociale, comme on pouvait s'y attendre, mais que la dimension économique est tout de même bien présente, ce que nous ne pensions pas trouver aussi clairement. Cela s'explique par le besoin d'assurer l'autosuffisance du volet commercial afin de permettre la survie de l'entreprise même. En plus, l'existence d'une véritable activité économique s'explique par la mission sociale et l'importance de former les jeunes et de les intégrer au marché réel du travail. Cette recherche a donc permis de mettre en évidence une vision de la performance propre aux entreprises d'insertion du Québec, avec un regard sur les difficultés, mécanismes et actions mis en place pour atteindre des objectifs de performance.

Comme pour toute recherche, il faut reconnaître certaines limites de notre étude, que l'on peut juger de nature exploratoire en raison du nombre limité de cas. Par contre, comme peu de travaux se sont intéressés au concept de performance dans de telles organisations, nous pensons avoir apporté des éléments pertinents pour des recherches futures. Une seconde limite, plus d'ordre méthodologique, est liée au fait d'avoir basé nos remarques exclusivement sur les propos des gestionnaires. En effet, nous n'avons pas pu fournir des indicateurs économiques plus clairs sur la situation de ces entreprises, l'état de leurs bilans ou des mesures semblables. Par rapport à cette limite, nous croyons que le fait que toutes les entreprises soient actives depuis au moins quinze ans témoigne de leur viabilité et peut garantir une certaine solidité économique. L'analyse des discours des gestionnaires **(**Jørgensen et Philipps 2002) nous a permis de comprendre la vision des entreprises d'insertion ainsi que leurs mesures et actions visant la performance, étant entendu que nous ne cherchions pas à réaliser une évaluation de performance classique.

Pour conclure sur les perspectives de recherche futures, nous revenons sur la limite liée au nombre de cas. Nous avons interviewé les gestionnaires de neuf entreprises plus le directeur du Collectif, un organisme qui réunit la quasi-totalité de ces entreprises. Une analyse de toutes les entreprises d'insertion (50 dans 13 régions) pourrait nous permettre de mieux dresser un portrait global de la performance, bien qu'il soit évidemment difficile de rejoindre l'ensemble des organisations dans toutes les régions. Nous pensons avoir tout de même assuré une certaine représentativité de la diversité des entreprises d'insertion et proposé des cas suffisamment divers. Le fait que toutes les entreprises interrogées se trouvent sur l'Île de Montréal s'explique par le fait que presque la moitié des entreprises soient situées dans la métropole ou dans ses alentours.

Ainsi, dans des travaux futurs, il serait sans doute pertinent de continuer à approfondir le concept de performance ainsi que les imbrications entre la performance sociale et économique. Par ailleurs, d'un point de vue de la contribution théorique, nous pensons que cette analyse d'une forme de « gestion des fragilités » ouvre une voie prometteuse pour la recherche, puisque nous nous intéressons ici à un public particulier de jeunes. Cette analyse pourrait fort bien s'étendre à d'autres groupes, comme les travailleurs âgés, comme le proposent Calvat et Guérin (2011), et ce d'autant plus que nombre de travailleurs vieillissants doivent aujourd'hui continuer de travailler en raison de difficultés économiques. La bonne gestion des fragilités pourrait constituer un modèle intéressant d'hybridation des pratiques de gestion dans un contexte d'économie sociale, comme dans une entreprise de marché traditionnelle.

NOTES

1. La majorité des entreprises accueillent des jeunes entre 18 et 30 ans, mais il y a des exceptions aussi bien à la hausse qu'à la baisse.

2. « Cette reconnaissance confère à l'entreprise d'insertion l'admissibilité à un financement provenant du Fonds de Développement du marché du travail d'Emploi Québec devant couvrir la totalité des coûts liés à leur mission afin d'atteindre les objectifs de formation et d'insertion sociale et professionnelle. La négociation du financement d'Emploi Québec repose sur une approche globale afin de pourvoir couvrir les coûts liés à la mission de l'entreprise d'insertion. À cet effet, Emploi Québec doit soutenir la masse salariale des participants et du personnel d'encadrement, ainsi que l'ensemble des frais destinés à l'insertion des participants. L'entreprise, quant à elle, assume les coûts de production à partir de ses revenus auto-générés. Quant aux frais de fonctionnement, ceux-ci doivent être partagés entre Emploi Québec et l'entreprise d'insertion. À cet égard, Emploi Québec doit veiller à verser sa juste part, c'est-à-dire celle couvrant toutes les dépenses liées à l'insertion. » [CEIQ. (2011). *Étude d'impacts socio-économiques des entreprises d'insertion du Québec*, p. 4.]

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Annexe 1 : Liste des entreprises d'insertion selon différents critères

Entreprise	Secteur d'activité	Critères d'admission	Rang du gestionnaire	Région	N. années d'activité
A	Production	16 à 30 ans Prestataire de l'assurance-emploi, de l'aide sociale ou sans revenu	Directeur général	Montréal	15 ans et plus
B	Services de base	16 à 25 ans	Directeur général	Montréal	15 ans et plus
C	Production	18 à 35 ans Faible scolarité	Directeur général	Montréal	20 ans et plus
D	Production et services avancés	18 à 35 ans (exceptions possibles) Prestataire de l'assurance-emploi, de l'aide sociale ou sans revenu	Directeur général	Montréal	15 ans et plus
E	Services avancés	18 à 35 ans Faible scolarité ou diplôme non reconnu Savoir lire, écrire et parler le français	Directeur général	Montréal	15 ans et plus
F	Production	18 à 55 ans (exceptions possibles) Prestataire de l'assistance-emploi, de l'assurance-emploi ou sans revenu	Directeur des opérations	Montréal	15 ans et plus
G	Services avancés	18 à 35 ans Faible scolarité Fragilisés financièrement	Directeur général	Montréal	15 ans et plus
H	Services de base	18 à 30 ans Faible scolarité	Directeur général	Montréal	20 ans et plus
I	Services de base	18 à 30 ans	Directeur général	Montréal	20 ans et plus
Collectif des entreprises d'Insertion	Organisme représentant la grande majorité des entreprises d'insertion du Québec	Le Collectif s'occupe de la formation des jeunes plus fragilisé avant qu'ils débutent leur parcours d'insertion	Directeur général	Montréal	20 ans et plus

Source : Tableau élaboré par les auteurs sur la base des informations du site internet du Collectif et de chaque entreprise. **Légende** Production : industrie ou artisanat. Service de base : restauration, nettoyage, recyclage, etc. Service avancée : informatique, multimédia et autres services spécialisés. **Note :** Le nombre d'années est approximatif afin de garantir le plus possible l'anonymat des entreprises et sujets concernés. L'entreprise la plus ancienne a 25 ans.

Annexe 2 : Récapitulatif des mesures et actions prises pour assurer la performance dans les entreprises d'insertion du Québec

Mesures d'intervention sur l'organisation du travail et le développement du marché	Développement contrôlé du volet commercial	Diversification de l'accueil des travailleurs selon le rythme du travail de l'entreprise (saisonnier, homogène ...).
Gestion des ressources humaines	Principe de la mobilisation collective en cas d'urgence	Importance du rôle des formateurs et des employés réguliers, comme responsables de la production et du travail de toute l'entreprise. Autres outils organisationnels: a) Main d'œuvre supplémentaire (pigistes et professionnels); b) Quarts de production supplémentaires pendant les fins de semaine.
Contrôle de la qualité	Recours aux certifications (par exemple ISO) Attestation reçue pour mérite	Innovation continue à plusieurs niveaux (social, produit, technologique).

ANSERJ
Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OBSL et l'économie sociale

Vol. 5, No 1
Spring / Printemps, 2014
pp. 41 – 56

On the Edge in Rural Canada: The Changing Capacity and Role of the Voluntary Sector

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ABSTRACT

Since the 1980s, neoliberal policies have downsized or closed rural and small-town services. In response, voluntary groups have played an increasing role to retain basic supports. How voluntary groups are impacted, and how they react, will affect community development. Drawing upon our research across northern BC and Canada, this article explores the changing role of voluntary groups, with a focus on the structural and institutional barriers impeding their renewal. Our research suggests that voluntary organizations have been diversifying their human and financial capital, expanding partnerships, and developing smart infrastructure to enhance their capacity. More place-based policies and programs are needed to: renew relationships; create synergies; stabilize operations; renew mandates and procedures; develop training supports; enhance development expertise; build diversity, capacity, and support for volunteers; and develop information management systems.

RÉSUMÉ

Depuis les années 80, des politiques néolibérales ont entraîné la diminution ou l'élimination de divers services dans les communautés rurales. En conséquence, les groupes bénévoles ont joué un rôle grandissant dans la préservation de services de base. Le traitement des bénévoles et leurs réactions face à ce traitement ont ainsi un impact sur le développement communautaire. Cet article a recours à notre recherche dans le nord de la Colombie-Britannique et ailleurs au Canada pour explorer le rôle changeant des groupes bénévoles dans un contexte où des défis structurels et institutionnels peuvent nuire à leur renouveau. Notre recherche laisse entendre que, pour accroître leurs capacités, les organisations bénévoles sont en train de diversifier leur capital humain et financier, augmenter le nombre de leurs partenariats et développer une infrastructure intelligente. Il faut davantage de politiques et programmes qui tiennent compte du milieu afin de : renouveler les relations; créer des synergies; stabiliser les opérations; reformuler les mandats et procédures; appuyer les activités de formation; accroître l'expertise en développement; augmenter l'aide aux bénévoles ainsi que leur diversité et leurs capacités; et développer de meilleurs systèmes de gestion de l'information.

KEYWORDS / MOTS CLÉS : Rural; Restructuring; Voluntary sector; Institutional barriers; Innovation / Rural; Restructuration; Secteur bénévole; Obstacles institutionnels; Innovation

INTRODUCTION

Local service provision in rural areas and small towns has always faced the challenges of small population numbers and large distances between settlements. While these challenges were somewhat mitigated during a period of proactive public policy and Keynesian economic reforms following World War Two, since 1980, the application of neoliberal policy and neoclassical economic modelling has resulted in the widespread downsizing and closure of rural and small-town services (Markey, Halseth, & Manson, 2012). Such services, however, are vital to supporting both community and economic transformation and renewal (Williamson, Beattie, & Osborne, 2004). In response, service providers and nonprofit groups have engaged in voluntary work in order to retain some basic service supports. At the same time, economic and social restructuring has changed the environment within which voluntary groups work. If we are to understand the impacts of rural restructuring, we must also understand and address the needs of the voluntary sector. How voluntary groups are impacted, and how they react, will affect the ways in which community development plays out in rural and small town Canada.

Drawing on almost 15 years of research across northern British Columbia (B.C.) and Canada, this article explores the changing capacity and role of the voluntary sector in rural areas and small towns. The purpose of this review is to highlight thematic directions and opportunities for the Canadian rural voluntary sector, and to connect them with trends in other industrialized countries. This article includes three sections. The first introduces background on the state of rural areas and small towns in the new rural economy. The second looks at some specific barriers to renewing the rural voluntary sector. Finally, it concludes with a discussion of lessons learned and innovative approaches being adopted to renew the rural voluntary sector.

THE NEW RURAL ECONOMY

The new rural economy continues to evolve within a constantly shifting global economy. This global economy is about diversity, speed, and change. The increasingly hyper-connected global economy means that attention to community development and community economic development is needed on an ongoing basis. As such, rural areas and small towns must pay increasing attention to their place-based assets, and to how developing those assets for local benefit correspond with local aspirations (McDonald, Brown, Frost, Van Dijk, & Rainnie, 2013). The emergence of an increasingly fast-paced global economy, and the subsequent transformations affecting the new rural economy, are also set against a wider backdrop of change in public policy support. Since the early 1980s, public policies adopted in many developed countries that are part of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), have increasingly called for “bottom-up” community development (Argent, 2011; Shortall & Warner, 2010). This transition—often associated with the adoption of neoliberal policy approaches—also fits well with the desires of many rural and small-town regions to have a larger say in community and regional development (Young & Matthews, 2007). To be effective, however, this transformation in public policy supports and bottom-up renewal rests on continued synergy between the two. Bottom-up community and economic development ideas need the support of public policy in order to be realized (Markey et al., 2012). Unfortunately, while public policy has countenanced increasing bottom-up aspirations, it has concomitantly and systematically removed basic supports in terms of services and associated skills of former public sector workers (Markey, Harketh, & Manson, 2007). The out-migration of professional and government employees from the service sector to regionalized centres, for example, has led to a loss of quality-of-life amenities and imposed burdens on those least able to afford the additional costs of travelling to access regionalized supports. It is clear that a robust foundation of quality-of-life amenities and services is necessary for both the recruitment and retention of people in a community as well as the stimulation of economic activity (Ryser & Halseth, 2010).

The role of the voluntary sector in the new rural economy

It is within this transforming rural landscape that we examine the continuing importance of the voluntary sector. In terms of contemporary community development, research in Canada, England, and Scandinavia has demonstrated that without the voluntary sector, many services would not exist (Andersen & Svensson, 2013; Hanlon, Rosenberg, & Clasby, 2011; Lie & Baines, 2007). The voluntary sector also plays a crucial role in helping communities cope with the impacts of demographic change and in promoting economic renewal (Lockie, Franettovich, Petkova-Timmer, Rolfe, & Ivanova, 2009; Skinner & Joseph, 2011; Steinerowski & Steinerowska-Streb, 2012). It is often at the heart of local relationships and partnerships and plays a role in nurturing both leadership and trust (Sarros, Cooper, & Santora, 2011).

Through social cohesion and social capital, voluntary sector organizations are able to mobilize, increase, and bridge various other types of capital to obtain a wider range of resources and information to build community capacity (Emery & Flora, 2006). Voluntary organizations can create routine opportunities for interaction that, over time, can nurture "well-worn" pathways by which residents get things accomplished. By providing routine opportunities for interaction, voluntary organizations can build both experience and trust, which, in turn, become a solid foundation for innovative community capacity building. While there are lots of ways to define innovation (Osborne, 2002), it is generally understood as the adoption of something new. This could be a new idea; new knowledge, products, services, administrative practices, technology, strategies, processes, or behaviours; or new ways of doing things (Sarros, Cooper, & Santora, 2011). These pathways can also lead to the creation of new organizations, new leaders in the community, or new solutions to entrenched problems. The key is that innovation must be implemented and it must be accepted as a new norm in the organization. Together, efforts through the voluntary sector can help enhance local quality-of-life and reduce out-migration.

What makes "rural" unique

In considering issues important to the voluntary sector, it is vital to understand that organizations in rural areas and small towns operate in a very different context than similar types of organizations in an urban setting. Distance and small population numbers—the basic underpinnings of rural areas and small towns—are key to these differences. To start, distance is a considerable challenge. There is distance involved in connecting with governmental agencies or key policy makers, which may determine the fate of voluntary sector groups and/or their funding applications. Distance exacerbates the possibility that policy makers do not understand small places. The opportunity to connect with wider networks of organizations or with government ministries and regionalized supports is also negatively impacted by both social distances—which are created through increasingly lengthy bureaucratic processes and accountability procedures—and the physical distances within which rural voluntary groups operate (McKinney & Kahn, 2004; Molnar, Duffy, Claxton, & Bailey, 2001). Distance also impacts exposure as well as access to information and different types of innovation, ideas, options, and solutions. With limited external networks, voluntary groups can become isolated and introverted, thereby limiting their capacity for renewal (Wollebæk, 2009). Rural and small town organizations know that a significant portion of their annual operating budget may be consumed by travel costs—either to deliver services in a low-density wide-reaching geographic area, or to connect with regionalized policy and program offices (Harris, Cairns, & Hutchison, 2004).

In addition to the general challenges posed by a low-density rural or small town setting, the voluntary sector is also under stress from changes occurring within those contexts. One set of challenges comes from population decline. Over time, many of the industries that have been the foundation for rural and small town economies have been under economic threat from low-cost suppliers around the world (Hayter, 2000). To meet that challenge, Canadian resource industries have aggressively pursued efficiency as a means of lowering their

production costs in order to remain globally competitive (Edenhoffer & Hayter, 2013). This often means a substitution of capital for labour, resulting in much smaller workforces. We are currently producing far more raw material for export with far less labour than at any time in our history. Population decline, brought about by diminishing employment opportunities, impacts not only the mean level of human capital within the community, but also the limited base from which groups can draw volunteers. This limits organizational capacity, and can also limit innovation and flexibility.

In addition to population decline, the remaining population is often aging (Davies, 2011). This trend is both attributed to the out-migration of younger families and the presence of an older workforce that is aging in place. As identified by Neil Hanlon and Greg Halseth (2005) this process of "resource frontier aging" can limit the community's capacity to sustain ongoing initiatives. These issues exacerbate the longstanding challenge of leadership renewal for voluntary groups in rural areas and small towns (Skinner & Joseph, 2011). By definition, small places have small populations, which means that if leaders move on from their position or burn out from the stress of service delivery, there are relatively few potential volunteers to draw from.

Further, an increasing level of downloading, or the outright closure of public and private sector services, has exacerbated all of these issues (Halseth & Ryser, 2006b). In a context where private and public sector services or supports have been downsized or eliminated, the voluntary and nonprofit sector has been increasingly called upon to fill the gap (Baines & Cunningham, 2011; Hanlon et al., 2007). Not only does this increase the workload, but it increases the risk of burnout. And, as mentioned, the possibility of renewing voluntary participation is limited by small community size.

BARRIERS TO RENEWING THE RURAL VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Through our research, we have identified seven key issues that are impeding the renewal of the rural voluntary sector. In this section, we briefly review these barriers as a preface to discussing some innovative responses to the renewal challenge.

Attitudinal barriers

One key barrier to renewal involves the attitudes and actions of leaders. One of the central issues concerns the readiness for change in voluntary organizations. This includes recognition about the need for change, as well as the ability to ensure that there is the capacity to implement that change (Allen, Smith, & Da Silva, 2013). At times, however, issues can arise around organizational protectionism, the entrenchment of positions (either policy positions or executive positions), unrealistic expectations (McKinney & Kahn, 2004), or a more general reticence to accept change (Sobels, Curtis, & Lockie, 2001).

Operational barriers

The operation of voluntary organizations can also be a barrier to renewal. This includes a lack of ongoing attention to renewing organizational roles, mandates, policies, procedures, and tools (Osborne, 1998). Very often we find organizations were created to address a need, but then continue on in a similar mandated role even after the need has changed, transformed, or disappeared. Without a clear vision, there may be conflicts about what the organization does, and why (Sorrentino & Simonetta, 2011). For example, conflict can emerge within organizations that have a mixture of paid and voluntary workers due to different priorities about where to allocate resources, as well as different preferences for formal versus informal work and management practices (Kreutzer & Jäger, 2011). Conflict can also emerge within organizations that have both paid and volunteer workers if paid staff are doing tasks that volunteers do for free. This can render unclear the roles and responsibilities of those in the organization, and in any partner organizations as well. When organizational roles

are not renewed, there can be a loss of relevance and a decline of volunteer assistance (Bruce, Jordan, & Halseth, 1999). When voluntary sector groups take over services previously delivered by the public or private sector, there can be difficulty managing expectations (McKinney & Kahn, 2004). There may also be a lack of planning for projected demands or the rapid pace at which new service demands arise (Barr, Brock, Brownlee, Frankel, Hall, Murray, Nicol, Roach, Rowe, & Scott, 2006). While such organizational barriers are not unique to rural organizations, these challenges can exacerbate pressures and undermine the effectiveness of an already limited capacity in underserviced small communities (Cloke, Milbourne, & Widdowfiled, 2000; Hanlon, Halseth, & Ostry, 2011; Johnsen, Cloke, & May, 2005; O'Connell, 2003). With limited human, financial, infrastructural, and political capital, rural voluntary organizations must ensure that their capacities are not wasted, but are purposefully deployed through their operational structures in the most relevant and effective way.

Heightened competition for the increasingly small "pot" of government funding programs (Allen et al., 2013; Graddy & Morgan, 2006; Walk, Schinnenburg, & Handy, 2013) means that groups and organizations may not work together on applications that would benefit everyone, but may only seek to secure the funding that would allow their organization to continue. In addition to drifting mandates as voluntary and nonprofit organizations chase available funds (which can generate internal conflict), this can also create conflict across communities as different groups move from a cooperative to a competitive environment.

Communication barriers

Another set of barriers around renewal involves communication. On a day-to-day basis, the increasingly large workload of voluntary groups with limited human resources due to small populations, means that communication within and across organizations can become disrupted and infrequent. This can lead to miscommunication and misunderstandings. In addition, while voluntary groups have started to use a wider range of communications tools (Halseth & Ryser, 2006a), there still remain generational differences in the types of communications tools that people use (Ryser & Halseth, 2013b). Small rural voluntary organizations have been less likely to use social media and other Internet-based tools to strengthen networks with others inside and outside of the community (Burt & Taylor, 2000; Eimhjellen, Wollebæk, & Strømsnes, 2013). This has been exacerbated by the limited broadband infrastructure and technical support staff in small and, especially, remote communities (Grimes, 2003; McKeown, Noce, & Czerny, 2007). In looking to recruit younger people into voluntary groups, more attention must be paid to communication media. This includes the transition from predominantly face-to-face and telephone communication to using the Internet and social media-based communication to support and strengthen interpersonal, virtual, other forms of interaction (Eimhjellen, 2013).

Financial barriers

Financial resources are, of course, a significant barrier to voluntary sector renewal. Not only are there fewer grant programs (Imagine Canada, 2010), but many of those funding programs have outdated frameworks or misunderstand rural realities and operating costs (Halseth & Ryser, 2010). This decrease in funding has also been exacerbated by the retrenchment of industry and business support since the recession of 2008 (Peddle, 2011; Ryser, Rajput, Halseth, & Markey, 2012a). Government funding has also been increasingly delivered on a short-term basis, thereby limiting the ability of voluntary groups to secure stable resources for staff (Walk et al., 2013). These funding realities—coupled with the decline in donations and community fundraising that come with the burnout of a limited voluntary sector base—all create challenges for maintaining services and renewing both the mandates and operational structure of voluntary groups. Research in the U.K. also suggests that rural voluntary organizations that have obtained external grants have been viewed as "cash rich" in comparison to to other local organizations, and have been at risk of losing other sources of in-kind and financial funding (McKinney & Kahn, 2004).

Limited human resources

Building upon these earlier barriers, another significant challenge to renewal involves human resources. To start, rural voluntary groups can have a limited administrative capacity (Poole, Ferguson, DiNitto, & Schwab, 2002). They may be able to draw upon—but not necessarily have continuous access to—high-order financial or management skills. At the same time, however, most training and capacity building supports are concentrated in metropolitan or urban settings, and it is difficult for rural groups to access such supports (Halseth & Ryser, 2006b). There is often a lack of skills to develop proposals suited to the increasingly complex world of grant applications (Nothwehr, Erickson, & Schultz, 2012; Simpson & Clifton, 2010), as well as a lack of time to create the onerous and lengthy applications or reports now required for program funding (these groups are, after all, busy delivering more and more services or supports). Often, a failure to succeed with funding applications can breed non-participation in the future. When groups are busy organizing every day for the delivery of services, or chasing dollars to keep those services going, there is often little time left for the succession planning or job shadowing needed to help build and renew collective capacity (Byron, Curtis, & Lockwood, 2001). In addition, there is often little time left at the end of the day for the "heavy lifting" work that goes into building collaborative partnerships within and across communities (Packer, Spence, & Beare, 2002; Ryser & Halseth, 2013a).

In some regions, the voluntary and nonprofit sector is just not able to compete with the wages offered in the resource sector (Ryser, Markey, Manson, & Schwamborn, & Halseth, forthcoming). This challenge is exacerbated by industries that are making use of transient workforces—workforces that can generate additional pressures on community services. Long distance labour commuting, an increasingly common feature of the rural landscape, further diminishes the volunteer base available in these small communities. As residents engage in long distance labour commuting, their engagement with voluntary organizations in their home community may become random, infrequent, and noncommittal (Wollebæk & Selle, 2004), thereby impacting the ability of voluntary groups to strengthen local social cohesion and social capital across residents.

Infrastructure barriers

Aging or limited communication, social, and transportation infrastructure can also be a barrier to renewal (Grimes, 2003, 2000; Skinner, 2008). This can include the age or absence of computers, printers, and other information access technologies (McKinney & Kahn, 2004). The donation of outdated computing equipment does nothing to help an organization access information online when all of that online information (e.g., application forms) requires the most up-to-date operating systems, a high-speed connection, and large RAM in order to download efficiently and properly. There is also limited access to technical supports; transportation options beyond personal vehicles; and even services such as daycare (on an ongoing or temporary basis), which can help to facilitate participation in meetings and engagements (Snavely & Tracy, 2000; Torgerson & Edwards, 2012). In addition, accessing space within communities for meetings, operations, and program delivery, as well as equipment and material storage, can be a problem.

Policy barriers

The final barrier to renewal involves policy. Policy has not kept pace with the changing realities of rural areas and small towns (Leipert, Kloseck, McWilliam, Forbes, Kothari, & Oudshoorn, 2007; Walsh, O'Shea, Scharf, & Murray, 2012). Instead, policy has been pressured to reduce the level of risk to central governments rather than to provide a more supportive policy environment for the voluntary sector operating on the ground. For example, there are increasingly complex policies, rules, and regulations around liability, insurance, maintenance of facilities or services, and training and qualifications of individuals (Lie & Baines, 2007). While no one argues that these topics need attention, public policy often directly downloads the responsibility for satisfying these policy needs to the voluntary group, rather than creating a cooperative environment for resolving these challenges. Such requirements do not reflect or support the more limited human and financial capacity of rural voluntary

groups, and, therefore, only exacerbate the operational pressures for these organizations. These challenges can be compounded by the distance involved in connecting with insurance providers, government agencies, or key policy makers in distant centres (Harris et al., 2004). This distance also exacerbates the possibility that policy makers do not understand the needs or constraints of rural voluntary organizations—to the point where policies and programs become ineffective in supporting their on-the-ground operations (Molnar et al., 2001).

A second area of policy challenge concerns transformations in expectations around the operations of rural voluntary groups. Research in the U.S., Australia, and Europe demonstrates that the movement toward more standardized and professional services (Graddy & Morgan, 2006; Kreutzer & Jäger, 2011; McDonald & Warburton, 2003) and integrated or shared models of service delivery (Poole et al., 2002), as well as the movement to a more business-oriented model of service delivery (Lie & Baines, 2007), are challenging the transformative capacity of these organizations. Again, the transitions occurring in the wider society are one thing, but the notion that public policy expects the voluntary sector to bear the burden of these transformations without adequate support and assistance is, however, quite another matter. As Keith Snavely and Martin Tracy (2000) argue, government funding agencies continue to require separate allocation, budgeting, reporting, and evaluation processes that are not conducive to nurturing collaborative relationships across the voluntary sector.

APPROACHES TO INNOVATION AND RENEWAL

With a continued emphasis on challenges facing the voluntary sector, few have explored renewal within the voluntary sector, and even fewer have situated these challenges within the unique rural context. Through our work, a number of lessons have been identified as these organizations work to renew themselves across a very diverse rural landscape (Cloke et al., 2000; Hanlon et al., 2011; Hanlon & Halseth, 2005; Lockie et al., 2009). Irrespective of the context, small communities are building capacity through the voluntary sector in a number of ways. In this section, we focus our attention on how they are diversifying their human and financial capital, as well as how they are using partnerships and smart infrastructure to overcome the barriers identified earlier and support ongoing operations and organizational renewal.

Human capital

To start, the rural voluntary sector is building its human capital by using a range of recruiting strategies. This has included using print media, the Internet, community presentations, job postings, volunteer databases, and informal methods such as word of mouth (Halseth & Ryser, 2006a). Voluntary organizations are also working with other service providers, such as schools and healthcare providers, to adopt joint recruitment campaigns (Walk et al., 2013). In the rural context, it has not just been about using a range of recruiting strategies, but also about organizations being more flexible in terms of the types of volunteers and commitments they are seeking. This has been especially important during times of significant industrial restructuring, where job losses may have prompted much of the local labour force to commute long distances for work (Lockie et al., 2009; McDonald, Mayes, & Pini, 2012; Sandow & Westin, 2010). Resources, such as volunteer fire departments and search and rescue teams, often require volunteers to regularly attend training exercises. Our research indicated that this is not always possible with rotating shift schedules and out-of-town work (Ryser et al., 2012a). In response, voluntary groups have been very supportive and flexible in finding ways for these workers to continue their training and engagement in the community. Some, for example, were able to maintain their training with mine rescue crews at distant industrial work sites.

Voluntary organizations have also been expanding the geographic scale of their operations. While many voluntary organizations have typically operated at a community level in the past, research in Canada and Norway has tracked organizations that have scaled-up to recruit and engage members on a regional level

(Beckie, Kennedy, & Wittman, 2012; Halseth & Ryser, 2006a; Wollebæk & Selle, 2004). This broader geographic scale can assist voluntary groups in drawing upon a broader network and range of resources.

Some groups have offered paid positions or compensation for items such as supplies or fuel, which can be a significant cost in rural regions due to large distances and low densities. Research that we conducted also suggested that organizations with paid or compensated leaders or board members were less likely to face a lack of new leadership, decreased member participation, and volunteer burnout (Halseth & Ryser, 2007).

Some communities have developed a family-friendly certification program—which has been adopted by voluntary groups as well as other public and private sector groups—to recruit new members, volunteers, and staff (Ryser, Schwamborn, & Halseth, 2012b). The goal of this program is to support flexible scheduling, access to childcare, organizing family-friendly activities, and other things. Similar to other places, small communities have also been looking at ways to provide volunteer rewards and incentives. This can range from passes to the recreation centre to donations for community groups (Ryser & Halseth, 2013b). Training and professional development have also been used as incentives to recruit and retain volunteers (Walk et al., 2013). In some cases, nonprofits have worked to build the capacity of their clients. In Kitimat, British Columbia, for example, one community service group has worked with their clients to operate a local food share program that redistributes outdated food from local grocery stores to those in need (Ryser & Halseth, 2013b). They have trained their clients in data entry and creating spreadsheets to support the operations of this and other programs. This not only equips their clients with the skills they will need to engage in the workforce, it also provides the organization with more human resources.

Having stable and adequate human resources can really impact the resiliency of an organization. Diverse human resources, for example, provide stability for developing and maintaining funding and partnerships (McDonald & Warburton, 2003; Milbourne, Macrae, & Maquire, 2003). Diversifying through gender, economic sectors, and age groups has been important, as each of these groups bring different networks and resources that organizations can draw upon (Halseth & Ryser, 2007). Some organizations, for example, have used their networks to expand their human resources by subcontracting or sharing staff to perform administrative and financial management tasks (Poole et al., 2002). Diverse networks also enhance the visibility of an organization, as well as support throughout the community for its initiatives.

Financial resources

Through our research, we found that many rural voluntary organizations are also diversifying their funding sources. More voluntary groups, for example, are obtaining or sharing the services of a grant writer (Ryser et al., 2012b). In some cases, this has been supported with funding from local governments and regional trusts. Voluntary organizations are also pursuing a broader range of funding and in-kind resources from government, industry, business, trusts, nonprofits, and other sources. They are also relying more on revenue from services and membership fees. An important component of this includes revenues from social enterprises. The development of social enterprises in rural communities is still largely emerging, but there have been some important role models (Ryser & Halseth, 2012). Obtaining stable staff and board members is, of course, not just important for supporting daily activities but also for procuring funding. In fact, having a board of directors was a condition many voluntary groups had to meet in order to obtain funding from government agencies. Our work with the New Rural Economy Project demonstrated that voluntary organizations equipped with a board of directors were more likely to receive funding from federal, provincial, and municipal governments (Halseth & Ryser, 2006a). This largely reflects the importance of adopting accountability measures in order to secure government funding.

Partnerships

As voluntary groups work to build capacity, partnerships are increasing, particularly with groups in other places. These partnerships can lead to new ways to deliver supports. They are also becoming increasingly important to obtain funding (Bradford, 2003; O'Toole & Burdess, 2004). Through partnerships, voluntary organizations can enhance the legitimacy of their activities and demonstrate that their organization's activities have a wider appeal and support across the community (Milewa, Dowswell, & Harrison, 2002). Partnerships are also increasingly important to provide supports to vulnerable groups that are complex and often beyond the capacity or mandate of any individual organization (Cloke et al., 2000)—something that is particularly important in smaller communities that have fewer specialized supports.

Research conducted in four Canadian provinces demonstrated that partnerships in rural places have been used to link voluntary groups to other networks, expertise, and resources (Halseth & Ryser, 2007). The use of outside expertise and expanded networks demonstrates the importance of building and bridging social capital in order to improve service delivery. Through partnerships, groups expanded their networks to update each other on activities, promote services, and offer referrals. Expertise was obtained through advice, information sharing, and joint decision-making. The business community, for example, has provided advice about investing money earned from donations or publications. Finally, voluntary groups used partnerships to expand their resources to better provide programs, share staff, obtain access to office space or equipment, and to meet a host of other needs. Furthermore, in some communities, the local government is providing support by taking care of the administration of contracts for some voluntary and nonprofit groups that have part-time staff (Ryser & Halseth, 2013b).

Our research in northern BC also explored how voluntary groups have been working to build the capacity of their partners (Ryser & Halseth, 2013b). This has been particularly important when they have engaged with Aboriginal groups, where the key to renewing relationships and capacity was flexibility—in terms of how they worked together and in terms of encouraging Aboriginal partners to make the rules that would guide the collaboration. Groups with partnerships have also used a range of communication tools to connect with partners both in their community and outside of it. It is important to note, however, that while rural voluntary organizations are using a range of communication tools, face-to-face contact remains important because it allows people to pick up on non-verbal cues such as body language, and to spend more time getting to know their partners. Furthermore, voluntary groups in rural areas have been working to collaborate with local government and align their messages for when they engage with senior government stakeholders and industry leaders (Ryser et al., 2012b). They are also working to find projects that will be of interest to industry (e.g., water conservation, recreation, health), in order to enhance their relevance.

Smart infrastructure

Rural and small town voluntary groups are paying particular attention to smart infrastructure to provide and maintain supports that might not otherwise exist. In some cases, the local government, churches, mall management, restaurants, and other private sector groups have provided free or low-cost access to space for voluntary organizations to meet or deliver services (Ryser & Halseth, 2013b). For example, churches in small communities provide space for food banks and similar operations. This has been important, of course, in communities that are struggling with temporary or permanent industry closures, but also in booming resource communities where commercial vacancies are low and commercial rental costs are rising. While some groups are sharing space, other groups are either sharing client information, budgets, and staff and administrative resources (Snavely & Tracy, 2000).

There is an urgent need for new models of rural service infrastructure to support the long-term sustainability of rural voluntary organizations in constrained fiscal environments. More organizations in both developed and

developing countries are addressing these challenges by co-locating or by developing multipurpose facilities in smaller communities in order to cultivate synergies, collaborate, and enhance communication across service providers (Johns, Kilpatrick, & Whelan, 2007; Moseley, Parker, & Wragg, 2004). Not only can this provide a more efficient portal for residents to access information about needed supports, it can also allow groups to share facility operating costs.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER: AN ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

Recent initiatives in Port Clements, B.C., demonstrate how rural voluntary organizations can work with other local and provincial stakeholders to diversify their human and financial capital, and use partnerships and smart infrastructure to overcome barriers. Port Clements is a community that experienced a significant decline in the forest sector and, subsequently, the local population. With a limited tax base, it was also challenged to replace aging infrastructure, such as the community hall and the elementary school. At the same time, an aging population was creating the need for a seniors' centre. This prompted the local government to form a partnership with the school district and the regional library system to build a multiplex building (Ministry of Education, 2007). Opened in 2008, the multiplex building consists of a new municipal hall, a community gym, an elementary school, a daycare, the public library, and multipurpose rooms that accommodate a community kitchen and a seniors' drop-in. Not only are more organizations sharing the costs of the facility and its operations and maintenance, but as a brand-new building, it has very low energy and operating costs.

LOOKING FORWARD

Looking forward, some important reflections must be considered to support the renewal of the voluntary sector and to better position it to engage in the new rural economy. First, it is important to recognize that the increasingly rapid boom and bust cycles in many rural economies can introduce a number of factors that shape change in the rural voluntary sector. Second, the unique experience of "rural" extends beyond cyclical economies and fluctuating populations, and includes the loss of institutional memory, constantly changing capacities, distance to policy writers and other decision makers, and limited infrastructure. In this discussion, we suggest six key areas that need attention in order to enhance the capacity and resiliency of the rural voluntary sector.

To respond to these challenges, rural voluntary groups need to establish a stable structural framework. This includes a careful investment of time and resources to renew their mandate, roles, policies, procedures, and tools in order to remain relevant in constantly changing environments. Voluntary groups also need to pay attention to diversity in their membership, leadership, and board of directors: attention to gender, being inclusive of different age groups, and incorporating people who have connections with different sectors of the community. Such diversity is key to developing resiliency by providing diverse networks from which to attract new members, as well as access to a wider range of resources and expertise. As groups work to enhance organizational stability, strategies should be deployed to take advantage of untapped expertise and energy within the community. These untapped resources can range from youth to seniors to tradespeople working in industry. To strengthen their foundation and stability, small community organizations need to make sure that adequate supports are in place to encourage broad participation by paying attention to the provision of childcare and transportation services. Rural voluntary organizations also need to purposefully invest in the renewal of relationships with stakeholders both within their communities and beyond.

Another element of an organization's stability concerns the capacity of its human resources. There is a need to invest in volunteer training to equip people with the tools to do what is needed. In small communities, this may also involve connecting with other voluntary groups to pursue joint or collaborative training exercises in order to

reduce costs. Local governments or community organizations may also invest in a volunteer coordinator in order to help build the capacity of volunteer resources. Voluntary groups also need to encourage and support the development and training of a board of directors in areas such as strategic and financial planning. Through investments in social capital, groups also need to transfer skills among those engaged in voluntary work. This ensures that if out-migration occurs, the collective capacity remains within the organization (Winterton, Warburton, Clune, & Martin, 2013). Again, it is about developing the next generation of rural leaders.

Once adequate human resources are in place, rural voluntary groups must make sure they are effectively using communication tools to improve relations locally and beyond. This will require voluntary groups to engage routine communication with stakeholders, in order to understand the opportunities and challenges that may lie ahead. A broad range of communication tools are needed to connect with different residents and stakeholders, as not everyone communicates or understands information in the same way. While there is a growing trend to use social media and the Internet to strengthen the integration of volunteers and partnerships and to improve the efficiency of sharing information (Eimhjellen, 2013), personal communication remains very important in small communities. Voluntary groups must also invest in building better information management systems to reflect today's fast-paced, connected environment, and to be ready to engage with—and meet the information requirements of—industry and government leaders (Burt & Taylor, 2000; Poole et al., 2002). It is about strategically using communication tools to invest in renewing relationships, as well as to build synergies, partnerships, and collaborations across groups in order to use resources and expertise more efficiently.

Voluntary organizations must also consider the integration of smart service infrastructure in order to create greater economic efficiencies and get away from older models of delivering services. Voluntary groups can become very focused on their current needs. Through long-term planning and thinking strategically about creative community foundations, voluntary groups can work to reduce future costs. Smart service infrastructure can enhance the capacity of these groups to be inclusive, connected, and accessible as they engage in their day-to-day operations.

Policy and program levers developed by senior levels of government, funding agencies, and affiliated organizations can play an important role in supporting the renewal of the voluntary sector. Voluntary groups have benefitted from the need to complete strategic planning processes and to formalize the training of board members and volunteers in order to renew community leadership and capacity (Graddy & Morgan, 2006). In an era of service restructuring, program designs should facilitate collaboration both locally and at the regional level. Senior levels of government can also encourage and strengthen collaboration and partnerships within the rural voluntary sector by developing strategic policies, incentives, and long-term supports that reflect the unique context of rural regions, as well as by developing multi-organizational grant allocation and management processes (Snavely & Tracey, 2000). Policy and program levers should also provide support for rural voluntary organizations to invest adequate time and resources in human capacity, and in organizational structural tools to strengthen operations during the early phases of initiatives (Poole et al., 2002). There is also a need for common sense funding programs, applications, and reporting procedures that are streamlined in order to help voluntary groups use their time wisely and focus their energy and resources where they are needed most (Barr et al., 2006). At the local government level, tax breaks have been provided to businesses and organizations that have donated space to voluntary organizations; thereby functioning as "incubator facilities" for the voluntary sector (Bruce et al., 1999).

Finally, we need to increase the "visibility" of the opportunities and challenges associated with the rural voluntary sector in national policy debates. This goes beyond talking about small communities as places of crisis. Their diversity and unique circumstances—distance to regionalized supports and policy makers, aging

infrastructure, and potentially limited technical infrastructure—require a different set of approaches and supports to renew the rural voluntary sector.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We greatly appreciate the advice provided by the editor and referees to support the completion of this manuscript. This research reflects the generous support provided through a number of grants, including the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Initiative on the New Economy grant 512-2002-1003, the SSHRC Insight Development grant 430-2011-0475, the United Way of Northern British Columbia, and the Canada Research Chair in Rural and Small Town Studies 950-222604.

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ANSERJ
Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OBSL et l'économie sociale

Vol. 5, No 1
Spring / Printemps, 2014
pp. 57 – 75

Nonprofits and the Promotion of Civic Engagement: A Conceptual Framework for Understanding the "Civic Footprint" of Nonprofits within Local Communities

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ABSTRACT

The literature suggests that nonprofit organizations provide civic benefits by promoting engagement within local communities. However, there exists minimal empirical evidence describing the ways in which nonprofits actually undertake this role. In order to address this omission, we conducted interviews with personnel of nonprofit organizations in one rural community in the United States. Our preliminary findings indicate that nonprofit organizations promote civic engagement through programs and activities that: 1) engage volunteers and donors; 2) bring community members together; 3) collaborate with organizations within and beyond the community; and 4) promote community education and awareness. Together, these findings help to develop a working model to understand the civic footprint of nonprofit organizations with methodological implications for future research that would seek to measure the extent to which nonprofits promote civic engagement.

RÉSUMÉ

Il est normal de supposer que les associations à but non lucratif favorisent l'engagement du citoyen dans les communautés locales. Cependant, il existe peu de données empiriques sur la manière dont ces associations assument véritablement ce rôle. Pour combler ce manque, nous avons mené des entretiens semi-directifs approfondis auprès du personnel d'associations à but non lucratif dans une petite communauté rurale aux États-Unis. Nos résultats préliminaires indiquent que ces associations motivent les citoyens à s'impliquer quand elles offrent des programmes et des activités qui : 1) intéressent les bénévoles et les donateurs; 2) rassemblent directement ou indirectement les membres de la communauté; 3) collaborent avec d'autres associations tant au sein de la communauté qu'au-delà de celle-ci; et 4) encouragent l'éducation et la conscientisation communautaires. Ces constats aident à établir un modèle pour mieux comprendre la présence civique des associations à but non lucratif dans les communautés et indiquent une piste à suivre pour des recherches futures qui examineraient l'influence de ces associations sur le niveau de participation civique.

Keywords / Mots clés

Nonprofits; Civic engagement; Voluntary associations; Civil society; Civic benefits / Associations à but non lucratif; Engagement civique; Organisations bénévoles; Société civile; Bénéfices civiques

INTRODUCTION

Scholars have long theorized about the variety of civic benefits produced by nonprofit organizations in their efforts to promote civic engagement within local communities. For instance, some have proposed that nonprofits promote civic action by encouraging community involvement and maintaining democratic functioning (Milligan & Conradson, 2006; Putnam, 1993, 2000). Others have suggested that nonprofits enhance the civic conditions of communities by fulfilling demands overlooked by government (Weisbrod, 1986) and by ameliorating the failures of the private market (Hansmann, 1980). Still others have argued that nonprofits add to the civic value of communities by providing an outlet for services where stakeholders, such as consumers and producers, can have a voice (Ben-Ner & Van Hoomissen, 1992) and undertake religious and secular entrepreneurial initiatives (James, 1987).

Missing from most of this previous scholarship, however, are descriptions of the specific actions undertaken by nonprofits that aid in the promotion of civic engagement. Indeed, although scholars have generally found that the civic contributions of nonprofits are positively linked to the establishment of stronger interpersonal networks among residents (Katz, 1993; Putnam, 1993, 2000), increased civic participation (Putnam, 1993, 2000), and even perceptions about the quality of local government (Brown, 1998; Van Slyke & Roch, 2004; Wuthnow, 2004), this scholarship does not enhance our understanding of what it is that these organizations do to attain such positive outcomes. To foster the behaviour of civic engagement, it is necessary to first understand what that behaviour involves. The purpose of this research is to understand the specific actions undertaken by nonprofit organizations that promote civic engagement within local communities. To delineate these processes, we conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with nonprofit administrators from a small U.S. Midwestern town. We then developed a conceptual framework outlining the ways that nonprofits collectively influence local community engagement by utilizing a "civic footprint" metaphor to answer our research question: *What do nonprofits do to promote civic engagement within local communities?* We utilize the "civic footprint" as a way to represent the variety of tangible ways that nonprofits add to the civic life of communities.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The civic benefits provided by a social entity (such as a nonprofit organization) are often distinct from economic or social benefits. Specifically, civic benefits are those that enhance individual and collective actions intended to further the public good. These actions can strengthen the connection between citizens and community by providing many goods and services that have public good characteristics and that involve members of the community as donors or volunteers (Ben-Ner & Van Hoomissen, 1992; Hansmann, 1980; James, 1987; Milligan & Conradson, 2006; Putnam, 1993, 2000; Weisbrod, 1986). Ultimately these actions lead to active participation in community life and the development of greater social ties and trust through civic engagement. Therefore, civic engagement simply refers to the act in which individuals come together for the common benefit of society (Schneider, 2007). More specifically, civic engagement has been defined as the multitude of ways that citizens participate in their communities in order to 1) shape the future of their community and 2) improve the conditions of other community members (Adler & Goggin, 2005). Therefore, this present study, following Alder & Goggin (2005), was particularly interested in better understanding the specific ways in which nonprofits support civic engagement in these two areas.

A great deal of literature has focused on the relationship between individual-level characteristics and the implications of these characteristics for civic engagement (Omoto, Snyder, & Hackett, 2010) and individual development (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). Some studies, for instance, have focused on youth and adolescents, arguing the importance of early civic engagement for democratic functioning and individual-level development (Henderson, Brown, & Pancer, 2012; Polson, Kim, Jang, Johnson, & Smith, 2013; Richards-Schuster & Dobbie,

2011). However, some studies do provide evidence of the importance of the role played by nonprofits in promoting civic engagement (see for example, Putnam, 1993). For instance, Roland Zullo (2013) investigated the relationship between participation in civic organizations and the extent to which individuals participate in local communities or in non-political acts of civic engagement outside of their organization. Zullo found that unions enhanced pro-social behaviour among non-religious and non-union members. Alternatively, Terriquez (2011) found that participation in civic organizations (and labour unions, in particular) did not necessarily mean that individuals would be more civically engaged in other community initiatives.

While there is some contradiction in these findings, they suggest that civic engagement is not only related to individual psychosocial qualities or to the nature of micro-level social networks. Instead, the organization—through which the engagement occurs—is likely to play a distinctive role in encouraging civic engagement through participation within local communities (Acheson, 2001).

Similarly, this previous research demonstrates that there is variability in the extent to which nonprofits promote civic engagement. For instance, Schneider (2007) has pointed out that nonprofit organizations do not equally promote civic engagement. Instead they might only promote civic engagement among a particular segment of the population, such as their members. For instance, Shiller (2013) has argued that the way organizations promote civic engagement within communities is through interactions between the organization's personnel and program participants. However, interaction between organizations and community members has tended to focus on micro-level processes of donating and volunteering and the subsequent outcomes for participants (Eliasoph, 2013). Instead, nonprofit organizations promote civic engagement in more complex ways than simply offering volunteer positions or opportunities for community members to donate (Schneider, 2007). Therefore, a more nuanced understanding of the ways that nonprofit organizations connect with community members and enhance civic engagement is needed. Indeed, Handy & Greenspan (2009) noted that for immigrants' civic engagement, the necessary condition was the existence of organizations that were welcoming to them, such as their ethnic congregations.

Theoretical frameworks of nonprofits and civic engagement

Three theoretical discourses provide a frame of reference for thinking about the ways that nonprofits actually promote civic engagement in local communities. The first follows from social capital theorizing. Within present scholarship, nonprofits have long been considered integral components of civil society. Indeed, since the time of de Tocqueville (1966), nonprofits have been viewed as the cornerstone of American democracy. The presence of these institutions has often been linked to both a strong civil society and effective democratic functioning (Putnam, 2000). Putnam (1993, 2000), for instance, examined the relationship between civil society and democratic functioning by focusing on the role of membership-based nonprofits in the development of social capital. Communities with a higher prevalence of membership associations are thought to foster horizontal relationships of reciprocity and trust, which result in citizens being more willing to act on behalf of the common good. Indeed, Putnam (2000) argues that nonprofits promote solidarity and inclusion and thus are the primary vehicles through which social capital is activated. Thus, from a social capital perspective, nonprofits (particularly those that generate social cohesiveness) are thought to promote civic engagement within communities by fostering, and then, increasing ties among networks of diverse individuals. This then begs the question, what do nonprofit organizations do to increase ties among networks of individuals? One particular way that has been widely documented is by way of creating opportunities for individuals to volunteer in the community (Handy & Greenspan, 2009).

Other theorists, particularly political economists, argue from a demand perspective. For instance, economic theories on the role and function of nonprofits have suggested that nonprofits provide civic benefits to

communities by correcting for market and government failures. As the argument goes, since markets typically respond to the laws of supply and demand (and often operate based on the willingness of individuals to pay for goods and services), for-profit firms are generally reluctant to provide goods and services with public good characteristics, or which require higher levels of consumer trust. The government and nonprofits then step in to meet these demands (Hansmann, 1980). However, government generally caters to the median voter (Weisbrod, 1986), and thus cannot meet competing expectations of heterogeneous stakeholders.

As a result, nonprofits are thought to enhance civic engagement within communities by responding to the needs of minority groups and meeting the plurality of public demands. Due to the constraint on the distribution of any surpluses generated, nonprofits also, as institutions, generate trust among the public (Handy, Seto, Wakaruk, Mersey, Mejia, & Copeland, 2010), and their presence gives individuals additional choices of where to purchase goods and services. Furthermore, nonprofits, in their advocacy role for their members or clients, also enhance civic engagement within communities by serving as intermediaries between individuals and various political structures by acting as advocates on behalf of those unable to advocate for themselves (LeRoux, 2007). These functions of nonprofits raise the questions: What types of actions do nonprofits undertake to engage with diverse community members? How do nonprofits engage with community members to meet the needs of minority groups?

Finally, stakeholder theories suggest that nonprofits provide civic benefits to communities in two distinct ways. First, nonprofits provide an outlet for entrepreneurial and stakeholder control in the face of information asymmetries (Ben-Ner & Gui, 1993; Ben-Ner & Van Hoomissen, 1992). For example, parents and other demand-side stakeholders may choose to form a nonprofit childcare centre due to lack of trust in for-profits and government agencies, resulting in entrepreneurial stakeholder control in the kind of services they want. Second, nonprofit organizations can provide an outlet for religiously motivated initiatives (James, 1987). For instance, individuals who would prefer to educate their children with particular values (religious or of an ideological manner) can create a school to reflect their values or ideology—an educational setting not likely to be provided by either the government (who must cater to the median voter) or for-profit firms (because of a lack of profits to be made). Thus, according to stakeholder theories, nonprofits promote civic engagement within communities by providing opportunities for minority interests to flourish and be sustained, and give individuals an opportunity to produce particular goods and services. As a result of this theoretical line of thinking, the question that emerges is: What do nonprofits do to bring like-minded citizens together?

These three theoretical discourses are not mutually exclusive categories, but a useful way to understand the primary contributions by scholars from different fields. *Social capital* theorists argue that nonprofits undertake activities and create opportunities that act to connect citizens together to promote civic engagement. While *political economic* theorists suggest that nonprofits promote pluralistic society by providing services that address the interests of a wider range of citizens. This essentially creates civic engagement among marginalized segments of the population by engaging community members from diverse backgrounds to promote social inclusion. And, *stakeholder* theorists argue that civic engagement is promoted by nonprofits through efforts at bringing individuals with similar interests and backgrounds together. One of the reasons for this variability might be because there are many different types of nonprofits with differing functions. However, based on this review of the theoretical literature, it is understood that nonprofits promote civic engagement in several different ways—and in ways that extend beyond discussions of volunteering and donating. To determine how nonprofits do undertake these three roles, we undertook a qualitative research study utilizing one-on-one interviews with nonprofit organization leaders in a small U.S. Midwestern town.

METHODOLOGY

Using a qualitative research design, involving in-depth one-on-one interviews with leaders of nonprofits in a small, rural American town, we explored the multiple ways in which nonprofits engaged with community members and investigated their role in the development of civic engagement.

The American town in which the data were collected was a small Midwest community with a population of approximately 2,500 people. According to the 2010 United States census, the majority of residents in the town are Caucasian (approx. 95%), with less than 1 percent combined reporting that they were African American, Asian, or Native American.[1] The town is located approximately 190kms from any larger cities or metropolitan areas. The research setting had 41 nonprofits in the area—listed in the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS).

Studying a single community in-depth has both strengths and weaknesses. On one hand, a single-community analysis allow for rich investigations of the interrelationships among a wide variety of groups and institutions. On the other hand, a single-community analysis always begs the question of representativeness, transferability, and generalizability. In this study, we weighed the trade-offs between conducting an in-depth single-community study versus several studies of the civic footprint of the nonprofit sector across communities. We settled on a single community study using Corbin and Strauss' (2008) construction of "thick and rich" descriptions as our guide.

By focusing on a single community we were able to explore not only individual processes but also context, unencumbered by intervening influences. Thus, the reader is able to make decisions regarding transferability (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, in investigating the relationship between campaign efforts and voter turnout, one might be more convinced by a study conducted in a single community than by multiple cross-community studies or individual poll data that rely on myriad, more or less unsatisfactory, controls (Gerber & Green, 2000).

Table 1: Breakdown of participating organization type and quantity

Type of Nonprofit Organization	Quantity
Charitable Foundation	1
Historical Society	2
Arts and Culture Organization	2
Community/Leisure Centre	2
Environmental Organization	2
Social Club	2
Religious Congregation	2
Economic Development Organization	2
Human Service Organization	2
Total	**17**

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the type of nonprofit organizations and the number of organizations of each type that agreed to participate in the study. The representation of nonprofits in this community does not appear unusual, except that there are two historical societies. One reason for two historical societies in such a small town is that there is a heavy emphasis within the local economy on tourism, and the historical elements of the town are instrumental in attracting tourists to the area.

One-on-one interviews were conducted with organization leaders by telephone using a semi-structured interview guide, following standard qualitative methods of interviewing (Fetterman, 2008). Questions focused primarily on identifying ways in which the nonprofit's programs and initiatives promoted engagement within the community. For example, respondents were asked:

- What is the extent of community interaction between your organization and the surrounding neighbourhood/community?
- Can you please describe the relationship between your organization and your local community?
- In what ways does your organization engage with the community and its members?

Interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and were digitally recorded and later transcribed. Qualitative methods of data analysis were utilized, which included a process of analytic induction and constant comparison strategies (see Glasser & Strauss, 1967; Goetz & Lecompte, 1984) to detect emergent themes (Charmaz, 2000) and patterns (Fetterman, 2008) within the transcribed interviews. Specifically, emergent themes and patterns were identified with a focus on how organizations support or promote civic engagement within the local community.[2]

In conducting our interviews we reached a saturation of findings; no new themes were emerging from the transcripts after the first 10 interviews, but we continued to interview all 17 nonprofits that had agreed to participate in the study to ensure a wider representation of different types of nonprofits.

FINDINGS

Our analysis uncovered four primary categories that describe how nonprofits promote and support civic engagement within this community: 1) engaging with volunteers and donors; 2) bringing community members together through direct and indirect services and programs; 3) collaborative engagement activities within and beyond the community; and 4) community education and awareness activities. The breakdown of each theme in the following sections provides some clarity to the specific things that nonprofits actually do to promote civic engagement.

Engaging with volunteers and donors

By engaging local community members through volunteering and donating activities, nonprofits increase community-level participation among their members, thereby promoting civic engagement. This takes place through programs as well as administrative activities in both direct and indirect ways.

Program activities

Most respondents describe efforts undertaken to directly engage community members in voluntary activities or direct fundraising in order to support the organization's goals. One respondent at a historical society described:

> We rely on the community for donations; we rely on the community for assistance in any activities that we need help [with] outside of our membership. We do have membership, and many community members are members of the organization. (002)

By involving community members in donating and volunteering activities, some nonprofits promote participation in organization activities that have implications for the degree of local community involvement of community members. Similarly, a respondent from a human service nonprofit providing support to elderly people described:

> The volunteers do everything. We have people that come in and wrap silverware. We have people that put water and ice in glasses and make the tea or the coffee. We have people that come into the kitchen and help prepare the food. We have people that come in that help do dishes. I have people that do Bingo, I have people that do sing-alongs, and drive vehicles to deliver meals. (015)

As this respondent describes, by engaging community members in voluntary activities with their organization, the community members become active participants in community-based support programs for more marginalized segments of the population. Without these volunteer opportunities, individuals would be less engaged in their local communities.

Nonprofits also undertake activities with other nonprofits, which indirectly promotes community engagement through inter-organizational collaborations. For example, one church provides funding and volunteers to other nonprofits. This respondent described:

> We provide some funding and there are many people who are members of the church who volunteer at those organizations or for those projects to keep them going and make sure that they are self-sustaining. (013)

By providing inter-organizational support, the members in one organization become intertwined with those in another organization. As these excerpts demonstrate, nonprofits promote engagement, to varying degrees, by enlisting community members as volunteers or by seeking donations. This also increases social engagement, as volunteers seek out community members and advocate their cause or provide needed services as volunteers.

The variability in the comments is important in assessing the overall extent that an organization supports or promotes civic engagement. Whether or not organizations are able to engage community members to actively volunteer and donate is one aspect of the variability. For instance, some respondents identified that it was difficult to engage volunteers, however others identified that it was relatively easy to encourage engagement among volunteers in the community. For instance, one respondent noted:

> We are able to get what we need from community volunteers. Volunteers just fill the need. For example, we had a fundraiser activity last winter. We sponsored the [respondent names sports team] to come in and play against local volunteer teams. We did not have a problem getting these volunteers. (006)

Variability in the number of volunteers is also an important consideration. While the previous respondent described promoting community engagement through recruitment of volunteers to participate in a hockey game

to raise money for a local sports team, other respondents described initiatives that sought to engage larger numbers of community members. For instance, one respondent described:

> I did shows that involved everybody in the area, not just [respondent names the town], but the whole area. I included people, I involved them in the shows with musical talents and drama talents, and I composed shows to try to raise funds for this project. I did eight shows. These were very successful and got people involved. … We had large crowds come to these shows and so it was great interaction with people. (016)

These quotes are examples that demonstrate how nonprofits engage people directly in community-level activities, through direct and indirect means. A comprehensive measure of the role of a nonprofit in promoting civic engagement should consider the multiple ways that organizations involve members of the community and the extent to which volunteers participate. These quotes also provide examples of ways in which nonprofits in this one community promote civic engagement by bringing community members together for a particular cause or issue (a finding that is explained more in the following section). This signifies the importance of thinking about the varying ways that nonprofits can promote civic engagement within local communities. It is not just about providing opportunities to volunteer and donate, because efforts of volunteering and donating can also encourage programs or initiatives that promote community collaborations and activities that involve the community more generally.

Also of importance to note was that respondents described administrative activities associated with volunteering and donating that promote community participation in varying degrees. Through these activities, nonprofits promote awareness of their cause or issue in the local community, which in turn serves to increase the level of civic engagement among community members by providing information to community members about ways to become involved and encouraging engagement with like-minded people in the community. These activities can be direct or indirect. Direct efforts involved recruitment by actively seeking new members or volunteers and/or donations from community members. This happens to varying degrees depending on the organization. For example, one respondent described undertaking minimal efforts to secure membership, resulting in lower impact on community engagement:

> We don't make a big deal about membership production, although that's my fault. Because I know there are people that want to join. But we basically just get members by saying, "hey would you like to belong to our organization." … I have a lady that works in the bank that wants to be a member, and I just haven't had time to go and get her hundred dollars membership fee. (011)

However, some organizations undertook a more active, direct process to enlist members in their organizations. For instance, one respondent described their direct administrative efforts to undertake structured recruitment drives:

> We do a membership drive the first of the [every] year, and that's kind of our seed money. We also make sure that we apply for other funding. For example, there are four foundations in our community that we apply for funding from every year; this is an extra $2,000 that we would miss out on if we did not follow through. (003)

By undertaking these direct administrative efforts, nonprofits engage with community members on an individual basis, encourage them to participate in the membership activities of organizations, and engage with the wider community about their particular cause or issue.

With regard to indirect administrative activities, respondents highlighted several ways in which their activities promote awareness of their organization and their programs, which can provide further impetus for promoting civic engagement by connecting with community members of similar interests. For example, one respondent described that by publishing the organization's meetings in the local newspaper they increase the awareness of their organization within the local community:

> We had people who didn't even know we existed; they just thought it was an old church. But we kind of started publishing our board meetings in the paper so people can see what's going on, what we're doing, what we're involved in. (004)

Another indirect activity relates to decisions regarding availability and access to services for community members. One respondent from a community leisure centre described the need to be available to the community by structuring their hours of operation accordingly:

> I think our hours that we open during the week are conducive to getting people over here. We open at 5 a.m. in the morning and we close at 10 p.m. at night. We're open 7 days a week. Our hours are a little shorter on Saturday, and Sunday. (005)

Other similar comments made by the respondents often highlighted how activities that support participation of community members include the extent that volunteers or the public are involved and contribute to the activities.

Bringing community members together

Respondents also identified several ways in which the programs and initiatives by their nonprofit promote civic engagement by bringing community members together. By bringing community members together around specific issues or causes or through community-wide events, civic engagement can be encouraged among citizens. Respondents frequently identified *direct* and *indirect* (in relation to their mission) efforts that support bringing people together.

Direct program mandates

Many nonprofits promoted activities directly related to their mission. For instance, one respondent detailed how community arts activities bring people together for workshops and other local events:

> The focus of the Arts Council is to promote music and art, and we do entertainment, Arts in the Park, and workshops. We just got through doing an art workshop. One week with high school and adults and the next was elementary kids and the third week was middle school kids. (003)

Another nonprofit undertook a local development initiative with the intention of creating collective community space, and the respondent noted:

> We did a project in [names town] where we took a very large section of the [river area] and developed it as walking trails and a destination for people. And that's proved to be a big benefit to the town and an attraction. (001)

The walking trails provide a space for daily interaction among community members that utilize this outdoor recreational space. And, since it is also a place that individuals from outside the community attend, it acts as a public space in which community members can interact with non-community members.

Several respondents offered similar narratives that captured aspects of their direct service mandates that promoted civic engagement in their communities. For example, environmental organizations brought like-minded people together around issues of land preservation; and historical associations maintained buildings and undertook activities that promoted local culture and provided collective leisure activities within communities. These service delivery functions capture the impact of nonprofits in promoting civic engagement, nevertheless, organizations often promote community engagement indirectly though other initiatives, as we describe below.

Indirect initiatives

In one indirect initiative, an environmental nonprofit established a scholarship fund for local high school students interested in agriculture, wildlife, or parks management. Through this initiative, students become aware about environmental issues in the community and are able to connect with similarly interested individuals. Similarly, a veterans' nonprofit providing support services to veterans in the community is also involved in multiple civic-minded activities, such as providing funding to local youth organizations to undertake their program mandates. It also provides publicly focused education campaigns that promote awareness, as well as a connection among its members and community members. For instance, the respondent from this veteran's service organization described:

> Some of the activities we do, with the help of [respondent names youth organization] is to decorate graves with memorial flags at the cemeteries … we [also] do other things, such as local parades. We decorate a pick-up or jeep and veterans ride in it, and demonstrate what it was like in our day. (017)

Through these efforts of community engagement, this local nonprofit helps develop an awareness of the issues affecting veterans in the community. By bringing awareness to the situation of veterans in the community, this nonprofit enhances community engagement as it seeks to promote collective action that can address the issues that its members experience.

Another example is the historical society, which also engages with the local community by making its archives publicly available. Similarly, respondents also described hosting information events around particular themes to bring like-minded community members together and to promote community engagement. Others offered their buildings to community groups or clubs to use for meetings and functions:

> We have a large enough building and campus area that we are able to enhance what goes on in the community through making our facilities available. If people have to go rent a building for every activity that goes on in here, it would make a pretty significant financial cost for many of the groups. We try to sponsor things to help the community. (009)

There is also an element of diversity within activities. For instance a local arts and culture nonprofit offered programs for individuals of all ages, while a community centre described establishing a 5km run/walk for all interested community members. Many of the efforts of the nonprofits were not just about bringing people with similar interests together, but also about creating community events or activities that brought community

members from different backgrounds and experiences together. Many organizations hosted community-level events, as one respondent from a church described:

> Once a year we have a very large parade and a community weekend. We give away snow-cones and popcorn and balloons for the kids. And then share the Gospel. We want to be a good neighbour in the community and encourage people to serve one another. (009)

Another respondent explained that by creating a community event that involved members from outside the community they facilitated engagement among people locally and beyond:

> We put on a powwow for [respondent names local event for an Aboriginal group outside the community]. Some of the people that are on the board participate. And some of our members participate in the pageant and help put on the powwow. (008)

To promote participation and involvement in activities that may otherwise be unaffordable, some nonprofits provide financial support to other organizations or individuals in the community. Providing financial support enables these other organizations to undertake programs and initiatives that promote civic engagement. For instance, one nonprofit described providing financial support to youth programs:

> We try to make a difference in the community. Each year we take that money and give some to the [names a youth nonprofit]. We give [names another youth nonprofit] $100. We give [names another nonprofit] $100 or whatever we can afford. So all the money we take in goes right back to the community here at home. (016)

Together, these quotes show how local nonprofits promote community engagement through direct (i.e., mission related) and indirect (i.e., activities beyond the primary mission) activities. Through these efforts, they bring community members together. In many cases the community members are like-minded, or similarly interested in a particular community issue, but sometimes they are relatively diverse; as in the case of the church and the nonprofit assisting in the powwow. This latter type of community engagement is what Putnam referred to as building bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000). We next examine further and more intentional efforts at building bridging social capital through collaborative engagement among community nonprofits.

Collaborative engagement

Respondents also described efforts for collaboration among nonprofits that indirectly support or promote civic engagement. Collaborations happened between organizations within the community as well as with organizations outside the local community. By bringing diverse groups of citizens together to address issues within the local community, civic engagement is enhanced.

Inter-organization collaboration

Some respondents identified working directly with other nonprofits in developing community activities. For instance, one local arts and culture nonprofit worked closely with the local Chamber of Commerce to undertake community-wide initiatives, and a local leisure centre partnered with the local hospital to promote social inclusion of the elderly members in the community. Such partnerships between nonprofits can create an environment in which an increased number of people can become active in community activities. Similarly, one

respondent from an environmental nonprofit described how partnerships outside the local community increased civic engagement among people not likely otherwise to meet:

> There are two other conservation organizations similar to ours in this area, and all of us are members of each other … because we are involved in so many things. We're all shooting for the same thing. (007)

Through inter-organizational collaborations, nonprofits with similar missions and mandates can create a concerted effort to align the larger population of similarly interested members of a community. Another respondent (one from a church organization) similarly described its collaborative efforts to undertake a community needs assessment and structure community initiatives based on those identified emerging needs:

> We often find out about needs through another organization, so we'll cross talk. For instance, we are the location that sponsors the local blood drive. So we provide a place and the electricity and all the water and whatever else is necessary for the local blood bank to come in once every so many weeks and gather blood for the community. (009)

These inter-organizational collaborative efforts develop long-term initiatives and civic engagement within the community. Furthermore, these collaborative relationships also support the development of a network-based approach that creates civic engagement and locally generated solutions to issues within the community.

Inter-community collaboration

To a lesser extent, collaboration with surrounding communities also supports civic engagement within local communities by connecting individuals to others outside of their immediate community. For some respondents this theme was captured in descriptions of charitable campaigns organized locally for meeting needs outside the community, as this respondent explained:

> We do an initiative called Operation Christmas Child, where we collect items for shoeboxes that are then sent to needy children all over the world. We will collect several hundred of those per year and we have a very active volunteer ministry for that. (009)

For others, inter-community collaboration involved engaging with surrounding communities to promote activities in their own community. One respondent from an economic development nonprofit described:

> You know, we get involved in events outside the community that can promote our own area. We went to the [respondent names state-level event], which promotes the [business] interests of the whole state. We've been to some other events like promoting our town. We've also tried to bring in some businesses to the community. (014)

This latter theme only emerged in a few of the interviews; but is instrumental in developing a comprehensive understanding of the multiple ways that nonprofits promote local civic engagement.

Education and awareness

Finally, respondent's organizations promoted civic engagement within their local community through efforts to raise awareness and educate community members about particular issues. Through education and awareness

initiatives, nonprofits create connections between people and issues within their local community. Some may be inspired to act as a result. Through these efforts of education and awareness, nonprofits provide a catalyst to get individuals engaged with local issues or problems, or to engage with the experiences of certain marginalized community members. For example, to promote veteran's issues along with raising civic pride, one respondent described their nonprofit's efforts:

> On Veterans Day we present to the 2nd graders across [respondent names area] the United States flag and a stand to put it on. Then on the state's birthday we present each one of those second graders with a state flag for them to display in their own room—to build pride and all that good stuff. (006)

By participating in a program that engages children and youth within this community, this nonprofit is building awareness of issues that some veterans in the community may be experiencing as a result of their service to the country. Other nonprofits described how their programs and initiatives promote local historical and cultural awareness to increase the community's participation in local events. For instance, one respondent described:

> We have geological programs about the geology of the area. School children come to the Mission for tours. That actually has dropped off, because they don't have the transportation budgets to bring the kids in. But the curator and volunteers from the [respondent names local nonprofit], often go to the schools. This happens several times a year. (008)

This finding of education and awareness was also present in the previous categories. For instance, a church organization that collaborates in volunteering efforts with a local human service organization also aided in promoting awareness of the social welfare needs of certain people in community to its members. Nonprofits that undertake direct volunteering and donation activities are also promoting awareness of their organizations and the specific issues that they are concerned with to the local community. Essentially, through education and awareness initiatives in local communities, nonprofits indirectly support civic engagement by providing community knowledge, creating a sense of pride, and facilitating a sense of belonging among community members.

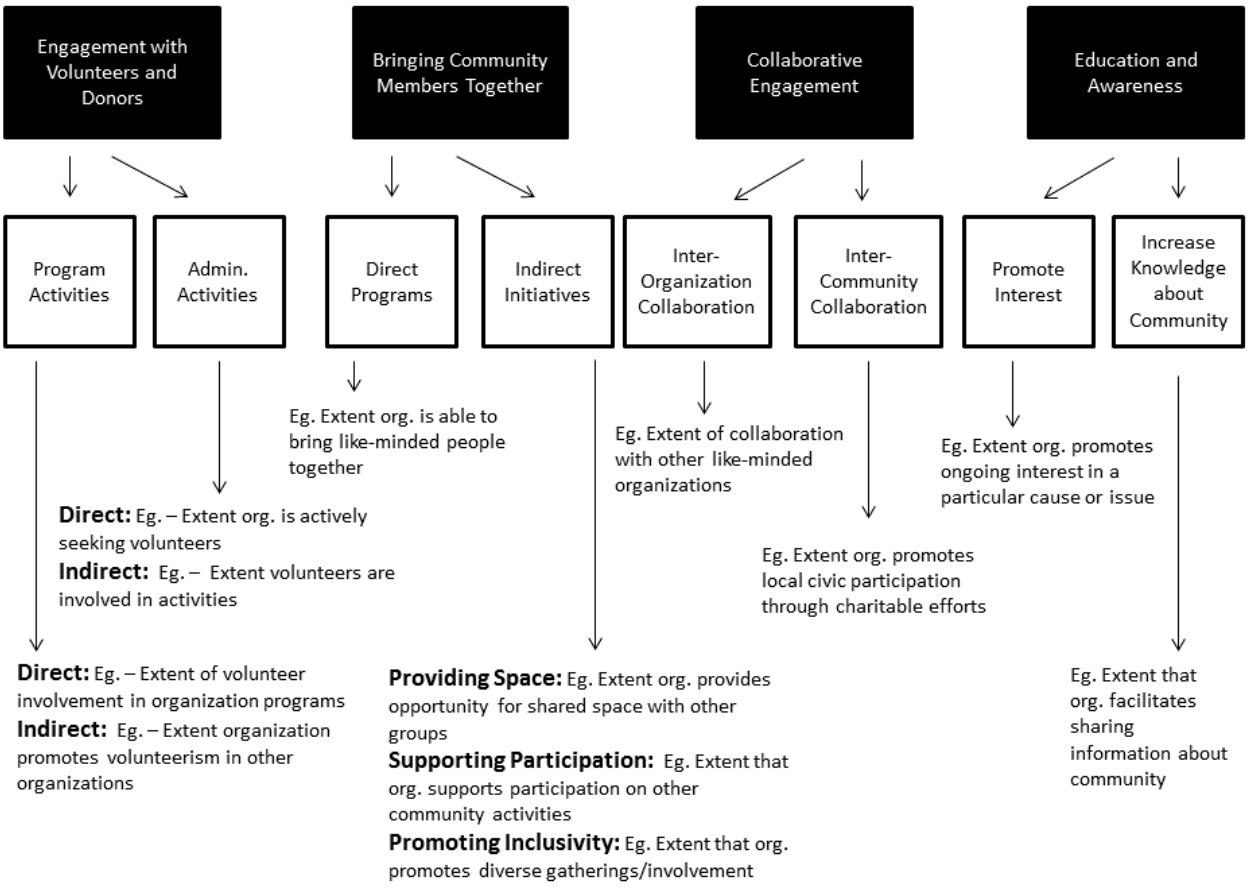
A "civic footprint"

Overall, our findings provide a conceptual framework of a community's civic footprint that more adequately documents the ways that nonprofits promote civic engagement in local communities. Figure 1 delineates our findings of how nonprofits promote local civic engagement; and it is represented in four categories with further delineation into direct and indirect activities.

Unlike previous scholarship, as seen in the literature review, this research focused on organizational level activities and not simply on measuring perceived civic benefits of nonprofit outcomes. Uniquely then, this model of the "civic footprint" captures the impact of nonprofits on community civic development based on activities at the organizational level. Further empirical research could develop measures for this model and pilot the measures with a group of nonprofits.

Shier, McDougle, & Handy (2014)

Figure 1: Conceptual model of the ways organizations promote or support civic engagement in communities



Our analysis, conceptualized in the metaphor of a footprint, is primarily taken from discussion of the "ecological footprint," but with some differences. The ecological footprint was developed as a resource accounting tool to quantify the impact of human activity on the environment by combining heterogeneous components into a composite indicator of ecological impact (Rees, 1992; Kitzes & Wackemagel, 2008). It represents a standardized measure of human demand of biologically productive land and sea areas in relation to the available supply of Earth's resources (Wackernagel & Rees, 1996). As the size of the "footprint" increases, the negative environmental impacts increase as well—threatening sustainability for future generations. Despite the conceptual ease of understanding ecological footprint analyses, there are a number of limitations concerning the actual utility of this measure. Kitzes and Wackernagel (2008), for instance, have argued that "it is an overly simplistic view of complex systems" (p. 815). Despite the potential for oversimplification, a footprint analogy provides a strong conceptual metaphor that can easily be understood by the population at large, and presents complicated indicators in an integrated manner.

Applying a similar concept to nonprofit organizations within communities allows for an assessment of the multiple and varied ways these organizations engage with the communities in which they operate. Indeed, through the various

actions undertaken by organizational personnel in relation to their local community context (as identified in Figure 1) we gain a sense of what organizations can do to increase their civic footprint in their local community. Furthermore, conceptualizing the ways in which organizations promote civic engagement can help create a model (to be tested in further research) that measures the extent to which an organization promotes civic engagement within its community.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Respondents in the study identified how their organization's activities support and promote civic engagement, underscoring and illuminating previous scholarship that has argued that nonprofits (collectively) provide benefits to society (Hansmann, 1980; Milligan & Conradson, 2006; Putnam, 1993, 2000; Weisbrod, 1986). But, unlike previous theoretical literature, we find complex nuances in the processes of how civic engagement is promoted by nonprofits. For instance, stakeholder theory alone might be too narrowly focused on special interests; religious organizations (like those participating in this study) may promote civic engagement among members of their faith group, but they also might promote civic engagement within the wider community by promoting social capital, providing direct social services, or through collaborative efforts with other organizations.

The relationship between nonprofits and civic engagement, according to theories of social capital, may also be too narrowly defined, as they tend to emphasize the nature of social ties at a micro-level of interaction. Nonprofits in this community also engaged in more macro-level practices, similar to those associated with political economic theories of civic benefit. For instance, nonprofits in this study undertook programs and initiatives that were aimed at engaging diverse community members and ensuring minority interests were met, essentially promoting social inclusion of varied community members. However, the findings from this study do highlight the role of nonprofits in creating social networks among community members through direct and indirect efforts of bringing community members together, along with engaging community members in donating and volunteering activities. Certainly, creating social ties was overall the greatest way in which nonprofits promote civic engagement in this local community.

Based on the findings from this study, promoting civic engagement is done in a variety of ways: affording opportunities to volunteer in organizations and in local community activities, through collaboration between members of different organizations, and by undertaking programs and initiatives that allow community members to come together. While social capital theories on the role of nonprofits in promoting civic engagement were found to align with these findings, aspects of stakeholder theories were evident in what respondents described. For instance, organizations undertook programs and initiatives that brought similar, minority interests together and organizations undertook public awareness and education campaigns that sought to align minority interests within the community. Many organizations also sought to enhance social inclusion of minority groups through collaborative efforts between organizations. This latter effort is an example of the political-economic role of nonprofits in promoting civic engagement.

These findings therefore support, in some aspect, social capital, political economic, and stakeholder theories about the varied civic benefits that nonprofits provide in local communities. However, unique to this theoretical literature, our findings highlight direct and indirect ways that nonprofits achieve these benefits for local communities through efforts to enhance civic engagement.

The nature of civic engagement, as we find in our research, is fairly broad and inclusive of inter-organizational collaboration, collaboration with actors outside the local community, generating community awareness, and

increasing civic and national pride, among others. There is a range of diversity and variability within community activities that underscores the depth and breadth of the level of civic engagement promoted by nonprofits. Therefore, further research could utilize this conceptual framework to measure what we have termed here as the civic footprint of an organization. It is also important to note here that while nonprofits can undertake activities to promote community engagement, it is not necessarily always successful (Eliasoph, 2013). Further research could evaluate these efforts taken by nonprofits to enhance the level of civic engagement within a local community; emphasizing what works and what doesn't.

One place to start would be with organizational practices and processes that are conducive to the development of meaningful civic engagement. For instance, Lelieveldt, Dekker, Volker, and Torenvlied (2009) analyzed data collected from 400 different organizations in the Netherlands and found that the nature of inter-organizational relationships and overall concern for the immediate community were the most important factors contributing to whether organizations participated in activities that aimed at enhancing their local communities. Similarly, Lefkovitz, Pinsoneault, Bonbright, and Nguyen (2013) highlighted the importance of the quality and expertise of the board of directors, available resources, and the focus of programming within organizations as contributing factors to civic engagement outcomes for human service organizations.

In much of this literature, and as was found in the study presented here, the actual organizations are seen as agents of civic engagement and participation (Miller, 2009; Richards-Schuster & Dobbie, 2011), and there are several factors at the institutional, community, and organizational level that contribute to whether nonprofits engage in efforts to promote civic engagement (Andrews, Ganz, Baggetta, Han, & Lim, 2010; Koos, 2012; Mulroy, 2004). This present research provides some insight into the ways that organizations promote civic engagement, which could usefully be applied to enhance organizational-level processes and practices that might hinder civic engagement promotion initiatives.

The findings from this study also support the notion that there is variability in the extent to which nonprofits promote civic engagement. For instance, Schneider (2007) has pointed out that nonprofit organizations do not equally promote civic engagement, and while previous research tends to focus on the role of nonprofits in providing outlets for community members to volunteer and donate, the findings here suggest that there are other, more complex ways, that nonprofits promote civic engagement, such as through inter-organizational collaborations or public awareness initiatives. The findings from Handy & Greenspan (2009), found that immigrant congregation members not only used their volunteering to build social capital within the congregation, but that their volunteering allowed them to interact with community members through congregational outreach activities. The findings from this study help enrich this knowledge base, and the concept of a "civic footprint" helps to create a methodological conceptualization of the varying ways that organizations promote civic engagement.

Although this study serves as a useful addition to prior research on the benefits of, and provides an empirically grounded conceptualization of how nonprofits promote civic engagement, one theme missing from this analysis is the advocacy-based role of organizations in local communities (undoubtedly, an important component of the final category in the findings). Unfortunately, this theme did not come through in any of the respondents' interviews. Further research, therefore, should expand on this thematic category in order to investigate the advocacy-based role of nonprofit organizations and the resulting impact on civic engagement. This omission might be a reflection of the limitations in the sample. However, one outcome of this study is new insight into what future research might shed on the matter. In particular, it would be interesting to know whether a sample drawn from a different kind of community,

urban for example, that might be more representative of a larger population suggests other thematic categories, or if the findings here are generally consistent with other populations.

Finally, a practical implication of the civic footprint is that it provides us with an easily understood metaphor for understanding the impact of nonprofits in their community-building role. While efforts in the environmental realm are made to shrink the ecological footprint, in our case we promote increasing the civic footprint—and our findings identify various ways that nonprofits achieve this by delineating what goes into the civic footprint. For instance, by increasing volunteer and donor engagement in the community through program activities, promoting collective community gatherings, and fostering collaborative networks with other organizations within and beyond the local community, nonprofit organizations can increase their civic footprint. Administrative policies and organizational practices can then be developed or restructured to support these efforts and to increase the overall civic benefit that an organization has on a local community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to Mrs. Helen Judd who helped facilitate many of the meetings with local associations and generously hosted one of the authors during a field visit. We would also like to thank Isabelle Sun for her research assistant support on this project and the anonymous reviewers for their very helpful comments on an earlier version of this article.

NOTES

1. It is important to note that the community in which this case is set is atypical of most contemporary American communities on the basis of race, ethnicity, and community size. We thank an anonymous reviewer who pointed this out. This point signifies important limitations when considering the transferability of the findings to other settings. Further research, building off of the findings here, is necessary in a larger, possibly metropolitan, community.
2. Further methodological details are available from the authors on request.

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ANSERJ
Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OBSL et l'économie sociale

Vol. 5, No. 1
Spring / Printemps 2014
pp. 76 – 78

Book Review

By Hoda Farahmandour & Ilya Shodjaee-Zrudlo

Building a Co-operative Community in Public Housing: The Case of the Atkinson Housing Co-operative. *By Jorge Sousa*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2013. 272 pp. ISBN 9780802038036.

In 1973, amendments were made to the National Housing Act that encouraged collaboration between the Canadian government and nonprofit organizations in the housing sector. More recently, in the face of dwindling government support for public and social housing and an increasing demand for affordable accommodations, the role of the social economy in this sector has come to the fore. Increasingly, co-operative organizations have been recognized as an integral part of the social economy, while groups of residents in public or private housing have, in some cases, made arrangements to assume co-ownership of the properties in which they reside.

An illustrative example of this emerging phenomenon is the conversion of the Alexandra Park public housing project in downtown Toronto into the Atkinson Housing Co-operative. Jorge Sousa has diligently captured this transition in *Building a Co-operative Community in Public Housing: The Case of the Atkinson Housing Co-operative*. The aim of this book, as Sousa explains clearly, is practical: to describe the establishment of the Atkinson Housing Co-operative through an ethnographic lens in order to draw out insights gained in the conversion process. In doing so, Sousa hopes to explain how this case—the first of its kind in Canada—unfolded**.** He also aims to establish a framework that may be employed to assist other communities in similar circumstances**;** it is referred to as the Framework for Community-Based Control.

The author convincingly argues that the set of principles and policies that govern the work of public housing—which consistently place little faith in the capacity of the residents themselves and aim to cut as many costs as possible—are disempowering for the local population and subvert the processes of community building. As a former resident who was involved in the conversion of Alexandra Park, Sousa explicitly states his belief in the positive ramifications of increasing tenant control over decision-making within public housing.

Sousa adapts and synthesizes several community development models and key elements of diverse bodies of academic literature, such as political sociology and co-operative studies, to construct a theoretical lens with which to interpret pivotal events surrounding the conversion. The integration of various theories to describe a complex phenomenon is a clear strength of the book, as is the ability to identify and analyze critical elements that explain the conversion process without getting lost in the details.

The two central chapters, which provide an overview of some three decades of the history of Alexandra Park, capture key events linked to the conversion process, as well as the ambiguities that surrounded it. The reader learns, for instance, how Sonny Atkinson, after whom the co-operative was named, rallied the community to tackle the drug problems and security issues that the housing authority seemed to be doing little about. His methods were, however, considered controversial by some. When Atkinson learned of the possibility of converting the housing project into a co-operative, he orchestrated a new focus in the struggle against the housing authority. The outcome, which was finally established in 2003, was a hybrid between the co-operative and public housing models. Generally speaking, the narrative is fairly presented, and challenges are given due attention.

The lessons learned are then synthesized and coherently presented. Drawing from its theoretical lens, the book elaborates on the Framework for Community-Based Control and its five components: community assets, building capacity, demonstrating capacity, critical consciousness, and goal attainment. Outlining this framework is one of the goals of the book, and it is compelling because it adapts the existing body of knowledge related to community development in light of lived experience.

Sousa welcomes a wide audience and intends to influence community developers, public housing residents, and policymakers interested in community-based control in the vital area of housing. Both practitioners and academics will find the example of transforming a community outside of government control useful, in relation to both similar types of conversions as well as others, such as business successions or worker co-operatives. Students will appreciate the book's structure and flow, with its clearly defined objectives, well-written chapters, and clear logic. Its content could complement the reading list of a number of undergraduate and graduate level courses in, for instance, community organizing, social movements, alternative economic arrangements, social economy studies, social research methods, public policy of social housing, or public policy of alternative housing models. The documentation, analysis, and interpretation of this community's journey provide a particularly rich contribution to the Canadian Community Economic Development (CED) network, as it continues to learn how to create vibrant and sustainable local economies.

While Sousa's case study provides insights into the dynamics of Canadian housing communities, it does, however, leave the reader with a number of deeper questions that could have been more explicitly explored. Although the book focuses on issues of power and decision-making, these are not the only relevant aspects of community life that must be addressed to foster co-operative living. For example, as Sousa himself makes clear, if latent tensions among residents from different religious and ethnic backgrounds are not adequately addressed, the conversion process can be significantly derailed. One wonders, for instance, how the diversity of the members of a community can contribute to, rather than hamper, its unity of purpose, vision, and action. Given the fact that heterogeneous communities within urban centres are increasingly becoming the norm in Canada, it would have been interesting for Sousa to add a discussion of such questions to his analysis.

Despite these minor limitations, Sousa manages to capture the magnitude of change that occurred at the Atkinson Housing Co-operative without overstating its achievements, as management change alone could not have addressed a number of the systemic social ills facing the community. Having collaborated with this community to learn how to empower its adolescents, Wordswell Association for Community Learning has seen that the residents' commitment to tenant involvement and to the beautification of their community is great. Their story provides hope that communities can be empowered to take greater ownership of their development, and that the limitations of public housing can be challenged and overcome.

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ANSERJ
Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OBSL et l'économie sociale

Vol. 5, No. 1
Spring / Printemps 2014
pp. 79 – 81

Compte-rendu de livre

par Nathalie McSween

La transition écologique de l'économie : La contribution des coopératives et de l'économie solidaire. *Par Louis Favreau et Mario Hébert*. Québec, QC : Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2012. 160 pp. ISBN 9782760535459.

À moins d'avoir la tête profondément enfoncée dans le sable, nous savons tous aujourd'hui que l'urgence écologique est à nos portes. Entre la multiplication de phénomènes écologiques extrêmes annoncés par le Groupe d'experts intergouvernemental sur l'évolution du climat (GIEC) et les conséquences prévues des changements climatiques sur la capacité de la planète à nourrir ses habitants dans le moyen et le long terme (GIEC, 2014), affirmer que l'économie doit urgemment prendre un virage écologique relève aujourd'hui du registre de l'évidence. La question qui se pose aujourd'hui est plutôt « comment? » Comment changer de modèle? Quelles sont les alternatives au modèle dominant qui permettraient de répondre à la crise écologique?

Louis Favreau et Mario Hébert ne sont pas les premiers chercheurs qui se sont proposés de réfléchir sur le nécessaire virage écologique de nos économies et sur les moyens d'y parvenir (voir par exemple : Abraham *et al.*, 2011 et Lipietz, 2012). La réflexion qu'ils nous proposent dans cet ouvrage se démarque cependant du lot et ce, parce que les auteurs abordent la question des alternatives à ce modèle sous un angle inusité : celui de la contribution – réelle et potentielle – de l'économie sociale et solidaire à la transition écologique de nos économies. La thèse centrale soutenue par les auteurs dans cet ouvrage est que le secteur de l'économie sociale et solidaire constitue une force concrète et une force de proposition qui est – et doit être – partie prenante de toute stratégie visant à dépasser le modèle actuel.

Le modèle économique actuellement dominant est en crise (cf. les deux premiers chapitres de l'ouvrage). Des alternatives concrètes à ce modèle existent déjà : les entreprises d'économie sociale (coopératives, mutuelles et associations) sont au premier rang des initiatives concrètes cherchant à concilier le développement économique, l'équité sociale et la protection des écosystèmes. Marginale, l'économie sociale? S'appuyant sur les estimations (généralement fort crédibles) de l'Organisation internationale du travail, les auteurs avancent que le secteur « pèse pour près de 10% du PIB, 10% des emplois et 10% de la finance à l'échelle mondiale » (p.44). Par-delà leur poids dans l'économie, les entreprises de l'économie sociale et solidaire sont aussi des actrices d'un autre modèle de développement : un modèle non capitaliste, démocratique et ancré dans des territoires (chapitre 3). Face à la crise (économique et écologique), disent les auteurs, le modèle de développement porté par l'économie sociale constitue une alternative au modèle dominant. Les chapitres 4 et 5 s'attardent ainsi à faire la démonstration de la capacité du

secteur de l'économie sociale à penser – et à mettre en place – des alternatives au modèle dominant dans les domaines de l'énergie et de la forêt.
Ici il ne s'agit pas de proposer que l'économie sociale constitue une Alternative avec un grand A au capitalisme, mais d'affirmer que l'économie sociale est un modèle économique alternatif qui non seulement *est déjà là*, mais qui constitue « une force de transition de l'économie » (chapitre 3) avec laquelle il faut compter pour repenser le système économique.

La force de cet ouvrage réside surtout dans sa capacité à rendre visible la dimension politique et réflexive du secteur de l'économie sociale. Ce que laisse entrevoir cet ouvrage est en effet un secteur économique qui se sent interpellé par la crise écologique qui s'annonce et par la crise économique qui est déjà là – un secteur économique qui, de surcroît, cherche depuis une dizaine d'année à devenir plus qu'un acteur socioéconomique ancré dans des territoires pour devenir aussi une force de proposition sociopolitique et ce, non seulement à l'échelle du Québec, mais à l'échelle internationale (chapitre 6). Ce que mettent par ailleurs en relief les auteurs est que le secteur de l'économie sociale a de plus en plus la capacité d'interpeller les pouvoirs publics. Le secteur coopératif en particulier dispose de structures associatives solides qui s'étendent de l'échelle locale à l'échelle internationale. L'effort réflexif des acteurs coopératifs et de l'économie sociale est donc appuyé par une capacité structurelle d'interpeller les pouvoirs publics à diverses échelles, y compris à l'échelle internationale (chapitre 7). La démonstration faite par les auteurs s'appuie sur leur participation personnelle à un processus de réflexion collective entamé depuis une décennie par un réseau de dirigeants de l'économie sociale et solidaire réunissant des acteurs de tous les continents, les Rencontres du Mont Blanc (RMB).[2] L'ouvrage recensé ici est issu des réflexions entourant la cinquième édition des RMB en 2011, une édition qui se tenait en amont du Sommet de la Terre (Rio+20) de 2012. En préparation de ce Sommet, les participants au RMB avaient choisi de réfléchir collectivement à la contribution de l'économie sociale au renouvellement du modèle de développement et, par là, à la contribution du secteur à la transition écologique de l'économie. Reste à voir si, comme semblent le souhaiter les auteurs, les acteurs de l'économie sociale parviendront effectivement à « faire mouvement » et, de là, à influencer substantiellement les pouvoirs publics.

À l'échelle internationale, le premier grand test sera celui du processus de l'« après 2015 ». Les RMB et le RIPESS (un autre réseau international d'acteurs de l'économie sociale)[3] ont tous deux été invités à participer aux consultations en vue de l'élaboration des Objectifs de développement durable (ODD) qui doivent remplacer les Objectifs de développement du millénaire (OMD) qui, nous le savons, ne seront que très partiellement atteints en 2015. Les réseaux de l'économie sociale parviendront-ils à modifier les termes du débat dans ces arènes internationales afin que les objectifs et les actions qui s'ensuivront participent à un « autre » développement, solidaire, écologique et ancré dans des territoires? Une histoire à suivre. Entretemps, l'ouvrage de Favreau et Hébert constitue un ouvrage à lire pour alimenter la réflexion de tous ceux qui sont à la recherche de modèles alternatifs à même de contribuer à une transition écologique de l'économie qui remette aussi l'humain et les collectivités humaines au centre de la réflexion.

NOTES

1. https://www.rencontres-montblanc.coop/
2. http://www.ripess.org/

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ANSERJ
Canadian Journal of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research
Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OBSL et l'économie sociale

Vol. 5, No. 1
Spring / Printemps 2014
pp. 82 – 83

Book Review
By Ushnish Sengupta

From Seva to Cyberspace: The Many Faces of Volunteering in India. *By Femida Handy, Meenaz Kassam, Sharjah Jillian Ingold, & Bhagyashree Ranade*. New Delhi, India: SAGE Publications India, 2011. 251 pp. ISBN 9788132106982.

From Seva to Cyberspace: The Many Faces of Volunteering in India by Femida Handy, Meenaz Kassam, Sharjah Jillian Ingold, and Bhagyashree Ranade is a useful addition to the literature on local volunteerism in different countries. The text is authored by scholars who have a deep understanding of volunteering in countries around the world, including the U.S., Canada, and India. They provide a deep analysis of the religious basis of volunteering in India, report on surveys about volunteering conducted across multiple countries (including India), and discuss case studies that highlight the theories and analysis presented in different chapters.

The book's main strength is the way it coherently combines a review of the literature on volunteering, case studies, and an analysis of theories about volunteering in the Indian context. The book is well organized. It begins with a historical overview of volunteering in India, followed by a chapter on defining volunteering in the contemporary context. The subsequent chapters describe volunteers, including youth, corporate employees, and mature adults. It concludes with chapters on religious volunteering, the value of volunteering, and virtual volunteering. The book is well designed, allowing researchers to quickly orient themselves with volunteering in India.

The examination of religious influence on volunteering in India is one of the highlights of the book, which provides both a historical and a contemporary analysis of the major role of religion in the country. Religion has a stronger influence on society in India than in countries such as Canada, where a significant percentage of citizens report no religious affiliation. Handy et al. start by explaining the origins of volunteering in India and its basis in religious beliefs, including Hinduism and the practice of charity, Islam and obligatory social duties, and Buddhism and ethical behaviour. In Chapter 6, the authors give a deeper analysis of religious volunteering and its inherent limitations, which include serving only one's own religious community and restricted involvement in more politically charged issues.

The volunteering case studies provided at the end of each chapter are also extremely valuable, as they enhance the analysis with a personalized illustration of theory grounded in practice. One example that stands out is the Non Resident Indian Parents Association, a uniquely Indian organization, in Chapter 5. Moreover, the explanatory notes at the end of many of the case studies reconnect the cases to the preceding analysis, effectively providing further subjective rationale in the form of personal stories the chapter's conclusions for the reader.

The primary limitation of the book is the small sample size of the surveys and the demographics of the surveyed population, which do not necessarily represent the broad and diverse Indian population. Notwithstanding the limitations of the sample size, the book does include surveys of volunteers, which contribute insight and knowledge to an area where additional empirical research is decidedly required. At the same time, as reported by the authors, a sample size of over 500 adults limits the ability to generalize for all of India, a country with a population of over one billion people. Furthermore, the demographic characteristics of the survey sample over represent an educated, English speaking population. The volunteer characteristics of the educated, English speaking population in India may be more similar to middle class volunteer characteristics in developed countries such as the U.S. and Canada. Comparing survey results between countries without controlling for socioeconomic demographics is inconclusive at best. The survey of university students from one city in India, for example, does not necessarily represent other cities or the rest of the country, which is socioeconomically diverse across regions.

In terms of further exploring volunteering in India, a deeper analysis of volunteering by class, income, gender, and geography would be useful, since these elements have different impacts across different countries. Handy et al. allude to differences in class and income in certain areas of the book. The level of income inequality in India is higher than that of Canada, but lower than the U.S., as measured by the Gini coefficient. The absence of a robust public social safety net in India is an income and class related factor that may affect volunteering. For instance, a person without a social safety net is less likely to volunteer, as they are more likely to spend the majority of their available time looking after basic needs for themselves and their family, including food, water, and shelter. Handy et al. also allude to geographical differences in volunteering, such as the percentage of people who volunteer in different places but do not expand on these differences, which can be substantial in a country as diverse as India. Since the survey of Indian volunteers was completed in one city, Pune, the geographical applicability is a further limitation of the study. A broader survey sample of volunteers covering additional geographical areas may provide some different results. Although not an explicit subject of the book, the increase of global and transnational volunteering and the related issues of "voluntourism" would be a useful addition to the book. Lastly, the final chapter on virtual volunteering, while a useful examination of the intersection of information technology and volunteering, could be enhanced by an analysis of Indian volunteer contributions to, for instance, the global open source software, open access, or open data movements. After all, Indians are also part of a significant global diaspora, and an analysis of the global diffusion of volunteering-related social innovations originating from India—such as Gandhian principles—would enhance a future edition of the book.

From Seva to Cyberspace: The Many Faces of Volunteering in India is a useful addition to the literature on volunteering that will be useful for both scholars and practitioners. The authors have been able to successfully communicate their research through theory analysis and case studies. This exploratory research enables additional study that will enhance our understanding of the similarities and differences of volunteering not only in India but also across the world.

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Official journal of the
Association of Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER)
Revue officielle de
l'Association de recherche sur les organismes sans but lucratif et l'économie sociale (ARES)

ISSN: 1920-9355