A resource-based participatory framework for community development strategies

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Abstract

A community is viewed as a group of local actors with a common interest or context. As the main local protagonists, community leaders strive for sustainable livelihood and resilient growth within the community through various economic and social developments. These community developments generally fall under two broad strategic approaches: the historically dominant Needs-based strategy (*What the community needs*), and the contemporary alternative Asset-based strategy (*What the community has*). Yet, communities often face local resource limitations in their local actions, and community leaders need to consider both local and foreign resources (social capital and economic capital) in their community development strategies. This paper proposes a unique resource-based community participatory framework that applies the Economics and Sustainability lenses in arguing why and when community leaders need to develop mutual economic reliance and sustainable communal resilience through meaningful engagements between local actors and foreign actors for its community development strategies. This framework articulates four relative resource trade-off windows for efficient capital allocation and utilization by community leaders and suggests possible optimal community development strategies. In essence, the paper forwards sustainable and economic rationales to call for community leaders to focus ambidextrously on developing both internal self-resilience capacities and external mutual-reliance capabilities applicable to Canadian and Indigenous community developments alike. Finally, the paper calls upon foreign public, private, and the third sectors to engage local community leaders to operationalise local communal actions on local economic and social developments.

Keywords: Multidisciplinary, Sustainable Community Development, Community Leadership, Social Capital, Economic Capital