

CLaRE and the Regional Centre of Expertise (Resilient communities)

**Community regeneration post-COVID-19:
challenges and opportunities**

May 2022 - First Annual Conference

Editorial

Welcome to the first annual Centre for Creativity, Leadership and Regional Economies (CLaRE) and Regional Centres of Expertise (Cymru) Resilient Communities Conference held at the Aberystwyth Business School. We are delighted to welcome presenters and conference delegates from across Europe.

The symposium has the following objectives:

- To provide opportunities for Aberystwyth Business School (and Aberystwyth University) staff: to share their research with School stakeholders and contribute to the culture of research and enterprise at the School.
- To complement the CLaRE Working Paper Journal and to generate activity/working papers to be published in the journal.
- To contribute to a REF evidence-based research culture, in particular to use the conference to develop potential REF case studies
- To provide opportunities for Aberystwyth Business School (and Aberystwyth University) research students to share their research, receive feedback and contribute to the culture of research at the School.
- To create opportunities for the application/implementation of Aberystwyth Business School and wider Aberystwyth University research and enterprise activity with industry

The papers delivered at this year's conference consider a wide variety of subject matter from regenerative tourism to the impact of Covid19 on high street retailing, from leadership practice in community development to well-being in Swansea's regional development policy, and from evidence based policy making in County Sligo to community asset transfers in Wales. The Business School is delighted to welcome keynote speakers Professor Michael Woods (Aberystwyth University) and Lee Phillips (Wales Manager, Money and Pensions Service).

Conference proceedings

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Abstracts

The rise of the Pro-C Artisan: Those who bridge the gap between Hobbyists or Professional Craftspeople

Dr Sophie Bennett-Gillison (Aberystwyth University)

Abstract

This paper identifies craftspeople who are neither hobbyists nor commercially successful craftspeople; described here as Pro-C Artisans these people operate lifestyle businesses within the crafts sector and often support their craftwork with other income or part-time employment. The importance of the Pro-C Artisan is not necessarily in their economic output, nor the quality of the work they produce, but in their trade-off between commercial success and desire for a 'rural idyll' lifestyle which, it is suggested in this chapter, will increase in the post-COVID environment. This new norm, it is suggested, creates the right environment for the rise of the Pro-C Artisan who are able to sustain their creative career by diversifying their creative practice, utilising local networks, taking on additional part-time employment and producing products that appeal to the recent influx of incomers with larger disposable incomes. These Artisans may not be a skilled craftsman, they may have little previous experience and lack international or even national reputation for their work, yet while other sectors may struggle with the long-term consequences of the pandemic and postpartum regulations many of the Pro-C Artisan in this chapter have weathered the storm successfully, in some cases increasing sales during this period. According to a recent UNESCO report the cultural and creative sector has been hit harder by the COVID pandemic than the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2008/9 (UNESCO, 2021), with the loss of ten million creative jobs globally; in contrast findings in this chapter suggest that the lifestyle businesses of the Pro-C Artisans in rural west Wales have remained in operation throughout the pandemic. In this chapter these Artisans are presented as the 'new creatives'; finding new ways to generate income, diversifying to meet the demands of incomers who share their dream of rural idyll and creating opportunities to survive in uncertain and changing times.

Empirical development and application of a structured framework with respect to power and trust to Collaborative Governance

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Key Words: Collaboration; Power; Trust; Collaborative Governance.

Introduction

The effects of COVID 19 on business collaboration is unclear with authors split between little to no change due to the switch to virtual methods compared to those who found the lack of face-to-face contact in collaborations limiting. The aim of this research is to fill a gap in knowledge and practice by undertaking an empirical analysis of collaboration which took place during the pandemic period to assess whether power and trust relationships in several collaborative situations had compromised outcomes.

Background

The literature on collaboration has identified several potential benefits including improved coordination of activities, better leveraging and pooling of resources, increased social capital, enhanced conflict management (prevention, reduction, and resolution), better knowledge management (including generation, translation, and diffusion), increased risk-sharing in policy experimentation, and increased policy. Likewise, outcomes can be unpredictable, short lived and expensive. There are serious problems with measuring the cost efficiency of networked

policy processes (Sørensen 2009). The output of collaborative networks can be extremely difficult to quantify, since it often includes intangible results such as joint problem understandings, common values, future visions, enhanced coordination, cooperative processes, and so on. Moreover, it is exceedingly troublesome to measure the total costs of networked policy outputs since the governance networks in question are seldom in control of the production of the tangible and intangible policy outputs.

Collaborative governance has a popular following but a mixed track record of sustainable outcomes (Sorensen and Torfing 2009). Arguably, improved outcomes where collaboration takes place may feasibly come from the recognition that power and trust relationships, often unequal from the start, are overlooked and should be managed as part of a collaborative system (Gash & Ansell 2008; Emerson & Nabatchi 2016). Better understanding and management may improve sustainable outcomes and reduce costs. The research will critically evaluate collaborative governance and the relationship of both organisations and individuals in active collaborative situations.

A systematic review of literature shows that whilst the detailed address to both power and trust singularly has been undertaken, a framework that brings both together as a means of analysis and improvement in collaborative arrangements outcomes has not been developed. An initial systematic review of literature revealed a framework applied to taxation policy the 'slippery slope' (Gangl et al; 2015; Kirchler et al 2007) that contained a seemingly workable method that could be adapted and applied more widely to collaborative governance. This research will apply the framework to collaboration initiatives and test its applicability to improve how they are run, managed and their outcomes achieved.

Research Approach

The research which is ongoing, undertook a systematic review of literature to assess the significance and relationships between power and trust in collaborative governance and in so doing derive the key factors that need to be taken into account when undertaking a research project. The research developed a detailed methodology for primary data collection method to test the relationship between power and trust. Primary data collection thus far has been through quantitative electronic questionnaire to obtain baseline information across the respondents to be followed up by semi-structured interviews.

The data collection has given 18 usable cases for analysis. The questionnaire was derived from literature on power and trust relationships in collaborative environments administered electronically to collaboration participants and initial results analysed. Based on the results and triangulated to the literature review, a series of semi-structured interviews will be undertaken as a next step, to clarify the value of a framework approach and deduce in more detail the motivations for practitioner involvement. The findings will be coded against power and trust criteria derived from the literature for the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The various initiatives will be tested and compared to see if the structured approach to power and trust imbalances and resultant collaborative states (antagonistic/voluntary or committed) are anticipated to lead to improved outcomes.

Initial Findings and discussion

General findings are that of the 18 projects surveyed, which ranged in size from 2 party collaborations to an initiative of over 30 participants, 13 (72%) of projects were judged by the participants to have been a success, 4 of the projects were viewed as partial successes and 1 project as unsuccessful.

			Q3: In your judgement how successful was the overall collaboration initiative ?			
			Total	Fully successful	Partially	Not succes
Q9: Do you think the following affected the outcomes of the initiative?	Relative Power positions	Positively affected outcome	6	5	1	0
		Neither positively nor negative	9	8	1	0
		Negatively affected outcomes	3	0	2	1
		Total	18	13	4	1
	Relative Trust positions	Positively affected outcome	8	7	1	0
		Neither positively nor negative	7	6	1	0
		Negatively affected outcomes	3	0	2	1
	Total	18	13	4	1	

Much of the literature on collaboration deals with the problems of alignment and systematic failures of collaboration but the findings of this research are that the majority of collaboration projects achieve or are judged to have achieved, by their participants at least, to be successes.

The above cross tabulation shows participants thought, where the outcome was successful, the relative power positions positively affected or was not a major factor indicating facets of power resident in all collaborative situations is used to support the collaboration. Likewise, Trust between collaborative partners was also judged to positively affect outcomes or to be neutral.

Power and trust are judged by participants to be equally important to successful outcomes. Literature has generally dealt with either trust or power individually, but this is the first time both have been judged together and their combined positions assessed.

The problems of alignment between power and trust arise where the projects do not work as initially envisaged where both relative power and trust affect the outcome. It is the contention of this paper these need to be judged on a case by case basis depending upon the initial aims, roles and power/trust positions from the outset.

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Regional Development Through Well-being: Evidence from the Swansea Bay City Region

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to evaluate the value of a well-being approach to regional development, particularly in the post-Covid-19 recovery. Specifically, this paper investigates regional development undertaken by 4theRegion, a membership organisation of businesses, community groups and stakeholders aimed at achieving asset-based growth across the Swansea Bay City Region. This case study draws attention to a place-specific approach to regional development, underpinned by the principles of well-being, therefore the paper aims to investigate how this approach influences regional development in Swansea Bay.

Relevant background information/context

Well-being is increasingly recognised as an important aspect in the ways in which local economies function, with countries such as Iceland and New Zealand looking to well-being as a preferred measure of economic prosperity than growth, as it takes a more holistic perspective. Well-being is also evident in legislation, such as in Wales, where the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) is hailed as a unique piece of legislation, outlining 7 goals at the heart of decision-making across Welsh life: prosperity, resilience, equality, health, cohesive communities, vibrant culture and Welsh language, and global responsibility. The Covid-19 pandemic has been a catalyst for profound changes, with lockdowns and health measures affecting businesses and individuals, impacting local economies. As the world recovers from Covid-19, regions could re-evaluate local development and consider how well-being could support sustainable economic development.

Research approach

This paper presents a case study of regional development based on well-being undertaken by 4theRegion in the Swansea Bay city region . The case study is based on multiple methods aimed at developing a holistic understanding of the contribution of the organisation, including interviews conducted with the 2 directors of 4theRegion to enquire about the values of membership to the organisation, and their role in supporting regional development. Secondly, interviews were conducted with 10 representatives of member organisations of 4theRegion to add further depth to knowledge about the contributions of 4theRegion in supporting opportunities for regional development. Secondary data was gathered on 4theRegion's policies and practice through document analysis of 28 videos and 25 articles on the 4theRegion website. Data from each research phase was analysed independently through thematic analysis, with data triangulated for further interpretation.

Discussion

Findings show the localised network approach of 4theRegion led to engagement from various stakeholders within the region, including government, universities, community groups and businesses, leading to inclusive place-based regional development. This is important due to the specific nature of the region, with a small urban centre and large rural hinterland. Findings align with debates on who should take the lead in localised ecosystems, with the benefits of the organisation in the case study seen through a bottom-up approach driven by social value and the principles of well-being.

Conclusions/implications

Implications point to new ways of understanding the value of promoting regional development through inclusive networks underpinned by well-being. Practical implications would enable SMEs, community groups, and other stakeholders within an ecosystem to explore new perspectives to business prosperity. This is especially pertinent in the post-Covid recovery phase, as businesses seek to develop greater resilience.

Key words: Regional development, Well-being, Swansea Bay, Entrepreneurial ecosystems, Post-Covid 19 recovery, Wales.

Related conference areas:

- 1 Economic policy and local regeneration strategies
- 6 Economic geography and local economic development
- 14 Health and well-being as a driver for community development

Community Redevelopment: The Case of Blaenau Ffestiniog

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Key words: Community, Redevelopment, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Social Entrepreneurship

Introduction

This paper is part of the Influencing Community Regeneration policy in Wales post Covid-19 research study. As part of this project, three community regeneration projects are examined, one in South Wales, one in Mid Wales and one in North Wales. The economic challenges facing these areas because of Brexit, COVID-19 and other factors are expected to be considerable and community development programmes play an important role in the local economies. The main aim of the paper is to understand the role of leadership in community development, sustainability of the organisations and post COVID-19 regeneration.

Background

A social enterprise is usually a not-for-profit enterprise which is intended to help the community. These enterprises can take many forms. Social entrepreneurship covers a wide variety of activities including community shops, banks, and other organizations to help the community. A social enterprise depends on a variety of factors for success including fundraising from various charities and donations, as well as grants and loans. They also depend on an effective management team and support from volunteers who often give their time without pay. Often, the motivation for the social enterprise will be a gap in the private or public sector. Although making a profit may not be primary consideration, nevertheless the survival of the social enterprise will depend on ensuring sufficient income to cover the running costs.

Research approach

Blaenau Ffestiniog was chosen as the location for North Wales as it fulfilled the criteria that firstly, it had formerly been part of the Communities First programme, secondly, the community development organisations had sustainability as their aim and, thirdly, they were actively contributing to community regeneration. Interviews were held with individuals who help leadership, management and volunteer roles within these organisations.

Discussion

The role of leaders or managers in community enterprises takes a different meaning than in a profit-making entity. It was clear that the interviewees did not want to be labelled as leaders and they saw their roles as coordinators who shared the responsibility of leading their organization with a group of people. They felt that the term leadership had political connotations and that it was over-used, and difficult to reconcile in the context of a community enterprise. Decisions were made by a management board, and everyone had a vote with the majority having the final say. This is seen as a democratic approach, and they respond to the challenges that arise and find a solution. Therefore, any decision is made by more than one person and is a very cooperative process.

Conclusions/implications

The co-operative approach in Blaenau Ffestiniog was emphasized in the interviews and this is rooted in the values of the community. The town is a very close-knit community which is based on the traditions of the slate quarries and the chapels. One of the issues facing the community enterprises in Blaenau Ffestiniog is the reliance on volunteers for the senior management. This is a considerable cost saving which enables them to survive. However, this is a short-term solution which needs to be addressed in the longer term.

'Creative Literary Practice in Community Development: A Project in Progress'

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Key words: creativity, stories, community development, transformative performance

Abstract

Writing about Jacques Derrida's 1993 volume *Specters of Marx* (trans. 1994), Nicole Pepperell suggests that Derrida's attempt to create what she calls a 'material transformation of Marx's text' itself 'acts out a vision of inheritance as an active, transformative performance, rather than as a passive transmission of inherited content to its heirs' (Pepperell, p. 222). Positioning the writing of imaginative narratives about a community's past, present, and putative future existence as crucially this sort of 'active, transformative performance' – of (variously) place memories, responses to location, or hopes for a community's future – this paper discusses the initial stages of a community development project being run from Aberystwyth University that seeks to explore whether the act of writing stories has an effect on participants' sense of engagement with or connection to their community. Discussing the importance of imaginative work in community development practice, Margaret Ledwith suggests that 'If we can free our imaginations then we will see much more easily what we need to do' (Ledwith, p. 52). Drawing on what she describes as Danny Dorling's sense that 'inequality has harmed our imagination', Ledwith's contention is that freeing the imagination can help us escape the consequent stultifying of our sense of possibility. Indeed, her suggestion is effectively that we can deploy acts of imagination to help us do nothing less than undercut what Raymond Williams would call the 'dominant' – in other words, those ideological structures that 'constitute[] a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives' (Williams, p. 9). Not only aiming to provide opportunities for imaginative writing for the community in which it is set, the project's work seeks to test the efficacy of writing stories for developing community belonging/engagement as a principle – and thus to offer critical engagement with Ledwith's suggestion of the practical value of transformative imaginative practice for community development as a whole.

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The Effect of Covid-19 on Rural Sport: A case study of Endurance GB

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Keywords: Endurance GB, Covid-19, Rural Sport, Equestrian Sport

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected virtually every country in the world and across many areas of people's lives. This paper investigates the effect of Covid-19 on rural sport in the UK, and more specifically on the equestrian sport of endurance. This sport entails horse and rider completing a natural course of between 32K and 160K (depending on level) at speeds not below 9kph and often much higher. Examples include Red Dragon in Wales, held in the Begwn uplands, and Euston Park in Suffolk, held in parkland and woodland.

Contrary to the upward trend of consumer spend on recreation over the past five years (Statista.com, 2022) the Endurance GB paid membership has declined year on year with a large drop in 2020 as lockdowns hit the UK according to Endurance GB membership data.

This secondary data was combined with questionnaires sent out to all current Endurance GB members in September 2021. As well as demographic, membership and horse related data, respondents were asked about how Covid-19 had affected their continuance of their sport.

There were 141 responses from a membership of 1103. The largest segment of riders is females over 45 (with 38 riders aged 65 and above). The results showed that 81% planned to join as normal in 2022 but 18% were keeping an open mind and would re-join when things were back to normal.

However, 13% of members did not ride during the first lockdown as they were concerned about injuring themselves and causing the NHS problems. Others (3%) went on slower, safer rides and 26% rode less. Some (39%) said there was little or no change and 5% had more time to ride and so increased their riding. Due to a lack of competitive events riding was for pleasure and to keep horses ticking over rather than full training rides.

Covid-19 affected the membership in many ways with comments including 'lost my competitive spirit', 'can't get my horse fit so not bothering coming back into the sport' and 'I have kept my membership to support Endurance GB as without it there would be no sport when the pandemic is over' amongst the responses.

Secondary ride data and membership for 2022 showed that membership was tracking in line with 2019 and early season rides were full with waiting lists, showing that there is as much enthusiasm for the sport as there was pre-Covid. However, some membership patterns had changed with a large increase in supporter (free) memberships and riders doing pleasure rather than competitive rides.

The implications for Endurance GB is that a renewed effort to recruit new members is needed, amongst younger age groups. It is the older riders who have dropped levels and distances as they got out of the routine of training and competing. For the future of the sport new young blood is needed.

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Evidence-based policy making and local community development. The Case of the European Tourism Indicator System in County Sligo, Ireland

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Abstract

Sustainability has become a necessity in the field of tourism planning, destination management and community development. While this connection between tourism, sustainability and local development has never been closer, decision making now requires reliable information to guide sound policies and the development future strategies. Without such evidence-based policy making, decision makers would be unable to anticipate future impacts on local communities, particularly as the tourism industry attempts to rebuild itself in the aftermath of the pandemic. Despite indicators being regarded as ideal tools to help monitor tourism impacts from a community perspective, limited data has been collected to date from their application across the Republic of Ireland. Therefore, the purpose of this submission is to present baseline data from the application of the core indicators that make up the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS) in County Sligo, Ireland.

While this application of the ETIS constitutes a significant advancement towards evidence-based policy making and the drive towards sustainable long term local community development. Although data here does represent pre-pandemic tourism activity. These findings do illustrate how the ETIS facilitates a robust method to allow decision makers to help manage tourism activity from a community perspective. Thus, allowing the monitoring and benchmarking of future indicator data over time.

Keywords: Community development, European tourism indicator system (ETIS), evidence-based policy making, Tourism Impacts, Ireland

The Cambrian Village Trust - community development in practice

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Key words: Local economic development, discourse analysis, post-Covid19, Cambrian Village Trust

Abstract

Introduction

The Welsh economy is forecast to be negatively impacted by the departure of the UK from the European Union and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic (Munday et al, 2020). As a consequence it is highly likely the work of community development organisations will be much sought after. From 2001 to 2018 community development in Wales was predominantly delivered by the Communities First programme. A legacy fund was provided by the Welsh Government to support a transition period following the closure of the Communities First programme in 2018. The legacy fund was designed to support work in the areas of employability, community empowerment and children's early year development. It can be stated that currently, community development delivery in Wales post-Communities First is fragmented.

The primary purpose of this project is to analyse community development and regeneration discourses in Wales. This abstract focuses on case study based on the Cambrian Village Trust

a community development organisation in the Rhondda Valley, South Wales. Specific attention is be paid to the impact of Covid19 on the work of the community development organisation. The creation of an effective interpretation of stakeholder views will contribute to greater stakeholder involvement in policy making.

The context for this research project is community development/regeneration activity in Wales. Welsh area-based initiative (ABI)/regeneration policy has its roots in the land reclamation schemes of the 1960s and 1970s (Welsh Government, 2016). However, land reclamation and property-based regeneration schemes are comparatively expensive. Adamson et al (2012) describe regeneration programmes in Wales being expensive, charged with achieving an 'uphill task'. Further, their economic and social knock-on effects may be limited (Gripaios, 2002). Welsh policy developed into property-based regeneration and subsequently in the late 1980s into education and training. Welsh ABI policy further evolved with the 2001 launch of the Communities First programme. The extent of the economic and social problems facing regeneration programmes such as Communities First may have been too large for the programmes to be successful (Gripaios, 2002).

Research Methods

The Cambrian Village Trust case study is being constructed via a mixed method approach. Namely, semi-structured interviews are being undertaken and an online survey will be carried out. The interviews have been held with individuals with similar functions or relationships in the case study. For example, individuals performing leadership, management, operational delivery and volunteer roles at the community development organisation are being interviewed. Other interviewees include community development organisation stakeholders such as service recipients, project funders, local and national government officers and partner organisations. Data will be collected via a survey instrument designed around the different types of social capital, innovation, community agency, community solidarity and community development leadership identified within the literature. Multiple items included in the survey are associated with each of the different aspects of leadership, sustainability, social capital and typology of innovation (especially social innovation), agency and solidarity. Descriptive analysis is used to examine differences in the leadership, sustainability, social capital and innovation, agency and solidarity items for those engaged in the case study.

The outcomes of the research project to date are multi-faceted. For instance, an outcome is a better understanding of the management and leadership styles most likely to create successful, sustainable community development organisations. Other outcomes include an interpretation of the drivers and obstacles to successful community regeneration.

Preliminary findings

To date five interviews have been undertaken with members of staff at the Cambrian Village Trust. The roles held by interviewees include leadership, operational level management, and community facing operational officers. The themes emerging from the interviews to date include leadership (including the implications for letting go of power to the community), the impact of Covid19 (Cambrian Village Trust well placed with its outdoor space based activities) and the need to enable community members to have a 'voice'.

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The impact of Covid19 on the small high street

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Key words: High-street, Local economy, covid19, Regeneration, small business, depedestrianisation.

This study is the first and second part of a greater longitudinal piece of research into the regeneration of a rural town and the affect coronavirus has on that regeneration. Holywell in North Wales is undergoing a regeneration project and pre-coronavirus small businesses were interviewed to understand their views on Brexit and how this will affect ongoing regeneration. The research has now shifted in focus to coronavirus as the main topic with Brexit as a secondary area of impact. Initially interviews were conducted face to face, however during covid they were conducted remotely, either via telephone or Zoom call.

The high street businesses have changed their views overall at this point regarding current impact and for the future. Whereas before coronavirus hit the area, they were upbeat about the regeneration, believing that it would breathe new life into the town and attract tourists, they now believe original plans will not be viable post Covid. Many businesses are struggling, with total or partial closure negatively impacting their revenue streams to the point that they may not recover.

The research continued with interviews of the same businesses after 6- and 9months intervals to assess the short-term impact of lockdown and the subsequent easing of restrictions as life returns towards normality and Brexit is once again higher up on the agenda. During the later stages of the 2021 lockdown, several new businesses have opened, suggesting that regeneration efforts albeit different from initially planned maybe come viable again.

A final set of interviews with the same respondents is planned a further 9 months on to understand medium term effects of both coronavirus and Brexit. An implication of this research is that the situation is quickly evolving, which would open up for future research to assess the longer term impacts on the town.

A mixed methods approach to investigating participation (and non-participation) in Community Asset Transfers in Wales

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Keywords: social enterprise, community asset transfers, CAT, localism

Introduction: Purpose

The purpose of this abstract is to examine how the use of a systematic literature review has informed the area of research for a Doctor of Management programme of study to evaluate the rationale for participation and particularly non-participation by social enterprises in Community Asset Transfers (CAT) in Wales.

Discussion

An initial systematic literature review (Tranfield et al., 2003) suggests literature studying asset transfers, may be considered embryonic and a growing empirical evidence base. Within this body of literature, there are a number of principally qualitative studies evaluating community asset transfers (Thomas and Trier, 2016; Findlay-King et al., 2018; Hobson et al., 2019). Other studies in the UK include Murtagh's (2015) study of the political situation in Northern Ireland and its impact on policy and implementation of asset transfers. Skerratt and Hall (2011) review village halls in Scotland and develop a community capitals framework. Wales has the four-stage evaluation of asset transfers (Thomas and Trier, 2016) and schemes in England are considered by Hatcher (2015), Findlay-King et al. (2018) and Hobson et al. (2019). Significantly, the focus of these studies may be considered at best synchronous with the transfer itself and in most cases focused on events following transfer.

A number of studies attempt to provide a 'comprehensive' map of the asset transfer landscape in the UK; notably Quirk (2007), Aiken et al. (2011) and, in Wales, Thomas and Trier (2016). Perhaps of significance to this study however, is the literature suggests limited research exists seeking to understand the rationale for participation, and particularly non-participation, prior to a transfer occurring.

Noteworthy theories and concepts emerging from this nascent literature include the view that asset transfers are the inevitable corollary of neo-liberal ideology, austerity and public sector spending cuts (Levitas, 2012; Nicholls and Teasdale, 2017; Hobson et al., 2019). Other concepts include institutional thickness regarding the prerequisite organisational and community capabilities required to oversee a transfer and manage an asset (Hobson et al., 2019).

Implications for Proposed Research Methodology

There may be as many as 1,700 social enterprises operating in Wales (Wales Co-operative Centre, 2017) and undoubtedly the majority of social enterprises are not participating in CAT. There is a cogent argument therefore, supporting the need for research to analyse the factors shaping decision making for both participating and non-participating organisations. Further, the data collection methodology adopted for published studies is largely qualitative in nature. There are a small number of mixed methods studies, including Skerratt and Hall (2011) and Ambrose-Oji et al. (2015), but on further analysis the quantitative data in these studies lacks sophistication in its collection, analysis and presentation.

The research will follow an explanatory sequential design (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018), comprising an initial pilot interview followed by a screening survey collecting quantitative baseline data, including participation and financial data for example. This will be followed by qualitative data collection using semi-structured interviews.

Potential opportunities are also emerging to evaluate more objectively and quantitatively the efficacy of CAT, by analysing the primary quantitative data with other secondary data such as socio-economic metrics using the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (Welsh Government, 2019) for example, to determine any correlation between deprivation, participation in CAT and organisational sustainability.

Conclusion

The on-going systematic review of literature suggests there is a deficiency in the body of literature which warrants further investigation and research. This analysis of literature has informed the research and its constituent research questions and methodology, principally to explore the rationale for non-participation in Community Asset Transfers in Wales. Moreover, there are unmet opportunities to employ a more rigorous mixed methods approach combining meaningful qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis and presentation.

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Challenges and opportunities of developing regenerative tourism on the LIŷn Peninsula

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Key words: Regenerative tourism, community-based tourism, sustainability, Covid-19 impacts, nature-based tourism

Abstract

This study is part of the LIVE (LIŷn IVeragh Eco-museums) project, which has been co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Ireland Wales Cooperation Programme. The project aims to enable coastal communities to promote their natural and cultural assets and to create opportunities for sustainable/ regenerative tourism, especially outside of the traditional peak tourist seasons. While the traditional tourism model seeks to increase visitor numbers for economic benefits, sustainable tourism respects and balances socio-cultural, environmental as well as economic values in order to avoid the depletion of natural and socio-cultural resources. Regenerative tourism goes a step further in that the aim is to not only preserve resources at the same level, but to restore and enhance socio-cultural, environmental, and economic systems by working collaboratively, focussing on local needs, and distributing tourism benefits fairly (Becken & Kaur, 2022). Accordingly, the objectives of this study are to identify the barriers and opportunities for 1) enhancing collaborative tourism on the LIŷn peninsula, 2) spreading economic benefits geographically, across the year, and between communities, 3) focussing on the types of tourism activities that benefit the whole system, and for 4) tourism to contribute to the natural and cultural regeneration of the area. We are exploring the various challenges and opportunities by adopting a mixed-methods research approach:

1. With the help of geotagged social media and GPS tracked routes, we are exploring spatiotemporal visitor patterns across the landscape on the LIŷn peninsula. In particular, we are investigating the types of visitor activities during the Covid-19 pandemic and before, as well as seasonal differences to identify activities outside of the traditional peak tourist seasons.
2. We are inviting tourism and hospitality businesses on the LIŷn peninsula to participate in a business survey to identify how Covid-19 has affected business opening hours, seasonality, revenues, sustainability, business challenges and opportunities. The business survey will be carried out between February and April 2022 both face-to-face (*interviewer-completed*) and online (*respondent-completed*). The online survey will be distributed to all tourism and hospitality businesses in the area. Businesses will have the option to opt-in to participate in a face-to-face, in-depth interview with the intention of complementing the quantitative survey data with qualitative experiences, and personal views and meanings. The results will be presented to and discussed with the participants to generate ideas on how potential future drawbacks can be minimised, and a more regenerative tourism business model can be created.
3. Stakeholder workshops will be carried out to identify the most important key performance indicators (KPIs) for developing regenerative tourism in the area. The intended outcome is a collaborative destination development plan that seeks to maximise the socio-cultural, environmental, and economic benefits, while minimising the negative impacts on the LIŷn peninsula.

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A History of Debt in Wales

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Key words: debt, poverty, Wales, credit systems, wealth extraction

Introduction and context

Debt has been a part of life in Wales for thousands of years, but when did it stop being a supportive community based function and instead become a problem for so many individuals? In 2019 it was estimated that 8% of adults living in Wales were facing severe debt problems with a further 16% showing signs of financial distress (StepChange). 17% of people in Wales borrow to pay bills (Bevan Foundation 2021).

Debt is both a result of poverty and a route into poverty (CSJ 2014). Nearly one quarter of people in Wales are living in poverty (JRF 2022). More than two-thirds of working-age adults in poverty live in a household where at least one adult is in work (JRF 2022). This paper investigates the reasons why debt has become a problem in Wales.

Discussion

Graeber (2014) describes how early communities used debt in order to function. As trading developed the use of credit was common except when dealing with strangers. Interest was low or non-existent between parties who considered themselves equal. Where lending and borrowing are based on equality, loan arrangements are made on terms that can result in equality being restored. Unpayable debts lead to, or stem from hierarchy.

Inequality in Wales increased with changes in landholding and shifts in power. Extraction and industrialisation brought wealth but the wealth rarely reached the workers. The people of Wales became predominantly poor wage labourers controlled by those with access to higher forms of credit (Davies 2009, Gower 2011). Forms of debt existed between employer and employee. The 'truck system' forced employees to buy supplies from their employer so that they were constantly indebted and unable to leave their employment (Gower 2011, Graeber 2014), while physical currency allowed powerful institutions to amass wealth. As the depression of the 1930s approached, credit from local shop keepers protected families from destitution (Coombes 1945, Davies 2007).

High cost credit has been provided to working class communities for as long as workers have needed to supplement their earned income. From 'tallymen' offering loans 'on the doorstep' relying on familiarity to compensate for high rates of interest (O'Connell 2009) to payday loans and credit cards which became easily accessed after deregulation of the financial markets in the 1980s (Kus 2015), credit systems are run by profit maximising organisations assisted by laws which place little restriction on interest rates and which favour creditors (Graeber 2014, Kus 2015).

Relative prosperity was enjoyed in Wales in the decades following the second world war although wages were 10% lower than the UK as a whole (Davies 2007). From the late 1970s the effects of privatisation and deregulation brought a return to insecure and low paid work via the service sector (Flaherty and Banks 2013). Several reports draw attention to areas of Wales, where, the conditions that lead to problem debt are concentrated as a result of the economic environment and social structure (Lansley and Mack 2015). Many workers in Wales experience the life of the precariat (Standing 2014).

The extraction of wealth from Wales that took place when raw materials were mined could be said to have continued via the privatisation of public services and the provision of high cost lending by shareholder wealth driven organisations.

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Wicked Leadership: An investigation into How Leadership Manifests Itself in Complex Environments

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Key Words

Complex (Wicked) Problems, Power, Leadership, Agency, Reflective Practice.

Introduction

This study set out to investigate the challenge of leadership in complex (wicked) environments through the experiences of one individual, who leads a multidisciplinary, multi-partner programme in a large urban local authority in the UK, tasked with improving the lives of young people transitioning from children to adult social care. However, in examining leadership it sought to move the debate from purely leader-centric perspectives to more plural or post-heroic leadership forms, examining both formal and more informal/personal modes of leadership. In doing so it drew upon agency and reflective practice as useful lenses through which to conceptualise the inter and intrapersonal (cognitive) adaptations required of individuals when shifting between the different modes. Further, it was based upon an initial assumption that the ability of a manager to influence people and events appears likely to diminish the further they stray from the formal authority of their own team or department. French and Raven's 'Bases of Power' provided a useful starting point in this regard (French and Raven 1959, Raven 1965).

Objectives

1. To investigate the assumption that leadership, the ability to influence others toward the achievement of a goal, becomes more challenging as one's sources of power diminish as one moves from a position of formal authority to one requiring a greater degree of informal or personal authority.
2. To examine a second assumption that adapting to and navigating these different levels of authority/power requires a reflexive approach to leadership.
3. To explore the broader challenges of leading in complex (wicked) environments, in order to help managers in similar situations to understand and leverage system dynamics toward goal achievement.

Research Approach

A single case study was chosen because of its applicability when investigating phenomenon in depth and within a real-world context (Yin 2018). Data was collected using a semi-structured interview because it lends itself to the examination of meaning, allowing participants 'to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view' (Cohen et. al. 2000:267). While the results may not be generalisable, we hope that they are at least relatable and of practical value to members of similar groups Basse (1981: 85-86).

Discussion and Implications

Our first assumption proved incorrect, failing to consider organisational complexity. A complexity that arises, in part, from the relational dynamics of homophily and reciprocity, rather than simple power dynamics. In this regard, we feel that Bandura's (2000) threefold conception of agency, individual, proxy and collective, provides a useful lens for further investigation, closely allied to Schon's (1983, 1987) conceptualisation of the leader as reflective practitioner. There is also a case to be made for extending French and Raven's Bases of Power (1959, 1965) to include the power to Connect, either in its own right or as an addendum to Information power.

Our second assumption appears to hold true. Both Karen's experience and our review of the literature suggest that leaders who work across boundaries would do well adopt a reflexive approach to leadership, one that allows them to navigate the difference between formal and informal leadership and maintain the capacity to be surprised and adjust accordingly. This suggests a need to further investigate leadership (auto)biographies. Asking leadership practitioners to consider their leadership experience, how this might affect their present and future practice, to what extent are they constrained by it and to what extent are they able to adapt.

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“Sustainable”, “holistic”, “regenerative” – can these hijacked words, which are losing their meaning through overuse, be reclaimed and redefined by communities through a culture-led approach.

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Key words: sustainability, regeneration, sustainable communities, Covid-19 recovery

Abstract: Communities world-wide are expressing concerns around ‘over tourism’.

There is growing discontent in ‘honey pot’ spots such as Barcelona and Venice and in World Heritage sites such as the Taj Mahal and Machu Picchu. Local people and their environments are struggling to cope with the growing numbers of tourists; the ‘goose that lays the golden egg’ is in danger. Economic, social, environmental and cultural threats to these areas are evident and similar concerns resonate in Wales where beauty spots are becoming overcrowded and communities decimated by the rise in holiday homes and short-term lets. The Covid-19 Pandemic exacerbated the situation, giving us pause for thought.

The EU Interreg funded [LIVE](#) (LIŷn IVeragh Eco-museums) project’s aim is to enable coastal communities to promote their natural and cultural assets, creating opportunities for sustainable tourism. In addition to identifying spatiotemporal visitor patterns and key performance

indicators on the journey towards improvement, an iterative dialogue on what 'sustainable' and 'regenerative' really mean for these locations needs to be had.

This is not straightforward. An 'approach to sustainability', as evidenced in the Annual Sustainability Reports and Annual Financial Statements of businesses, large organisations, Universities and third sector organisations, is by now universal but the topics covered vary wildly reflecting the organisations' interest and often lead to issues that are clearly not 'sustainable' being excused. This is not surprising; The Cambridge English Dictionary lists more than 60 words related to 'sustainability', more than 160 words related to 'regeneration' and 130 or so words related to 'holistic' so there is ample scope for a variety of interpretations.

This thought piece is inspired by 'Sand Talk' a book by First Nation Australian Tyson Yunkaporta on 'How Indigenous Thinking Can Save the World. Yunkaporta (2020) invites us to consider our world view and to reimagine our relationship to sustainability, money, power and education by looking at the world through the lens of people who have a very strong oral culture, who 'yarn' and draw images in the sand, who realise that reducing thoughts into a written text over-simplifies complex ideas. He does not suggest that indigenous thinking should be adopted as a 'one size fits all' solution as can happen when policy makers push 'best practice', which may have worked in one situation but might not be 'best' everywhere.

The thesis presented here is that 'it's both complicated and complex' but that the Well-being of Future Generations Act's 'Five ways of working' and the Australian First Nation 'five ways of thinking' and 'the five ways of coming to knowledge' could provide a culture-based system of thinking and discovering patterns to guide us towards a well-defined 'sustainable future'.

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[Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)