A Typology of Residents for Community Development

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Introduction

In a role theory approach to training workers for community development, four main roles have been differentiated — the observer, diagnostician, strategist and stimulator. (Connor, 1966:6-8) For effective performances in these roles, a typology of residents based on developmentally-oriented dimensions is proposed as useful and even necessary.

This paper outlines one such typology and indicates the distribution of the types of residents in an Atlantic fishing community. It suggests the prospects of a model which would relate (1) the proportional distribution of these types of residents, (2) certain types of communities and (3) specific strategies of development. While this work is still in an early exploratory phase, it may stimulate a more systematic approach to significant theoretical and practical problems involved in social and cultural change.

Typologies

The prospects and problems posed simultaneously by typologies have been developed by Znaniecki, Becker, Moore (Moore, 1959:842) and, more recently, by McKinney (McKinney, 1966). Whether in Merton's classic formulation of the localite and cosmopolite (Merton, 1957:387-415) or in the layman's subconscious categorizing of "good" men and "bad", persons faced with the full range of human variety will impose on it some classificatory system as a first step in confronting and relating to the data.

Unfortunately, many development workers tend to view a community of people in terms of relatively static variables such as age, sex, formal education, ethnic origin, religion, occupation, income and wealth. While these data provide some useful descriptive

information, they are relatively non-dynamic in prediciting the propensity of residents to involve themselves in various ways in the processes of community development. Experience indicates that persons who rate both high and low on these dimensions have played significant roles in the development of their communities. Have these variables, singly or jointly, much predictive power in forecasting who will act in a given direction in community development? What alternative dimensions may be more usefully employed?

Components for a Dynamic Typology

Some core components for a dynamic typology are proposed as follows:

1. The extent to which residents fully understand and accept the local community subculture and, in turn, are accepted by its principal proponents. In many cases, the *natives* of the community are most likely to be accepting and accepted; *non-natives* who have migrated to the community from some location, perceived as "foreign", are less likely to understand and accept the local sub-culture fully and may well be totally or partially rejected by many persons in the community.

2. The extent to which residents possess a broad knowledge of alternative ways of solving recurrent human problems, gained through extra-community experience and non-formal education, here conceived as the selective relief of ignorance (Connor and Magill, 1965:66). *Continuous* residents of the community are less likely to possess such knowledge and the liberal attitudes fostering its use; *discontinuous* residents, on the other hand, will have "marched to a different drummer", (or seen others doing so) and experienced the conjunction of opposites (Barnett, 1953:46-56). For a native, a period of residence beyond the home community may be taken as an indicator of an innovative disposition as well as a source of stimulating new experience i.e. as both a dependent and independent variable.

3 The degree to which residents are committed to the well-being of the community as a value which includes a considerable portion of their own identity. The *willing* residents of the community are more likely to identify themselves with the community

and be willing to invest themselves in its development whether as innovators, advocates or participants (Lapierre, 1965:103-211). The *unwilling* residents are less likely to become thus involved

When these three variables are combined, seven types of residents may be distinguished, as shown in Table 1. (The separation of Immigrant Professionals from Displaced Residents is made by the use of an occupational classification.)

TABLE I — TYPOLOGY OF RESIDENTS

Types of Residents	Place of Birth	Community Experience	Community Identification
Contented Resident	Native	Continuous	Willing
Reluctant Resident	Native	Continuous	Unwilling
Returned Emigre	Native	Discontinuous	Willing
Disappointed Migrant	Native	Discontinuous	Unwilling
Displaced Resident *	Non-Native	_____	Willing
Immigrant Professional **	Non-Native	_____	Willing
Reluctant Emigre	Non-Native	_____	Unwilling

* Non-professional or unskilled occupation
** Professional or skilled occupation

It is important in developing a typology of this nature that its components be indexed with operational ease and appropriate accuracy. Place of birth and continuity of residence are relatively easy kinds of data to acquire through records, key informants and conversation without generating an atmosphere of threat or hostility. Data on an individual's commitment to the community are more sensitive, but it is thought to be sufficiently critical to warrant the risk and effort required. In many cases, individuals will volunteer verbal or behavioural statements about themselves, and comments about others which will assist in this classification. If sufficient importance is allocated to the vital role of observer to acquire a systematic understanding of the community (Connor, 1964), it should be possible to obtain these motivational data.

What alternative or additional components might be employed in a dynamic typology of community residents for developmental purposes? How might these components be indexed and operationalized?

Types of Residents

The descriptions of the six types given below are the result of field experience and several studies of Nova Scotian communities, (Connor, 1963; 1966) but they must still be treated as tentative and illustrative: [1]

1. *Contented Resident :* This person was born and brought up in his present community and has lived in it all his life, except perhaps for a few brief visits elsewhere. He is a willing member of it, viewing the advantages of living there as out-weighing the attractions of distant places. In education, income and occupational class, he is likely to be average or below the average of the community. The view-point of this individual centres, typically, on his own community rather than any larger political or social group. Personal, informal and face-to-face kinds of communication are those he usually employs. Contented Residents frequently make up the stable core, physically and emotionally, of the community in contrast with some of the more mobile and less conservative types which follow.

2. *Displaced Resident:* This is a very similar kind of person to the above. He came from a community nearby because he wished to continue the type of life in which he was raised, but perceived this to be impossible in his community of origin, e.g. second son on a small farm. Apart from this, the Displaced Resident shares many of the characteristics of the Contented Resident, and may with time seem almost indistinguishable from him. But to the native born, he is likely to remain a foreigner and somewhat suspect, perhaps for several generations. He usually views the world in terms of the local community; he can add some weight to the stabilizing influence of the Contented Resident.

3. *Reluctant Resident:* While a native of the community and a continuous resident, this person remains in it unwillingly. He may be restrained from leaving by family obligations, the possession of unsaleable fixed assets or the lack of marketable job skills. He sees events in natural rather than local terms. He is likely to be a

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[1] The following descriptive material is drawn largely from Connor, 1966; 27-30.

source of destructive discontent for process of development — the disaffected voice from the rear which shouts, "What's the use — it'll never work here" !

4. *Returned Emigre:* A native of the community and a willing resident of it, this person has much in common with the Contented Resident. Unlike him, however, he saw he could not establish himself in the community to his own satisfaction without some additional capital, experience or education. He therefore left the community for a time and then returned and settled where he was born, usually for motives more to do with emotions than economics. Many view him as successful — one who made good in the outside world, but who still believed in the values of the local community and its superiority as the best place to live. With his breadth of experience, he has seen alternative ways of solving traditional problems and is thus a potential innovator. He will often understand some of the development worker's thinking more easily than some other local people. His experience, capacity for empathy and commitment to the local community make him a key person for the development worker to identify and get to know — one who could have a great deal to contribute locally to the process of development.

5. *Disappointed Migrant:* This individual has much in common with the Reluctant Resident, being a native and unwilling resident who often views life in national rather than local terms. He left the community intending to migrate from it permanently. However, he failed to establish himself and was forced to return to his former home, often by unemployment, when his abilities did not match his aspirations. Many see him as unsuccessful. Like the Reluctant Resident, this individual is likely to be a negative figure for the process of development.

6. *Immigrant Professional:* This person is not a native, and therefore not a continuous resident, but lives here willingly; he also belongs to a skilled or professional occupation. His viewpoint is usually that of the national society; typically he has an above average income, education, social rank and formal leadership skills compared with other members of the community. While he has some commitment to the local community now, it is often not as powerful as many other residents. He is likely to be regarded as

a foreigner. Although he is often found at the head of various organizations because of his special skills, this does not mean he is necessarily a power in the community. He may be figurehead or spokesman for a powerful leader who prefers to remain out of the limelight for various reasons. The Immigrant Professional, like the Returned Emigre, has often a breadth of experience and capacity for empathy which the development worker will appreciate. He may have a useful part to play in the process of development, but does not have the same appeal for local people as the native son.

7. *Reluctant Emigre:* (This is the Returned Emigre, during the time he is absent from his community seeking the means to fulfil himself in it later.) He thinks largely in terms of the values of the community to which he hopes to return. While away from it, he often shows little concern for his present community. He may at times be a social problem for it, though usually an economic asset by hard work. Typically, he chose to migrate to it through the advice or presence of persons from his home community. He may be prevented from returning home by growing obligations, e.g. marriage and family, or a slow change of outlook.

An Empirical Test

Data[2] gathered recently in an Atlantic fishing community permits an illustration of the distribution of these types and a test of the predictive powers of this typology concerning the probable dynamic characteristics of the residents for community development.

Ecologically, a line village occupying both sides of a narrow estuary, the community has a total population of 278; of the 136 adults, there are 66 females and 70 males. The nearest major service community (5,000 pop.) is some 70 miles distant. While inshore fishing from motor-driven, 30-35 foot wooden boats is the principal industry, many derive supplementary income from cutting pulp wood, roadwork, berry picking and subsistence sources. The average

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adult male has an income from all sources of less than $1,700. The majority of the residents are adherents of the Baptist or United Church. An education of Grade Six is typical.

The general research design consists of a comparative study of this relatively isolated fishing community with a less isolated rural community by a combination of ethnographic and survey research techniques. Six months was spent in each community using participants observation, key informants and similar qualitative techniques for the first five months, after which a questionnaire was developed and administered to all the adults to quantify selected variables; the Kluckhohn-Strodtbeck values questionnaire was also administered.

Standard items in the questionnaire were used to index the three variables employed in the typology:

a. a comparison of place of birth and place of present residence separated Natives from Non-natives.

b. Continuous residents were those Natives who replied negatively to the question: "Did you ever live for 6 months or more in any other community?"

c. Willing residents were identified as responding positively to the question: "Do you *want* to remain living in this community for the rest of your life?" In the case of ambiguous or qualified answers, their response to a further question was employed: "Do you think of this community as 'home'?"

Findings

The distribution of the population on these variables is shown in Table 2. The overwhelming number of males who are natives of the community is in contrast to the proportion of non-native females. However, this difference is mitigated by the fact that most of the non-native women enter this community as wives who were born and brought up in neighbouring fishing villages with a similar subculture.

More than half of the men have never lived outside this community for more than six months; half of the native women have not lived beyond the community either. A further index of

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TABLE 2 — TYPES OF RESIDENTS IN AN
ATLANTIC FISHING COMMUNITY BY SEX

Components & Resultant Types	Male No. % (N=57)		Female No. % (N=60)		Total No. % (N=117)*	
Native	54	95	35	58	89	76
Non-Native	3	5	25	42	28	24
Continuous	31	54	17	28	48	41
Discontinuous	26	46	43	72	69	59
Willing	51	89	49	82	100	85
Unwilling	6	11	11	18	17	15
Contented Residents	28	49	17	28	45	39
Returned Emigres	21	36	16	27	37	32
Displaced Residents	2	4	16	27	18	15
Reluctant Emigres	1	2	9	15	10	9
Reluctant Residents	3	5	1	2	4	3
Disappointed Migrants	2	4	1	2	3	2

* The total adult population of 136 was reduced by the absence of 7 men working away from the community during the six months of field research; 3 men and 2 women were not interviewed for medical reasons e.g. senility; 2 men and 4 women were absent during the survey period; one man refused to be interviewed. Total non-respondents = 19.

geographic stability is provided by the fact that there are only 16 family names in the community and two of these account for half the adult population.

The very high proportions of willing residents, particularly among the men, is a distinctive feature of this community. This level of community identification is heightened when coupled with the predominance of native and continuous residents among the men, and male dominance to a high degree in this rather traditional community.

Types of Residents

Table 2 indicates that Contented Residents make up the largest single category, particularly amongst the men, followed closely by the Returned Emigres. The Displaced Residents are almost entirely women as are the Reluctant Emigres. There are few in the Reluctant Resident and Disappointed Migrant categories and none classified as Immigrant Professionals.

After individuals were designated by the indices of this typology, an opportunity to test partially the validity of this approach was

provided through an evaluation of the classification by the person who carried out the ethnographic and survey research in the particular community. (During the course of six months of constant close association with the residents, he has come to know them so well that his estimates of four of their value orientations is identical with indices derived from the Kluckhohn-Strodtbeck questionnaire in 70% of the cases.)

While this typology offers predictions of the types of developmental behaviour which can be anticipated from residents of a community, it must be understood that these predictions are on a *probability* basis only.

TABLE 3 — ETHNOGRAPHIC ESTIMATES OF DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TYPES OF RESIDENTS BY SEX

Types of Residents	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Contented Residents						
Total	28		17		45	
As Predicted	26	93	14	82	40	89
Negative	1		—		1	
Positive	1		2		3	
Doubtful	—		1		1	
Returned Emigres						
Total	21		16		37	
As Predicted	11	52	12	75	23	62
Negative	3		2		5	
Neutral, doubtful	7		2		9	
Displaced Redidents						
Total	2		16		18	
As Predicted	2	100	14	87	16	89
Negative	—		1		1	
Positive	—		1		1	
Reluctant Emigres						
Total	1		9		10	
As Predicted	1	100	5	56	6	60
Positive	—		3		3	
Doubtful	—		1		1	
Reluctant Residents						
Total	3		1		4	
As Predicted	3	100	1	100	4	100
Disappointed Migrants						
Total	2		1		3	
As Predicted	2	100	1	100	3	100
TOTAL	57		60		117	
TOTAL AS PREDICTED	45	79	47	78	92	79

A comparison of the ethnographic estimates of individual's response to developmental stimuli with the predictions inherent in the typology are presented in Table 3. Contented Residents were hypothesized to be typically neutral, at least initially, to the introduction of developmental ideas and programs into their community. Field knowledge suggests that in fact most of the individuals so classified do possess this neutral attitude, though three were judged to be supportive of development, one to be negative and one to be a doubtful quantity in this regard.

Returned Emigres provided the greatest challenge to analysis. Three men and two women were characterized as "destructive, rebellious, alienated" as a result of close acquaintanceship during field research. A further seven men and two women were classified as neutral to constructive prospects in their community (i.e. similar to Contented Residents in their viewpoint) or difficult to assess in terms of their developmental potential. It is notable that the remainder of this category contains many of the active members and formal leaders of community organizations, e.g. both members of the regional Board of Trade, all but one of the members of a men's Lodge, key figures in a former local co-operative, the Baptist deacon, the Sunday school teacher, and both Presidents of the two church-related women's organizations.

The Displaced Residents seemed to be largely as predicted. Among the Reluctant Emigres, three women were judged to have positive attitudes towards development of this community even though they remain affiliated to another "home" community. The Reluctant Residents and Disappointed Migrants appeared to be largely as predicted.

In summary, this preliminary analysis indicates the distribution of these types of residents in this Atlantic fishing community and indicates ethnographic support for their predicted orientation to community development in 79% of the cases. Further analysis will be undertaken to relate these types of residents to certain socioeconomic indices and to individual scores derived from the Kluckhohn-Strodtbeck values questionnaire. Data from this fishing community will be compared with those from another rural community.

Prospects for a Model

Model-building in the social sciences is not only fashionable but necessary if we are to explore, test, establish and use the systematic relationship between dynamic variables in applied social fields. Its general aim is to reduce the proportion of art in human development work and increase the proportion of scientific technology. Unless this can be effected, the prognosis for widespread and effective community development is not bright. This rationale is advanced to justify the rather speculative propositions advanced below :

1. In any community, its propensity for development (i.e. positive, purposive, processual, qualitative and/or quantitative change over time, particularly as achieved through enhancing local problem-solving capability) is a function of the social and ecological characteristics of the community.

2. The differential distribution of types of residents, as outlined previously, may be used to index the social characteristics of the community in dynamic terms relevant to development.

3. The ecological characteristics of the community may be defined in such terms as its relative size, isolation, resource base, etc.

4. Communities may be located on a continuum according to their propensity for self-induced (i.e. externally unassisted) development with reference to their social and ecological characteristics. For example a community least likely to experience self-induced development may be described as one with a high proportion of Contented Residents, Displaced Residents, Reluctant Residents, Reluctant Emigres and Disappointed Migrants and a low proportion of Returned Emigres and Immigrant Professionals, and ecologically, small, isolated and lacking in resources. A community with a high propensity for self-induced development would, on the contrary, be characterized by high proportions of Returned Emigres and Immigrant Professionals compared with the other types of residents and, ecologically, large, central and possessing a substantial and diversified resource base. (While designed with rural communities in mind, this model may be adapted to urban centres and their disadvantaged sub-communities.)

5. Development may be induced, typically by the introduction of a development worker supported by an agency external to the community, by selecting from amongst a score of specific strategies those which are appropriate for this type of community. (A further selection amongst these strategies must be made in terms of their suitability for the particular fieldworker given, agency and local problem (s) (Connor, 1967).

If and when models of this type or another variety are developed, they will only reduce, and not eliminate, the element of art in Community Development. This work is still in an early exploratory phase; it is presented in the hope that it will stimulate further research and administrative concern with a core problem in community development. Reactions and suggestions are warmly solicited.

Conclusion

This paper has outlined a typology of residents based upon components hypothesized to be relevant for community development, has described some social characteristics of each type and has illstrated the distribution of these types with data from an Atlantic fishing community. A tentative model has been proposed to relate the types of residents and ecological factors with certain types of communities according to their propensity for self-induced development and the relevance of some specific strategies of induced development to each type of community.

No categorical statements are made concerning this material which is presented mainly to stimulate the exchange of constructive ideas concerning important areas in the field of community development.

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