Commuters and Communities: How Employment Mobility Affects Community Development in Source Communities

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Outline

• ‘On the Move’?
  • Definition of employment mobility
  • Research objectives

• Methodology
  • Conceptual Framework
  • Data collection methods
  • Study Area

• Preliminary Findings
  • Questionnaire results
  • Implications on source communities
  • Future research directions
What is employment mobility?

Employment-related mobility takes into account people who commute for work away from their place of residence that involves more than 2 hours daily to more extended absences and journeys lasting weeks, months or even years (Temple et al., 2011).
On the Move Partnership

- Working in seven Canadian provinces and abroad
  - British Columbia
  - Alberta
  - Ontario
  - Quebec
  - Nova Scotia
  - Prince Edward Island
  - **Newfoundland and Labrador**
  - Norway, Iceland, the United Kingdom, the United States

- Multiple sectors
  - Oil and gas
  - Mining
  - **Nickel processing**
  - Retail service
  - Health
  - Construction
  - Trucking
  - Shipping
  - Tourism
  - Forestry
  - Fisheries
Research Objectives

- What are the impacts of commuting on community development in source communities?
  - Community involvement (volunteering)? (Hall, 2014)
  - Spending patterns (buying property, goods)? (Esteves, 2006)
  - Emotional attachments to place? (McDonald, Mayes, and Pini, 2012)
Conceptual Framework

- Positioned within the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ emphasizing the importance of systematic movements – work, family, leisure, politics, and protest (Sheller and Urry, 2006)
- Community development: “a purposeful and systematic intervention through public policy(ies), programs, projects...to influence change towards a set of desired economic, social, cultural, physical, environmental outcomes” (Douglas, 2010)
Data Collection Methods

To date ...

- Four community consultations have taken place since 2012

- Phase 1 of research on host communities completed in fall of 2014

- 131 completed questionnaires received from nickel processing employees

- 3 semi-structured interviews completed, more to follow
Nickel Processing Facility
Long Harbour, NL

(Vale, 2014)
Optimized Commuting Flows to Destination Locality by Place of Residence

People with destination as place of residence
- 10 to 39
- 40 to 80
- 81 to 166
- 590

People who travel to locality other than place of residence
- 3 to 14
- 15 to 26
- 27 to 45
- 46 to 68
- 69 to 550

Roads

Note: Optimized Flows are temporally and spatially constant connections between localities derived from labour market, hospital separation, school busing, and school enrollment data from 2001 to 2014.
Questionnaire Findings: Commute Time

Commute Time to Nickel Processing Facility - One Way

Number of People

Commute Time

Less than 15 minutes
Between 15 and 29 minutes
Between 30 and 44 minutes
Between 45 and 59 minutes
Between 60 and 74 minutes
Between 75 and 89 minutes
90 minutes or greater
Questionnaire Findings: Stress of Commute

How stressful do you find your commute (1-Not stressful, 5-Very stressful)
## Questionnaire Findings: Community Investment

### Activities Mobile Workers Participate in their local area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Festivals</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holiday Parades and Festivities</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraisers</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire department</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lions/Service Club</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Municipal Politics</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canadian Blood Services</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Special Events Committee</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowl for Kids</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Lego League</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psoriasis Society of NL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraisers</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scouts</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPCA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musician</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
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</table>

### Have you volunteered in your local area in the last six months?

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<th>Response</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td>Church</td>
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<td>School programs</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Questionnaire Findings: Spending

Communities Where Workers Purchase Automobiles

- St. John's: 78%
- Gander: 5%
- Mount Pearl: 3%
- Carbonear: 3%
- Bay Roberts: 1%
- Clarenville: 2%
- Portugal Cove: 2%
- Halifax: 2%
- Montreal: 2%
- Toronto: 1%

Communities Where Workers Purchase Gas

- St. John's: 31%
- CBS: 12%
- Whitbourne: 12%
- Placentia: 7%
- Paradise: 5%
- Bay Roberts: 5%
- Mount Pearl: 5%
- Holyrood: 5%
- Clarenville: 5%
- Chapel Arm: 5%
- New Harbour: 3%
- Norman's Cove: 3%
- Carbonear: 3%
- Blaketown: 3%
- Clarke's Beach: 3%
- Goulds: 3%
- Green's Harbour: 3%
- Harbour Grace: 3%
- South River: 3%
- Summerford: 3%
- Stephenville: 3%
- Stephenville: 3%
- Stephenville: 1%
- Stephenville: 1%
- Stephenville: 1%
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Questionnaire Results: Sense of Belonging

How would you describe your sense of belonging to the community where you primarily reside?

How would you describe your sense of belonging to the community of Long Harbour?
Implications for Source Communities

How employment mobility *enhances* resiliency:

- Allows residents to remain in permanent place of residence
- Stimulate local economic development opportunities in local communities

How employment mobility *deters* resiliency:

- Losing human resources for local opportunities
- Negatively affecting social development, camaraderie, and sense of belonging
What can communities do?
Conclusions and Future Directions

• While extended commuting is common, it has yet to take a stressful toll on most workers

• Significantly less mobile workers volunteer vs. non-mobile workers; impacts community resiliency

• Local economic development opportunities can be stimulated by mobile workers’ income

• At what threshold will workers relocate vs. commute? Does ‘sense of place’ matter?
The On the Move Partnership is a project of the SafetyNet Centre for Occupational Health & Safety Research at Memorial University. On the Move is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Research & Development Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Canada Foundation for Innovation, and numerous university and community partners.

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