



Leadership and Social Capital in Rural Communities

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**Bruno JEAN
Université du Québec à Rimouski**

Leadership in rural communities: ageing, but socially recognized

- Formal (elected) and informal leaders come from older age groups. 75% are over the age of 45
- The majority (60%) of these local leaders are people who were born and raised in the same community.
- Even more surprising is that 75% of persons holding positions in formal or informal organizations are also employed in the locality in which they also reside.



Local leadership

- These leaders have told us (95%) that their work in the community is “appreciated” or “greatly appreciated”.
- 31% of *informal leaders* believe the local population “greatly appreciates” their volunteer work
- Only 9% of the *formal leaders* feel “greatly appreciated”.
- Recognition varies significantly depending on the type of community.
 - 89% of the leaders of *leading* communities feel appreciated;
 - Only 65% in the case of the *lagging* localities.



Social capacity: a factor for local development and sustainability

Social capacity refers to various “capabilities” needed to achieve social and economic vitality for any rural community.

- the degree of openness of the community to different opinions and behaviors ,
- the capacity to mobilize resources for activities in the community,
- the capacity to work together, and
- the capacity to establish ties with governments in order to obtain certain advantages.



Social capital: conclusion

- Social capital varies according to type of communities (leading or lagging)
- A rich social capital is more favorable to economic development
 - **more social capital is present in “leading” rural communities,**
 - **in lagging communities, social capital is much lower.**
- This research seems to confirm our thinking that the social capital is essential to economic development.

