COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND THE SCHOLARSHIP OF ENGAGEMENT: CHALLENGES FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS

By:

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Dedication

This doctoral thesis is dedicated to the memory of Dr. David Dibbon who started this journey with me so many years ago. As I reflect upon Dave, I am reminded of a conversation I once had with him about the art of writing. At the time we were drafting a report that was coming together, and I remember him saying how amazing it was to create a piece of writing from scratch…you start with a blank page, but in the end you create something beautiful.

Words really cannot adequately express how Dave has touched my life. I had the great fortune to have Dave as a professor for one of my Master's graduate courses. I remember thoroughly enjoying the course with him that summer, and learning a lot about leadership. As he revealed his beliefs about educational administration, my admiration for his leadership capabilities grew. In my opinion, he truly "got" what leadership is all about. He talked the talk, but most importantly walked the walk. He was so down to earth in his teaching approach; a characteristic which as I got to know him better seemed to permeate his approach to life in general. It was so easy to talk to him; there was no "put on"; and his passion for education was real…he truly cared about making education in our province better for students and teachers. In later years I went on to work with him on a number of research projects including the CURA project, and when I returned to university to start my PhD, I asked him to be a member of my doctoral committee (a team that I referred to as the Dream Team since it was incredible to watch the synergy created when Dr. Jean Brown, Dr. Bruce Sheppard, and Dr. Dave Dibbon collaborated). I feel truly blessed to have had the precious opportunity to work with this "dream" team as a part of my doctoral studies.

Dave was an amazing person who is sadly missed. Dave made me feel like nothing was impossible, and to always believe in myself and my abilities. He had this special talent to always make one feel better just by being in his company. I miss our many chats, our emails back and forth as we collaborated on projects (he was always just an email away, and never too busy to respond), but most of all I miss his friendship. In his last email to me (end of October 2010), he wished me well with my work, and explained that perseverance in his opinion was the greatest virtue. Dave, in life and in death, has given me the motivation to persevere. I have persevered to finish my doctoral thesis despite personal challenges, and will follow my dreams thanks, in part, to Dave's encouragement and fine example. Dave, I am sure, is with me in spirit as I complete this milestone in my life. I hope that he would think this creation is "a beautiful thing".

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative, interpretive study was to explore the challenges associated with collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement particularly for academic researchers, to determine the value placed on collaborative research by both academics and community partners, and to investigate how community-university partnerships can be sustained. Academic researchers and community partners from a Community University Research Alliance (CURA) project in a Faculty of Education at a Canadian university, a CURA fellow graduate student, a representative from a knowledge mobilization unit at a university, and a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) official were included in the study population. Sixteen interviews in total were conducted and analyzed.

The findings of this study suggest that collaborative research is challenging work. Administrative, relationship-related, cultural, and ethical challenges were highlighted. Administratively, it can be very difficult to manage a partnership with multiple projects, and its players having varying levels of understanding of collaborative research. One of the greatest administrative challenges is dealing with the changeover of players, and engaging participants who come to the project later. Clarity of expectations can be challenging since even when one attempts to develop protocols, it can be difficult to predict all issues that may arise. This study demonstrates that academics and community partners do not have a good understanding of each other's cultural realities which can be the source of frustration when individuals do not understand why the other partner is behaving in a certain manner. Dealing with findings that may not be favourable to the community partner creates ethical challenges.

This study demonstrates that the value of collaborative research depends on the perspective of the participant. Some academic researchers and community partners welcome the opportunity to work together in the co-creation of knowledge since they recognize that a more enriched product can be the end result. Other university researchers, holding steadfast to more traditional research, sometimes only engage in collaborative work to gain access to funding, and very quickly resort to more traditional methodologies. For some community partners, the research has little value to guide practice.

Among factors highlighted for contributing to the potential success of collaborative partnerships, the level of participant buy-in is noted as having a definite effect. Minimizing the number of partnerships and allowing more than five years may be needed to grow sustainable partnerships. Looking for the

"right fit" between partners where interests align could help. Knowledge mobilization units could be beneficial to help connect partners. The creation of memorandums of understanding, advisory committees, and a project manager position are highly recommended. Fostering strong leadership, incorporating succession planning, and the need for ongoing dialogue to help engage participants and create ownership are important. Time release supports for both academics and community partners, and university support through promotion and tenure practices that reward collaborative research involvement can help sustain community-university partnerships.

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This journey to complete my doctorate would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of an amazing circle of mentors, colleagues, family and friends who have been at my side throughout the entire process.

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Finally, in special remembrance of two very dear people to me who have passed away, my grandmother, Gladys Tapp, and my aunt, Dorothy Short, I know they are with me in spirit as I complete this milestone in my life.

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study

Journey to the Question

As I reflect on the journey to my doctoral thesis, and my interest in collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement, I have come to the realization that this is something that I have been interested in for much of my career. With 25 years of experience in education and almost two decades of that in educational administration, I have always been interested in learning about the latest research and how this research can better assist educators in their decision-making processes. What I noted in my personal experiences as a K-12 educator was that there seemed to be a disconnection between the world of academia and the world which I lived in as school principal. I did not understand why more partnerships did not exist between universities and the school system. I would go to university in the summer time, or take courses throughout the school year part-time, and feel like what I was learning was so important and so applicable to my job situation. While there was the occasional request for academic researchers to conduct research in schools, sustained interactions between university researchers and the various schools that I worked in did not appear to be happening to the extent that they could have been. I would have welcomed such an opportunity. My colleagues seemed to feel the same way. The knowledge of school personnel coupled with the expertise of university researchers are such a powerful combination; they have the potential to effect change.

One can imagine my excitement when I learned about the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) program sponsored by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and was fortunate to become involved in such a project at a Canadian university, an involvement which spanned a seven year period. My philosophy regarding the importance of research being practical and applicable to the "real world" aligned perfectly with this SSHRC program. What ensued was an incredible experience of learning mostly firsthand about the opportunities and challenges associated with collaborative research. While the shaping of my research questions went through an evolutionary process, in the end I was drawn to this field of research and the multiple questions that needed exploration. What challenges are associated with collaborative research for those who engage in it? How do we create and sustain successful community-university partnerships? Do community partners value such relationships? This interpretive study grows out of an interest in understanding these questions.

Research Landscape

The role of the university and its relationship to the community has long been a highly debated topic (Maurrasse, 2001). For years, universities have been criticized for their lack of connectedness to the real world (Boyer, 1990; Glassick, Huber & Maeroff, 1997; Hollander & Saltmarsh, 2000; Maurrasse, 2001; Miller, Devin & Shoop, 2007; Percy, Zimpher & Brukardt, 2006; Saltmarsh, 2005; Soska & Butterfield, 2004; Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoeker & Donahue, 2003). Meanwhile, in an age of increased accountability, community

organizations face mounting pressures to adopt the latest research-based

practices (Campbell & Fulford, 2009; Cordingly, 2009; Miller et al., 2007; Nutley,

Walter & Davies, 2003). As Chopyak and Levesque (2002) explain, "communities

today have more problems than resources to solve them, creating a significant

need for solid information that will help community members prioritize their

resources" (p. 204).

This widespread interest to better connect research and practice has

resulted in a changing research landscape (Chopyak & Levesque, 2002).

Proponents of this new research topography advocate increased collaborations

between university researchers and the community (Gaffield, 2007; SSHRC,

2004). Consequently, the concepts of scholarship of engagement and

collaborative research have been gaining currency in these growing

conversations (Dunnett, 2004; Hall, Tremblay, & Downing, 2009; Minkler, 2004;

Sandmann, 2006).

Reacting to the disconnect between academics and the public, advocates

for the scholarship of engagement assert that universities should be more fully

engaged in societal issues beyond the campus (Barker, 2004; Boyer, 1990;

Bridger & Alter, 2006; Glassick et al., 1997; Hall, 2009; Maurrasse, 2001; Percy

et al., 2006; Rhoades, 2009; Soska & Butterfield, 2004; Weerts & Sandmann,

2008). Broadening the traditional views of scholarship, these proponents argue

that university scholarship must move from being a unidirectional approach of

delivering knowledge to the public to become a reciprocal, two-way interactive

model (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). As Weerts and Sandmann (2008) explain,

"the new philosophy emphasizes a shift away from an expert model of delivering university knowledge to the public and toward a more collaborative model in which community partners play a significant role in creating and sharing knowledge to the mutual benefit of institutions and society" (p. 74).

Forging collaborative partnerships between academics and community partners is the currency of engagement (Brukardt, Holland, Percy & Zimpher, 2006). Collaborative or community-based research (CBR) offers much promise for breaking down the existing silos since it offers university researchers and practitioners the opportunity to be co-creators of knowledge (Chopyak & Levesque, 2002; Dunnett, 2004; Gaffield, 2007; Hall, 2009; Israel, Schulz, Parker & Becker, 1998; Leadbeater et al., 2006; Minkler, 2004; SSHRC, 2004; Strand et al., 2003).

The movement of engaged scholarship through collaborative research is growing. Even government funding agencies such as SSHRC echo a similar vision in their mandate. Gaffield (2007), president of SSHRC, challenges the traditional model of a university divided into different "pillars" and emphasizes "the oneness of teaching, research and community" (p.2). This vision, more fully articulated in a SSHRC (2004) document titled *From Granting Council to Knowledge Council: Renewing the Social Sciences and Humanities in Canada*, acknowledges the changing context in higher education, arguing that globalization, the knowledge economy, rapid and powerful technological change is changing the "economic, social and cultural fabric" of Canada (p. 7). SSHRC, it is argued, must see itself as "one part, albeit an important one, of a much larger

system" (p. 7). This vision forces universities to rethink their role in society, and to move from being "ivory towers, disengaged from their community or the knowledge economy" to "be at the heart of both" (p.8).

Clear signs of the trend towards engaged scholarship include the growing number of knowledge mobilization units on university campuses and the establishment of centers with an emphasis on community engagement (Cooper, Levin & Campbell, 2009; Hall, 2009; Levin, 2008). The Harris Centre at Memorial University and the Research Partnerships Knowledge Mobilization Unit/Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community-University Engagement (formerly the Office of Community-Based Research) at the University of Victoria are two examples of such knowledge mobilization units from opposite ends of the country. Additionally, all three national research councils in Canada, SSHRC, Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research (NSERC), have arrangements for funding community-university research partnerships. Furthermore, at the international level, funding agencies such as SSHRC and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) are supporting university-community partnerships around the world to investigate and solve global issues.

Purpose of the Study

While some study has been done to document best practices of engaged institutions through the use of collaborative research, there is a recognition in the literature that more needs to be done to determine the true impact of these partnerships (Banks & Armstrong, 2014; Brukardt et al., 2006; Levin, 2008;

Maurrasse, 2001; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). As Banks and Armstrong (2014) maintain, "despite the value placed on equal research partnerships between universities and non-university participants in research, there are relatively few published accounts that combine the perspectives of both parties in reflecting on their experiences of the process of collaboration" (p. 2). Are collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement making a difference? If so, how are they making a difference to universities and community organizations? Are they valued by participants? What are the challenges faced when university researchers and community partners engage in collaborative research? What can be done to make these partnerships sustainable?

A move towards such a collaborative research vision is a huge departure from traditional research. Such a large-scale change initiative, if successful, can lead to deep changes that affect the values, beliefs, and assumptions of organizations (Evans, 2001; Fullan, 2006; Hall & Hord, 2001). This interpretive study grows out of an interest in understanding the challenges for academic researchers to engage in collaborative research, and to gain insights into the extent to which community partners value such partnerships.

Research Questions

Specifically, my two primary research questions are:

(1)   How do collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement challenge academic researchers?

(2)　　To what extent do community partners value collaborative research and

the scholarship of engagement?

Sub-questions which grow out of these primary questions include:

(a)　　What examples are there of successful community-university

partnerships?

(i) How are they created and nurtured?

(ii) How is "successful" defined?

(b)　　What philosophy of research is espoused by faculty researchers

engaged in collaborative research?

(c)　　What infrastructures are in place in order that community partners use

research in their practice?

(d)　　What are the challenges associated with collaborative research and the

scholarship of engagement?

(e)　　What strategies can be used to advance collaborative research and the

scholarship of engagement? What kinds of capacities, resources, and

relationships should be fostered to create sustained interaction and

collaboration between universities and community partners?

Scholarly Significance

This research study adds to the existing literature on collaborative

research and the scholarship of engagement. One of the major contributions of

this study is the completion of an extensive literature review, which links these

bodies of literature. To date, these bodies of literature have remained relatively

independent of each other with little overlap between them. Furthermore,

perspectives of community and university researchers on collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement have been examined. The inclusion of community partners' perspectives, in particular, in this study is a major contribution since few studies have drawn on perspectives of community partners to further understand engagement practices at universities (Wenger, Hawkins & Seifer, 2011). Moreover, this study documents lessons learned from one community-university research alliance in one Canadian university. The documentation of such lessons learned, best practices for partnerships, and effective structures and policies was noted at the Community-Engaged Scholarship conference held in Guelph, Ontario in November 2010 as an important area for future research in the field.   This study has the potential to significantly impact the fields of collaborative research and engaged scholarship, especially in education where little research has been published.

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

For years, academics and practitioners have been criticized for their lack of collaboration in co-creating research agendas. Much of the literature on higher education highlights the concern that traditional academic research, due to its unidirectional approach, has not been useful for solving practical problems (Barker, 2004; O'Meara, Sandmann, Saltmarsh, & Giles, 2011; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). As Greenwood and Levin (2000) purport, universities have become viewed as dissociated from the real world becoming organizations in which "a narrow group of socially interdependent individuals generate standards for each other and judge each other's performance without regard to their contextualization within the interests of society at large" (p. 104). Similarly, practitioners "are criticized for not being aware of relevant research and not doing enough to put their practice into theory" (Van de Ven, 2007, p. 2).

Van de Ven (2007) explains that "academic researchers sometimes respond to these criticisms by claiming that the purpose of their research is not to make immediate contributions to practice; instead it is to make fundamental advances to scientific knowledge that may eventually enlighten practice" (p. 3). However, there is evidence that traditional published reports and articles are having little impact on practice. For example, in the field of business management, Van de Ven (2007), citing Starbuck (2005), reports that papers published in scholarly journals were cited on average only 0.82 times per article per year.

Van de Ven (2007) reviews three ways the gap between theory and practice has been framed. Firstly, he argues that this limited use of research knowledge in practice has often been framed as a knowledge transfer problem. Citing the UK Office of Science and Technology, the University of St. Andrews Knowledge Transfer Centre (n.d.) makes the point that "knowledge transfer is about transferring good ideas, research results and skills between universities, other research organizations, business and the wider community to enable innovative new products and services to be developed" (para. 1). This approach to research, Van de Ven (2007) maintains, assumes that practical knowledge "derives at least in part from scientific knowledge" (p. 3). The problem then framed in this way is one of inadequate translation and diffusion of the research knowledge into practice.

Secondly, Van de Ven (2007) suggests that an alternate view of the theory-practice disconnection sees scientific knowledge and practical knowledge as different kinds of knowing; that scholarly work and practitioner work differ in their context, process, and purpose. Practical knowledge is connected to experience and specific situations while scientific knowledge is rooted in generalizations and theories.

The third view of the disconnection between theory and practice frames the issue as a knowledge production problem. Each form of knowledge is viewed as partial, and therefore needs the other to complement it. Van de Ven (2007), citing Pettigrew (2001), argues "a deeper form of research that engages both academics and practitioners is needed to produce knowledge that meets the dual

hurdles of relevance and rigor for theory as well as practice in a given domain"
(Van de Ven, 2007, p. 6).

The disconnection between theory and practice coupled with greater
accountability requirements for both higher education and community
organizations has led to increased collaborative relationships between the
academy and community partners. There are various references to such
partnerships in the literature with the terminology associated with such alliances
differing slightly. Some terms include: action research, participatory action
research, community-based research, community-based participatory research,
community service learning, community-university partnerships, collaborative
research, engaged scholarship, community engagement, community-engaged
scholarship, knowledge mobilization, knowledge translation, and the scholarship
of engagement. Interestingly enough, some of these bodies of literature seem to
exist as silos without any reference or acknowledgement that the other exists or
the similarities between them. There are two defining characteristics of these
bodies of research: they are action-oriented and participatory (Etmanski, Hall, &
Dawson, 2014). Etmanski et al. posit that an orientation to action means that the
participants (both university researchers and community partners) commit to
improving the community in some way. Additionally, "the word participatory
means that the intended beneficiaries of the research (i.e., community members)
have significant control over some if not all parts of the research process: from
problem definition, to research design, data collection, representation, and
dissemination of findings" (Etmanski et al., 2014, p.8).

In this conceptual framework, the focus will be on the scholarship of engagement and collaborative research. There are many similarities between these two bodies of literature, yet in many respects the literature seems to have developed mostly independent of each other. While there are a few authors (Dunnett, 2004; Etmanski et al., 2014; Giles, 2009; Hall & Tremblay, 2012; Sandmann, 2009) who reference the work of the respective fields, these discussions are very brief. Upon closer examination, what would appear different is the lens through which one chooses to view the fields. The scholarship of engagement literature (including terms like engaged scholars, engaged scholarship, community-engaged scholarship, civic engagement, and scholarly engagement) is written from a higher education perspective, while the literature on community-based research seems to take a community partner view. Both perspectives, however, share fundamental values. Sandmann (2006) explains collaborative learning involves academic researchers and community partners who are active co-creators of knowledge. I will now turn my attention to these emerging fields.

Scholarship of Engagement

The term "scholarship of engagement" derives from the work of the late Ernest Boyer, a former president of the Carnegie Academy for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (Barker, 2004; Boyer, 1990, 1996; Sandmann, 2006; Shultz & Kajner, 2013). In 1990 the Carnegie Foundation published a report entitled *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* in which Boyer proposes four general views of scholarship that have "separate, yet overlapping

functions" (Boyer, 1990, p. 16). The first is the most familiar, the scholarship of discovery (or research). However, Boyer extends the views to include the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application, and the scholarship of teaching. For Boyer, the scholarship of discovery is basic research which contributes to the advancement of human knowledge. In proposing the scholarship of integration, Boyer advocates interdisciplinary conversations which can lead to a new knowledge paradigm. Essentially, Boyer sees researchers as situating their work within a larger intellectual context. The scholarship of application is one in which theory and practice inform each other. His scholarship of teaching recognizes that "teaching is the highest form of understanding" (Boyer, 1990, p. 23), and it inspires both the teachers and students to be lifelong learners. In his later work, Boyer argues that his own framework should be expanded to include the scholarship of engagement which suggests a reciprocal, collaborative relationship with partners outside the university (Boyer, 1996). As Boyer (1996) purports, "the academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment to what I call the scholarship of engagement" (p. 11). Boyer's work on the scholarship of engagement was the impetus that began a movement to re-examine the role of higher education in society.

In 1999 the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities published a report entitled *Returning to our Roots – The Engaged Institution* (Kellogg Commission, 1999). Building on the work of Boyer, this report

challenged universities to become more responsive to the needs of society, to work in partnership with communities, and to provide practical experiences for students in helping to solve community problems. The Commission also recognized that incorporating community engagement into promotion and tenure policies was likely the biggest challenge to engagement (Kellogg Commission, 1999).

The conceptualization of the scholarship of engagement or community-engaged scholarship implies two parts: engagement and scholarship (Sandmann, 2006). The principles of engagement are reflected in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' (2002) definition of engaged institutions. Engaged institutions are "fully committed to direct, two-way interaction with communities and other external constituencies through the development, exchange and application of knowledge, information and expertise for mutual benefit" (p. 7). Sandmann (2006) asserts that "scholarship, on the other hand, is typically considered original intellectual work communicated to and validated by peers" (p. 81). Sandmann (2006) further states:

> Only when the principles of engagement are coupled with the standards of scholarship is community-engaged scholarship achieved. In other words, not all community-based outreach constitutes engagement – not all is done *with* the community – and not all community engagement activities by faculty constitute scholarship. (p. 81)

Cox (2006) asserts that varying degrees of engaged scholarship may occur depending on the connections between university researchers and community partners.

At a less engaged level, the interaction may involve only one dimension of scholarship or one of a limited set of scholarship activities. At the deepest level, the interactions carry through multiple dimensions and across all the scholarship activities. In each case, however, it is the presence of that interaction that distinguishes the scholarship of engagement. (Cox, 2006, p. 125)

Sandmann (2006) succinctly articulates the nature of engaged scholarship stating:

Scholarship, therefore, is the architecture for community engagement. It can be the foundation on which the community-based engagement is conceptualized, implemented, assessed, and communicated. Scholarship is *what* is being done, engaged scholarship is *how* it is done, and for the common or public good is *toward what end it is done.* (p. 82)

Over the past two decades, the conceptualization of the scholarship of engagement in universities has evolved (Sandmann, 2007). As noted above, earliest works attempted to broaden traditional concepts of research, not "supplant the triad of teaching, research, and service" (Sandmann, 2006, p.80). Many of these writings attempted to define the characteristics of engagement.

More recent works related to engagement have incorporated knowledge flow theory as a way to distinguish between one way and two way approaches to university outreach (Weerts, 2007; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). Drawing on the work of Roper and Hirth (2005), Weerts and Sandmann (2008) contrast traditional research with the scholarship of engagement. The authors explain that in the unidirectional model of knowledge flow (espoused by traditional research), knowledge is viewed from an objectivist epistemology. In this way, knowledge is viewed as "a commodity that can be transferred from the knowledge producer to the user" (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008, p. 77). In this model, research is

disseminated without much regard for how the recipients may use this knowledge. In contrast, the two way model draws on a constructivist epistemology, and "suggests that the knowledge process is local, complex and dynamic" (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008, p. 78). Dissemination of knowledge in the latter model is very different since "boundary spanners act as conveners, problem solvers, and change agents who negotiate the wants and needs of parties involved in the process of creating and disseminating knowledge" (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008, p. 79).

Another thread in the evolution of engaged scholarship attempts to disentangle "scholarship" from service and outreach (Sandmann, 2007). Sandmann (2006) explains "the scholarship of engagement is not a renaming of the service category of the traditional tripartite mission of the academy" (p. 80). Citing Holland, Sandmann (2006) notes "the scholarship of engagement and the idea of community partnerships are not about service. They are about extraordinary forms of teaching and research and what happens when they come together" (p. 80).   In a similar vein, O'Meara and Rice (2005) add:

> The scholarship of engagement requires going beyond the expert model that often gets in the way of constructive university-community collaboration, calls on faculty to move beyond 'outreach', asks scholars to go beyond 'service', with its overtones of noblesse oblige. What it emphasizes is genuine collaboration: that the learning and teaching be multidirectional and the expertise shared. It represents a basic reconceptualization of faculty involvement in community-based work. (p. 28)

Barker (2004) reiterates this view when he writes "the language of scholarship suggests a conscious effort to bring a greater sense of rigor and clarity to civic renewal efforts in higher education" (p. 126).

Barker (2004) outlines a taxonomy of five practices of engaged scholarship: public scholarship, participatory research, community partnerships, public information networks, and civic literacy scholarship. Barker argues that public scholarship is more focused on public deliberation than participation. Deliberative practices through the use of public forums help participants better understand community problems. This can result in scholars being able to generate new research questions. Participatory research (also referred to as action research or participatory action research), like public scholarship, recognizes the important role community partners can play in the co-creation of knowledge. Community partnerships, while often overlapping with public scholarship and participatory research, are more focused on social transformation. Public information networks help communities identify resources by providing comprehensive databases of what is available. Finally, Barker explains that the scholarship of engagement can be enhanced by emphasizing civic skills or civic literacy. In this way, scholars help educate the public in the necessary skills to reflect on public issues.

The scholarship of engagement literature in recent years has also attempted to address some of the issues related to how the scholarship of engagement can be actualized in universities where traditional scholarship is emphasized (Bridger & Alter, 2006; Giles, 2009; Hollander & Saltmarsh, 2000;

Rhoades, 2009; Saltmarsh, 2005; Sandmann, 2009; Scott, 2007; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008). One of the challenges associated with the scholarship of engagement is assessing the quality of such scholarship (Cox, 2006). This raises questions on what is to be expected from university faculty members (Cox, 2006). Should all faculty members be expected to participate in the scholarship of engagement? Is the scholarship of engagement more appropriate for certain faculties more so than others? Are there certain times in an academic's career when it is more appropriate to become involved in the scholarship of engagement? If all faculty members are not involved in it, how can equitable standards be developed and applied to evaluate faculty members who pursue different forms of scholarship? These questions will be revisited in a later section of this literature review. For now, the focus is collaborative research.

Collaborative Research

Collaborative research is an overarching term that is increasingly used to encompass a variety of collaborative approaches to research. Minkler (2004) explains that collaborative research is "not a method per se, but an orientation to research that may employ any number of qualitative and quantitative methodologies" (p. 685). There are a number of terms used in the literature that come close to describing this type of research, but the body of literature on community-based research (CBR) perhaps comes the closest to capturing the heart of what collaborative research is all about (Strand et al., 2003).

While a single, unified definition of community-based research cannot be applied to all projects, Leadbeater et al. (2006) capture the essence of CBR by stating:

> The different projects share certain characteristics that are specific to a community-based approach model of interconnected stakeholders and long-term research partnerships. Always an important goal is to engage non-academics in the research process for the purpose of enhancing the production of relevant, scientifically sound knowledge that can be rapidly disseminated. (p. 5)

Consideration of the title "community-based research" reveals three key concepts in the term including: "community", "based", and "research". Dunnett (2004), in discussing community, asserts that there can be communities of place (e.g., a geographic area); communities of interest (e.g., e-learning); communities of practice (e.g., education); and communities of fate (e.g., people with disabilities). With respect to the term "based", varying opinions exist as to whether the research must be placed in the community in the physical sense. For many, "CBR is based in the community when it is initiated by the community and when it addresses locally identified issues" (Dunnett, 2004, p. 18). For SSHRC, community-based research means that the community must perceive the research to be beneficial to its interests, it must leave a legacy in the community, and it must be socially relevant (SSHRC, 2004). Finally, the term "research" raises the question as to whether this approach to research is considered quality research (Dunnett, 2004). Community-based research differs from traditional research in that it co-produces the knowledge with stakeholders who shape the research agenda and have an interest in the results. Results

often are difficult to compare due to the community-specific nature of many cases (Dunnett, 2004). This sometimes creates difficulty in convincing some academics of the value and quality of CBR (Dunnett, 2004).

An examination of various definitions reveals certain key principles of CBR. Israel et al. (1998) say that these key ideas include: the facilitation of collaborative partnerships in all phases of the research; the blending of local and professional knowledge; building on the strengths and resources within the community; promoting a co-learning and empowering process; integrating knowledge and action for the mutual benefit of all partners; and disseminating findings and knowledge gained to all partners. Hall et al. (2009) elaborate:

> CBR structures and projects create the bridge and ferries to connect the archipelagos of knowledge in our universities. CBR and KM strategies increase the impact of already existing knowledge, provide students and research faculty for priority local initiatives, build research capacity within our communities and create more interesting and relevant curricula for students who attend our universities. (p. 15)

Community-based research is closely linked to organizational learning. The type of organizational learning that results from CBR is very similar to what Argyris and Schon (1996) describe as double-loop learning. As these authors explain, such learning "results in a change in the values of theory-in-use, as well as in its strategies and assumptions" (p. 21). Argyris and Schon (1996) further suggest that practitioners and researchers should engage in collaborative research models so that "people in organizations function as co-researchers rather than merely as subjects" (p. 50). Moreover, they posit "people are more likely to provide valid information about their own intentions and reasons for

action when they share control of the process of generating, interpreting, testing, and using information" (p. 50). In CBR, communities recognize that solutions cannot be delivered exclusively by academics, but must involve a collaborative endeavour with feedback loops to and among all partners. I will now examine the value attributed to community-university partnerships.

Value of Community-University Partnerships

Hall and Tremblay (2012), in their study of twenty community-university partners across Canada, identified a number of positive outcomes of community-university research partnerships. From a community perspective, these included the development and strengthening of community-university relationships, building community organizational capacities, improvement to community services, policy and legislative impacts, and economic contributions. From an academic perspective, they highlighted student training, improved receptivity for research alliances, development of new courses and programs, increased inter-university linkages, and development of new and improved theory.

Community capacity building is noted repeatedly in the literature as a major positive outcome of collaborative research (Hall & Tremblay, 2012; Holland & Ramaley, 2008; Strand et al., 2003). Through training, the development of new skills and knowledge, community organizations can better meet the needs of their community (Hall & Tremblay, 2012). Furthermore, this enhanced capacity can often lead to further funding and more partnerships.

With increased accountability and limited funding, governments increasingly look to evidence-based decision making to determine policy direction

(Hall & Tremblay, 2012). The knowledge co-produced through the cooperative efforts of university researchers and practitioners in collaborative research has a huge potential to influence policy.

Student involvement in collaborative research through research fellowships and research-related support is one of the largest successes of community-university partnerships (Hall & Tremblay, 2012). Not only do such collaborative environments give students an opportunity to engage in all aspects of research from agenda formation to dissemination, but the networks and relationships fostered through their participation, in many instances, has inspired future study and career paths that are penchant towards that collaborative field.

From a university perspective such collaborative partnerships have helped strengthen the scholarship of engagement movement within the academy. As Brukhardt, Holland, Percy, and Zimpher (2004) suggest:

> The promise of engagement lies in its potential to rejuvenate the academy, redefine scholarship and involve society in a productive conversation about the role of education in a new century. (p. iii)

Brukhardt et al. (2006) further maintain:

> Partnerships are learning environments. Too often the university arrives with the answers. True partnerships are spaces within which questions are created, there is genuine reciprocal deliberation, and the work to find the answers is begun cooperatively. It is within the partnerships that expertise both inside and outside the university is valued and honoured. (p. 247)

Partnerships of this nature have helped to inform new university programs and courses, as well as contributed to improved theory. Niks (2006) affirms the positives associated with collaborative research such as "the potential

collaboration has for enriching the process and product of research" (p. 175). In fact, many of the participants of that study referred to the potential that collaborative research has to generate "richer" knowledge since such partnerships involve more than one perspective. In many instances such partnerships have enhanced the receptivity for research alliances at the university moving engaged scholarship further to the forefront of university priorities (Hall & Tremblay, 2012). Furthermore, community-university partnerships create the potential of strengthening inter-university linkages through academic networks and furthering collaborative research initiatives.

It must be noted that the value of community-university partnerships may vary depending on the participant perspective (Niks, 2006). For example, after interviewing twelve university-based and non university-based researchers, Niks (2006) observes:

> While one of the community-based researchers interviewed recognized that some university-based researchers are interested in developing relationships with community-based researchers, others are more interested in the access to funding these partnerships allow. In her view, universities do not "really" value partnerships; it is what they need to do to access the funding. (p. 175)

Niks goes on to explain the reward system in the academy typically does not value collaboration between universities and community partners for promotion and tenure purposes. What universities value most are single-authored publications which becomes difficult in a collaborative research model. Of course, this can depend where one is in his/her academic career. As Niks discovered from one interviewee:

It looks different depending on which side of the tenure line you are on. When you are an established and tenured faculty member, doing the community stuff is career enhancing and it is valued, especially in the last few years, and there's another change, the universities in general have become more aware of that and they are desperately searching for people who are doing it so that it is more advantageous to one's career. I still believe that if I had an untenured colleague come to me and ask me for advice about how best to build their career and their pre-tenure years that I would caution them against some of the things I did, especially the collaborative project. I still hear that talk that devalues the pragmatic that devalues the collaborative and that emphasizes the individualistic achievement model within the university. (p. 176)

A number of positive outcomes can be gleaned from the literature as being associated with collaborative research particularly as it relates to the field of education. In describing the positive effects of school-university collaborative research, Yashkina and Levin (2008) include increased teacher self-confidence, improved teaching and research skills, the development of professional learning communities, and a decrease in the gap between theory and practice.

While the value of collaborative research is discussed in the literature and a number of positive outcomes are highlighted, there is a recognition that more needs to be done to ascertain these perspectives, particularly from a community perspective (Wenger et al., 2011).

Challenges of Community-University Partnerships

Community-based research and the scholarship of engagement are not without their challenges (Dunnett, 2004; Israel et al., 1998; Minkler, 2004; Sandman & Kliewer, 2012). In the literature, the analogy of a "black box" has been used on a number of occasions with respect to community-university partnerships. Firstly, sometimes the university context and all its complexities

have been described as a "black box" which is not well understood by outsiders (Siemens, 2012). Secondly, several authors refer to the "black box" of the processes associated with building collaboration between universities and community partners (Dumlao & Janke, 2012; Thomson & Perry, 2006). This section explores the challenges associated with understanding these "black boxes".

Given universities' and communities' differing cultures and contexts, challenges abound (Siemens, 2012). The literature highlights some of the challenges that are inherent in building the bridge between university and community cultures (Flicker & Savan, 2006). One metaphor that is used in the literature to describe the differing cultures of the ivory tower and the community is that of two different worlds (Niks, 2006; Sandy & Holland, 2006). In these two different worlds, different rules apply. The world of the academic is one where oftentimes the pace of decision-making can be described as near glacial (Duderstadt, 2001). Duderstadt (2001) maintains that the university is "one of the most complex social institutions of our times" (p. 2). Hollander (2011) explains the need for academic researchers engaged in community-university partnerships to produce peer reviewed publications. The community partner does not necessarily understand the promotion and tenure policies of universities or other "black box" issues associated with the ivory tower and just want answers to their community issues in a timely manner (Buckeridge, Mason, & Robertson, 2002). Academic researchers do not necessarily understand the timelines that community partners must operate within. The end result is often frustration

between the parties due to this lack of understanding (Siemens, 2012). In order to cross the chasm that separates these different worlds, "boundary crossing" must occur (Sandy & Holland, 2006). For a partnership to be successful, all partners must understand each other (Siemens, 2012). A two way engagement between academic researchers and community partners must be developed through mutual understanding (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008).

Partnership-related, methodological, and ethical challenges have been noted in the literature. One of the biggest factors that discourages such research is the amount of time involvement necessary to build partnerships, particularly given that many academics would not necessarily have the skill preparation of how to engage non-academics in the research (Bowan & Graham, 2013; Israel, Schulz, & Parker, 2001). Lack of role clarity of participants from the outset can muddy the waters and add to the time required to help build partnerships (Bowan & Graham, 2013). Increased time adds to the overall costs of the research which is always an issue for consideration (Bowan & Graham, 2013). This is further complicated by those academics who may be less willing to engage in community-university partnerships since they fear it will threaten the rigour and objectivity of the study (Bowan & Graham, 2013). Furthermore, a history of mistrust between the academy and the community can hinder the development of research alliances (Israel et al., 2001). The literature is replete with references to academics who have seemingly exploited communities for their research agendas (Israel et al., 2001). Building trusting relationships in communities is slow since genuine collaboration takes significant amounts of time for meetings,

accountability processes, and working through conflicts (Minkler, 2004). This is

time that an academic might feel better spent churning out papers for peer review

for further advancement (Minkler, 2004). Related to this issue of time, Minkler

(2004) argues that the pace of research can be slow. Conversely, the need for

near immediate solutions can be beyond the capability of university researchers

who also have teaching and administration duties (Minkler, 2004). The difficulty

of comparing results across cases and to create generalizations, as well as the

inability to outline research upfront, poses methodological challenges (Israel et

al., 1998). The possibility that a major study result may cause some partners to

wish to suppress it creates distinct ethical challenges (Minkler, 2004).

One of the underlying issues with collaborative research and the

scholarship of engagement rests with the power differential between university

researchers and community partners (Sandmann & Kliewer, 2012). A discussion

of such power differentials warrants a return to the seminal work of French and

Raven (1959), as cited in French and Raven (1995), and their articulation of a

five point typology to conceptualize bases of power. French and Raven's original

power taxonomy was comprised of five types of power: reward, coercive,

legitimate, expert, and referent power. Reward power is said to be the type of

power used when a power holder promises some form of compensation in

exchange for compliance. Coercive power is used when the threat of punishment

is made in order to gain compliance. Legitimate power comes from an individual

having a justifiable right to request compliance from another person. Expert

power is used when one relies on his or her superior knowledge in order to gain

compliance. Referent power is utilized when a person complies with the request of a power holder due to his or her identifying with the influencing agent.

In community-university partnerships several bases of power are at play. As Sandmann and Kliewer (2012) point out, "management of inter-relational power dynamics is intimately connected to the success of any relationship. Engagement partnerships between the community and the university are no different" (p. 26). Such community-university partnerships exist within social and political contexts that naturally create differences in power. Additionally, given the propensity of the university towards traditional methods of research, academic researchers can sometimes find themselves in a difficult situation.

> There are pressures to design and carry out the project following traditional academic understandings which limit the involvement of those who do not have academic training. If the academically located researcher's way of writing proposals, defining questions and choosing methods is preferred, other perspectives will be less represented. This situation sets the stage for unequal control of the collaborative project. (Niks, 2006, p. 176)

The literature is replete with references to the challenges that university promotion and tenure can pose to academic researchers becoming involved in collaborative research (Niks, 2006; Scott, 2007). Existing reward structures in universities act as disincentives for academic researchers to engage in community-based research. As Niks (2006) purports, "certain academic practices, such as peer review can be seen as one of the professional structures built into most academic mechanisms that serve the perpetuation of the system" (pp. 173-174). In an examination of obstacles to community engagement, Scott (2007) further remarks:

The obstacle to engaged-community research most frequently mentioned is the typical reward system, which puts the highest value on individual in-depth, theory-based research that expands knowledge within a specific field. In that system, the often more interdisciplinary, collaborative, and real-world applied character of engaged-community research, where a specific problem is the primary focus, is looked down upon or not considered when it comes to determining tenure and promotion. (p. 9)

Traditionally in universities the work of an academic has been divided among research, teaching, and service with the first two playing a more critical role in achieving tenure. Academics on the "publish or perish" treadmill can be taking a major career risk to step out of the box and engage in more collaborative ventures with the community (Niks, 2006). As Niks (2006) explains, "there is a cost and a penalty for doing research that includes, for example, participatory components, since it does not translate easily into the degrees or promotions researchers seek within the academy" (p. 174). This is particularly the case for new academics who are just getting established in their careers (Niks, 2006; Randall, 2010; Scott, 2007). Universities typically have rewarded single author papers in peer reviewed journals, not multi-authored reports that may be disseminated unconventionally through various web 2.0 apps (Niks, 2006). Partnerships have not been encouraged from a university point of view with singular disciplinary specialization being the gold standard rather than interdisciplinary work engaged with communities. This reality ultimately impacts the scholar's ability to gain funding for community research and the long-term involvement of academic researchers in the community (Barreno, Elliott, Madueke, & Sarny, 2013).

Research suggests the academic's university discipline may further influence the likelihood of the individual to engage in the scholarship of engagement (Chang, 2000; Diamond & Adam, 1995; Lunsford, Church, & Zimmerman, 2007). In a study to examine the relationship between engaged scholarship and discipline, Diamond and Adam (1995) explain that disciplines vary greatly in their conceptualization of scholarship. Furthermore, faculty in disciplines with more traditional forms of scholarship were more reluctant to be open to changing the definition of scholarship (Diamond & Adam, 1995). Chang (2000), in a study to evaluate outreach work for promotion and tenure, found that faculty from the fields of agriculture and education were more likely to be involved in outreach, while faculty from science and business administration were least involved. Moreover, Lunsford et al. (2007) found disciplinary differences in how faculty define and value outreach work, as well as how that work links to their scholarly endeavours. Specifically, faculty in applied fields of social science recognized the integration of outreach, teaching, and scholarly work. Faculty in the more traditional sciences, while recognizing the relationship between all three, considered community outreach as a separate activity. Faculty in the natural sciences did not identify outreach at all as being a part of their scholarly work.

A review of Canadian faculty collective agreements reveals that while the word 'community' is present in 23 of 39 collective agreements, the emphasis is in a context of community service and not one whereby community engagement is recognized as an acceptable research practice for promotion and tenure

purposes (Randall, 2010). Similarly, Barreno et al. (2013) found that the language of community engagement does not play a significant role in faculty collective agreements of universities studied. While this may be true, their qualitative interview data paint another picture revealing that Canadian academics have a long history of community engagement (Barreno et al., 2013). In other words, there is a disconnection between university promotion and tenure policies and the work of many academics who engage on a regular basis in community partnerships.

Research suggests that some universities have begun to take on a more visible civic engagement mandate, and tenure and promotion criteria for those universities are changing (Barreno et al., 2013). However, this lack of professional recognition of community engagement in academia still remains one of the greatest barriers for academics to engage in community university research alliances (Barreno et al., 2013).

One of the biggest challenges to community-university partnerships is as Niks (2006) explains "to generate a space where individuals with different ways of knowing can enter a genuine dialogue in which the differences are acknowledged and valued" (p. 177). Unless there is a genuine respect for the differing worlds and their respective ways of knowing, collaborative research will not be able to fulfill its true potential.

Sustainability of Community-University Partnerships

A number of factors have been identified in the literature to encourage the sustainability of community-university partnerships. Some of these include: strong

leadership; mutual interest; clear expectations; consensus decision-making; mutual respect and trust; capacity-building; adequate allocation of time and resources; and shared power (Davies, Edwards, Gannon & Laws, 2007; Dunnett, 2004; Hall & Tremblay, 2012; Maurrasse, 2001; Yashkina & Levin, 2008). While these factors are widely supported in the literature and viewed as essential for success, they are not easy to create in practice.

A recurring theme in the literature suggests that successful collaborative research requires strong leadership (Bussieres et al., 2008; Hall & Tremblay, 2012). Central to the concept of leadership is the relationship between leaders and followers (Hall & Tremblay, 2012). Hall and Tremblay (2012), when considering conditions inherent for successful community-university partnerships, suggest "it is also important to take the time to allow for new forms of collaborative leadership to evolve" (p. 32). What follows in the next three sections is a discussion of leadership with respect to community-university partnerships by examining the relationship between organizational culture, collaborative leadership, and organizational learning. While it is recognized that organizational studies and cultural perspectives are only two of multiple lenses (others include psychology and motivation; as well as psychology and career development) that can be used to study faculty engagement (O'Meara et al., 2011), they are nevertheless two very important perspectives that deserve further exploration in this literature review. The factors identified above as conducive to sustaining collaborative research are framed through this organizational learning conceptual framework.

Organizational Culture

When one considers a shift from traditional research to a more collaborative model espoused by the scholarship of engagement, it involves the process of change. Universities and community partners come to the partnership with existing, well established cultures. Overcoming bureaucratic, hierarchical structures that may exist in both universities and community organizations requires a change in organizational culture. Organizational culture is at the core of the process of change (Fullan, 2007; Hall & Hord, 2006; Sarason, 1996). Drawing on the work of Schein, Owens (1998) defines organizational culture as "the body of solutions to problems that has worked consistently for a group over time and that is therefore taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think about, and feel in relation to those problems" (p. 192). Essentially, when one speaks of organizational culture, one is referring to the attitudes, beliefs, and values of the members of an organization (Schein, 1985, 1992).

Since organizational culture is so ingrained, it provides a sense of security and continuity to its organizational members (Evans, 2001). As Schein (1992) explains, this reflects "our human need for stability, consistency, and meaning" (p. 44). Research suggests that whether people are in strong or weak organizations, the results are similar, that is, when faced with change, people have a tendency to cling tightly to the existing way of doing things (Evans, 2001; Schein, 1992; Trice & Beyer, 1995). Leading a shift to collaborative leadership and organizational learning requires a shift in mental models or, in other words, a change in how the

world is viewed (Senge, 2006). Of course, making such a change implies

considerable risk and is dependent on mutual respect and trust (Bryk &

Schneider, 2003; Kouzes & Posner, 2003; Sheppard, Brown, & Dibbon,

2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Barth (2007) posits that "risk-free

change is an oxymoron" (p. 217). As noted above, people do not like to be

taken out of their comfort zones (Barth, 2007). Moving to a new way of

doing things raises suspicions and creates skepticism. All organizational

members need to feel respected and that their voice counts (O'Toole,

1995). They need to feel that they can take risks in the new environment

and will be supported if they make a mistake. From a collaborative research

perspective, university researchers and community partners need to feel

mutually respected and understood, that they are able to build a trusting

partnership where the co-creation of knowledge is valued, and they are

able to work out issues collaboratively. The next section will discuss the

type of leadership necessary to lead such change.

Collaborative Leadership

Some scholars suggest collaborative leaders practice transformational

leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 2007);

understand the moral imperative of leadership (Fullan, 2003); are leaders of

leaders (O'Toole, 1995); are able to facilitate distributed leadership (Spillane,

2004, 2005a, 2005b; Spillane, Diamond & Jita, 2003; Spillane, Halverson &

Diamond, 2001, 2004); and have a strong personal vision (Senge, 2006). Such

leaders also recognize the importance of being: boundary spanners connecting

organizational members (Coldren & Spillane, 2007); good listeners (O'Toole, 1995); and systems thinkers (Hall & Hord, 2006; Senge, 2006).

Collaborative leadership is about credibility which is closely linked to trust and respect (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Harris & Lambert, 2003; Kouzes & Posner, 2003; O'Toole, 1995; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). As Kouzes and Posner (2003) maintain, "being seen as someone who can be trusted, who has high integrity, and who is honest and truthful is essential" (p. 24). Similarly, O'Toole (1995) opines that "what creates trust, in the end, is the leader's manifest respect for the followers" (p. 9). Leaders must always be "focused on enlisting the hearts and minds of followers through inclusion and participation. Such a philosophy must be rooted in the most fundamental of moral principles: respect for people" (O'Toole, 1995, p. 11). Perhaps, this idea is best expressed in the words of James MacGregor Burns (1978) when he writes, "moral leadership emerges from, and always returns to, the fundamental wants and needs, aspirations and values, of the followers" (p. 4).

This trust and respect is reciprocal and is reflected in the relationship between all organizational members. Within the framework of collaborative leadership, there are formal and informal leaders (Spillane, 2005b). Kouzes and Posner (2003) use the term "constituents" to refer to informal leaders since they believe it more accurately describes the relationship between formal leaders and what has traditionally been referred to as followers. Leadership, then, is viewed as the interaction between formal leaders, constituents and the situation (Spillane, 2005a). Hall and Hord (2006) contend:

In the learning organization context, all members of the staff share the leadership role, although the [formal] leader remains the point person. Ultimate responsibility must not be abandoned, and the positional leader (principal, superintendent, etc.) assumes and maintains this responsibility – but operationally in a less visible and more democratic way. (p. 31)

A closer examination of this relationship reveals the inherent risk, as well as the nature of the mutual trust and respect that must be present for it to work (Sheppard et al., 2009). Firstly, due to the traditional hierarchical nature of organizations, the waters are still largely uncharted in bringing about this change process. There is a definite dependency on adaptive learning. The formal leader, therefore, as the lead change agent must take a considerable risk to embark upon such a change in the first place. Secondly, the formal leader is in risky territory since if he/she forces the implementation too much, constituents will become disengaged. Knowing constituents' levels of tolerance is extremely important in deciding how far to "push" the initiative (O'Toole, 1995). With regard to mutual trust and respect, it is clear that both formal and informal leaders are dependent on the ethical behaviour of each other and their willingness to work collaboratively to accomplish organizational goals. When considering community-university partnerships, Hall and Tremblay (2012) opine:

Each partner must be able to trust the other partners to exercise good judgement, keep the others' interest in mind and work for the success of the partnership. This trust stems from the assumption that multiple sources of knowledge are valid and essential and that each partner brings a valuable contribution as an expert in their own lives and experiences. (p. 29)

Harris and Lambert (2003) contend that collaborative leadership employs a constructivist model. As they explain:

It is a form of leadership that is about learning together and constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively. This approach to leadership creates the opportunities to surface and mediate perceptions; to enquire about and generate ideas together; to seek to reflect on and make sense of work in the light of shared beliefs and new information; and to create actions that grow out of these new understandings. Such is the core of leadership. Leadership is about learning together. (p. 16)

Conceptually, a collaborative leadership approach is quite different from the traditional, hierarchical model and therefore, simply stating that now the university or a community organization is going to operate in such a manner that everyone has a leadership role to play in the collaborative process, will undoubtedly result in failure. Shared images of the organizational model must be created. As Sheppard et al. (2009) affirm in their study of a school district:

A formal leader who is committed to a collaborative leadership approach must focus on establishing a culture of collaboration and trust throughout a school or school district, and must work with constituents to both develop shared images of the organization they wish to create and eliminate the barriers imposed by the structures and processes of the traditional hierarchy. (p. 29)

Organizational Learning

The literature suggests organizational learning is key if real, continuous change is to occur (Dibbon, 2000; Fullan, 2005; Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Hall & Hord, 2006; Leithwood, Leonard & Sharratt, 2000; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Sheppard et al., 2009). The term "professional learning communities" has been used frequently to designate such an approach to learning (Dufour, 2004; Hall & Hord, 2006). Coming out of the work of Hord (1997), Dufour and Eaker (1998), and influenced by Senge's (1990, 2006) concept of learning

organizations, organizations that function as professional learning communities (PLCs) encourage constituents to move away from being isolated practitioners and move towards a collaborative, learning-centred model. As Senge (2006) explains, a learning organization is "where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (p. 3). While there are a variety of terms used to capture the concept of PLCs (e.g., communities of practice, professional communities of learners, communities of continuous inquiry, etc.), the general definition describes a group of professionals who focus on learning within a supportive community (Dufour, 2004).

Building Collaborative Structures

One of the essential elements in developing organizational learning is building a culture of collaboration. As Dufour (2004) posits, "educators who are building a professional learning community recognize that they must work together to achieve their collective purpose of learning for all. Therefore, they create structures to promote a collaborative culture" (p. 3). Senge's (2006) five disciplines (personal mastery, shared vision, mental models, team learning, and systems thinking) provide a useful framework to develop these collaborative structures.

It is recognized in the literature that organizations grow through individuals who learn (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Senge, 2006). While

individual learning does not necessarily guarantee organizational learning, without it there will be no organizational learning (Hall & Hord, 2006; Senge, 2006). The discipline of personal mastery taps into this growth potential of individuals. Clearly, universities and community partners need to foster a climate where the principles of personal mastery are valued and practised daily; a climate in which the vision of community-university partnerships can grow and be fostered. As Senge (2006) concludes, "that means building an organization where it is safe for people to create visions, where inquiry and commitment to the truth are the norm, and where challenging the status quo is expected—especially when the status quo includes obscuring aspects of current reality that people seek to avoid" (p. 162). Being a leader in such an organization also means being a role model and remaining committed to personal mastery.

Another important consideration in building collaborative structures is developing ways that constituents can articulate their mental models. "Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (Senge, 2006, p. 8). Organizational members must be given opportunities to practise reflection in action by exploring the differences between espoused theories (what we say) and theories-in-use (the implied theory in what we do) (Argyris & Schon, 1996). Such practice will help develop a more open, engaged organization where people feel comfortable to explore their assumptions resulting in learning for the organization.

Failure to contemplate and surface mental models can reduce greatly an organization's ability to engage in systems thinking. In the case of community-university partnerships this means giving participants an opportunity to discuss their understanding of the process and how best to reach their mutually beneficial goals.

Shared vision is vital to an organization since it provides the focus for learning (Senge, 2006). When an organization has genuine vision (not just a vision statement) people are committed to the change process because they want to be, not because it has been imposed on them. A shared vision is not shared until it connects with the personal visions of people throughout the organization. Therefore, organizations keen on developing a shared vision encourage their members to develop personal visions. If participants of a community-university partnership are engaged simply for the funding it may provide and do not share a personal vision that espouses collaborative research, it is unlikely the partnership will succeed.

Senge (2006) suggests that "building shared vision must be seen as a central element of the daily work of leaders. It is ongoing and never-ending" (p. 199). It is important for those who hold formal leadership positions in organizations to remember that their visions are not automatically the organizations' visions. Shared visions take time to emerge. They come from ongoing conversations where people listen to each other's personal visions and co-create a sense of what is possible.

For community-university partners this means investing time to discuss research questions and their views on the collaborative process.

Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, and Smith (1994) suggest that genuine collaboration will only occur through dialogue which is closely linked to Senge's (2006) team learning. Team learning involves mastering the practice of dialogue and discussion (Senge, 2006). Dialogue is distinct from discussion or debate, since the latter usually imply some sort of winning. In dialogue, a group explores difficult issues essential to a team's work from various points of view. As Bohm, cited in Senge (2006) explains, "the purpose of dialogue is to reveal the incoherence in our thought" (p. 224). In true dialogue, subjects that would otherwise be undiscussable become discussable due to a deeper listening process and a suspension of assumptions. Teams that engage in dialogue develop a deep level of trust and a better understanding of each other's points of view. It is particularly important for academic researchers and community partners to come to respect each other's worlds and to forge ways that they can move forward collaboratively, building a space where both worlds can meld and blend to develop a richer knowledge that is co-created from the expertise of both worlds.

By so doing, people are able to move beyond simple advocacy for their beliefs and to truly allow them to engage in double-loop learning. Double-loop learning occurs when people go beyond the simple identification and correction of errors which is associated with single-loop

learning and begin to question their basic assumptions to determine why the problem occurred in the first place (Argyris & Schon, 1996). Universities and community partners need to be able to practise engaging in dialogue to develop their collective learning skills.

What then might collaborative structures look like in action in the context of community-university research alliances? For community and university partners they include the development of professional learning opportunities for partners to learn from and about the collaborative process (Scott, 2007); a governance structure based on consensus decision-making (Hall & Tremblay, 2012); and the development of memorandums of understanding (Hall & Tremblay, 2012). For community partners it means determining the level of participation that best fits their involvement in the project (Stoecker, 1999). At the university organizational level it means engaging in true dialogue on engaged scholarship (Senge, 2006); making the scholarship of engagement a priority in the academy (Scott, 2007); changing promotion and tenure policies to be more inclusive of community engaged scholarship (Barreno et al., 2013; Sandmann, 2006); creating support mechanisms (through research funding and institutional supports) for increased collaboration within faculties, across faculties, and between universities and community partners (Scott, 2007). At the faculty level it means deans and faculty members putting engagement on the agenda for dialogue at faculty meetings (Senge, 2006); for faculty members interested in collaborative research it means engaging in collaborative leadership to

lead such partnerships (Sheppard et al., 2009). For all, it means using some of the strategies, tools, and methods outlined in the *Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* to enhance collaborative structures (Senge et al., 1994).   By fostering such connections, capacity building is enhanced and constituents have the opportunity to engage in ongoing, meaningful exchanges (Fullan, 2003, 2005; 2006; 2007; Fullan, Hill & Crevola, 2006; Harris & Lambert, 2003). I will now examine in more detail these collaborative structures with respect to community-university partnerships.

The analogy of a black box has been utilized in the literature to describe the little understood processes of collaboration (Dumlao & Janke, 2012; Siemens, 2012; Thomson & Perry, 2006). Banks and Armstrong (2014) contend that there must be a greater focus on collaborative reflexivity in community-university partnerships to enhance learning from the research process. Such a process enables individuals to reflect critically on themselves; engage in critical dialogue thereby scrutinizing structures and relational dynamics to consider how these influence the collaborative process.

Formalized engagement training has the potential to develop the skills and attitudes to support effective community-university partnerships (Sandmann & Kliewer, 2012). Organizations such as the Wellesley Institute and the Kellogg Foundation have developed training and toolkits that might be useful to research partners in helping to maintain university-community relationships (Flicker & Savan, 2006). The downside of communication training is that such training may

not be welcomed by some participants, it assumes that such skills can be learned, and it could be cost prohibitive (Flicker & Savan, 2006).

Sharing an equal balance of power in a community-university partnership is critical for success. As Hall and Tremblay (2012) suggest, "in order to achieve this participants must be reflexive and recognize positions of relative privilege, and work to ensure that collaboration is equitable and power sharing is taking place" (p. 30). Creating a governance structure that is based on consensus decision-making can go a long way to sustain successful partnerships and help to maintain a more equitable distribution of power (Hall & Tremblay, 2012). Such a framework helps to maintain parity between community and university partners at all levels.

Critical to communicating clear expectations is the development of memorandums of understanding between community-university partners. As Hall and Tremblay (2012) note:

> Having a clear Memorandum of Understanding between the university and community partners was not only a valuable process in the development of the partnership, but provided a clear framework outlining the motivations, goals, and expectations of each party. Partners need to have a clear understanding of what they wish to achieve, what their strategies will be, what each partners' role will be, the decision-making process, and how disagreements will be resolved. (p. 28)

Sandmann and Kliewer (2012) further reinforce the idea of partnership agreements by stating:

> A major strength of the contractual approach is that it forces university-community partners to make tough decisions about the relationship up front. In most situations engaged relationships respond to conflict when it develops. The contractual approach opens lines of communication and might help prevent serious disputes from developing. Furthermore, the

contractual process transfers both conscious and unconscious power differentials to a conceivably objective juridical space. Instead of confronting differentials in power on a case-by-case basis, contractual understandings of partnerships allow the stakeholders to address structural tensions in an environment that is free from the stresses of applied engagement. Said plainly, the contractual negotiation of power and engagement permits partners to discuss the terms of an engagement relationship before emotional and relational baggage develops. It is much easier to discuss power differentials in community-university partnerships in an abstract and indirect way, before the pressure of real circumstances can threaten to sour the relationship. (p. 25)

Of course, a drawback to the creation of such contracts could be that the relationship between partners becomes very impersonal, rigid, and distant (Sandmann & Kliewer, 2012). Moreover, the conditions that surround such a contract could be such that one partner feels coerced into agreeing to terms that may not necessarily represent their views (Sandmann & Kliewer, 2012).

Many models of CBR seem to promote maximized community partner involvement in the research partnership as being the ideal. However, due to the "different worlds" that community partners and academics live in, community partners might not be interested in all the minute details of research nor have the time or resources to engage in all aspects of the research (Flicker & Savan, 2006). Stoecker (1999) contends that perhaps it might be best to examine what level of participation community partners are most comfortable with which still ensures authentic community involvement. Finding an appropriate balance in community participation could be of key importance in promoting successful community-university partnerships.

The engaged scholarship literature asserts "the necessary ingredients for the sustenance and enhancement of [the involvement of universities and colleges

in community partnerships] rests considerably within the academy" (Maurrasse, 2001, p. 4). There must be institutional leadership that espouses this type of architecture with support being demonstrated in the institution's mission, strategic planning, infrastructure, and funding allocations (Sandmann, 2006; Sandmann & Driscoll, 2011; Scott, 2007). The university's organizational culture must adopt engagement as a core value (Sandmann, Williams, & Abrams, 2009; Scott, 2007). University support with respect to promotion and tenure can do much to enhance and sustain community-university partnerships (Sandmann, 2006).

The literature suggests that Canadian university administrators have increasingly infused community engagement language into university mission statements in recent years; still much work remains (Randall, 2010). In a recent review of promotion and tenure policies at selected Canadian universities, Barreno et al. (2013) contend that "growing expectations of community engagement have not yet been fully matched by a growth in institutional supports for community-engaged scholarship"(p.5). These authors suggest a seven step ground-up approach to create changes in promotion and tenure policies in universities (Barreno et al., 2013): identifying institutional inroads and getting the topic on the agenda of existing group's meetings; determining the most effective levels of engagement (beginning in a smaller environment and growing larger); creating a local work group; reviewing existing policies and language; educating colleagues and the community; addressing the question of peer review by developing a model that could work; and operationalizing reform through the creation of a summary document of recommendations.

Some work has already been done to suggest how community engagement can be recognized in universities. Building on the work of Boyer and the Kellogg Commission Reports, Glassick et al. (1997) in *Scholarship Assessed: Evaluation of the Professoriate* suggest a model for evaluating scholarship that could be used by all disciplines. The six standards proposed include: clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, and reflective critique. The criterion of clear goals refers to the need for scholars to be clear in the purpose of their work, defining realistic objectives. An academic with adequate preparation has a good understanding of her/his discipline and possesses the skills to complete the research. A scholar who uses appropriate methods in his/her work chooses appropriate methodology for the questions raised. Significant results means that the work produced is important to the field of knowledge and stimulates additional inquiry. Effective presentation refers to the academic's ability to present findings to the intended audience, whether this is through peer-reviewed journal articles or less traditional modes of knowledge mobilization. Reflective critique refers to an academic's ability to reflect on his or her work as well as ask others to review and critique her/his work.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has done work in the area of documenting and assessing the institutionalization of community engagement. The Foundation proposes a community engagement classification which was first made available in 2006 (Sandmann & Driscoll, 2011). As of 2010, over 300 institutions of higher education had submitted

successful applications documenting their commitment to community

engagement (Sandmann & Driscoll, 2011).

The creation of a regional/national engagement governing institution could

further help to regulate and ensure standards of engagement between partners

(Sandmann & Kliewer, 2012). As Sandmann and Kliewer (2012) explain:

> Unlike statewide Campus Compact organizations, which catalogue and connect partners, these proposed institutions would go one step further and act as a governing body. They would have the power to accredit engagement units, set professional standards, establish rules and regulations, and resolve conflicts between partners. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching applies its community engagement classification to assess whether institutions of higher education achieve a threshold of engagement institutionalization. However, there is the potential to develop a more robust community engagement governing board that moves beyond the description and general assessment of community-university partnerships. Conceivably such governing bodies would be a type of regional accreditation body and mediation board. (p. 26)

A downside to such a governing body is that partners may be reluctant to

surrender their power to an external agent.

Providing increased funding for the developmental stages of partnership

building can go a long way in the sustainability of community-university

partnerships (Scott, 2007). It is during this particularly delicate stage in

relationship building that partners need time and resources to delineate agendas,

clarify roles and expectations, build trust, and discuss how conflicts will be

resolved. Time is needed to hammer out partnership agreements that can act as

guiding beacons when waters become muddied.

Leading a shift from hierarchical structures to collaborative leadership and

organizational learning takes time, hard work, and knowledge of leadership

practices. It is not something that can be decreed from on high, and then all of a sudden the organization miraculously operates in an ethos of collaboration. Collaborative structures must be forged, and leadership must be distributed. Organizations that foster organizational learning nurture a culture of collaboration. In such organizations, staffs are actively engaged in working together to construct meaning.

Global Community-University Partnerships and Networks

International networks in community-university engagement are growing around the world (Community Based Research Canada, n.d.; Crumbley & Tickner, 2003; Dunnett, 2004; Hall & Tremblay, 2012; Sclove, Scammell & Holland, 1998). While these networks take different forms in different regions, a common theme exists: universities and community partners are involved in the co-creation of knowledge (Munck, McIlrath, Hall, & Tandon, 2014). Recognizing a significant disconnection between universities and communities, these partnerships seek to engage university researchers and community partners in real world issues.

Some of these earliest partnerships, born out of the Science Shops first initiated in Holland in the 1970s, were developed to create alliances whereby university based centers assist community organizations in environmental and social research (Living Knowledge, n.d.). The Living Knowledge Network (LKN) based in Europe, the umbrella for the Science Shops, uses this definition:

> A Science Shop provides independent participatory research support in response to concerns expressed by civil society. Science Shops use the term "science" in its broadest sense, incorporating social and human

sciences, as well as natural, physical, engineering and technical sciences. (Living Knowledge, "Science Shops", n.d., para. 2)

Science Shops have quickly expanded to a number of countries throughout Europe. Citizens and organizations can come to these science shops with questions or issues for which they need research help.

Other examples of community-university partnerships around the globe include: the Loka Institute in the United States (which has studied the Science Shops in Holland extensively) (http://www.loka.org), the National Coordinating Center for Public Engagement (NCCPE) in the United Kingdom (http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk), and Engagement Australia (EU) (formerly the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance – AUCEA) (http://www.engagementaustralia.org.au). More global networks include: the Talloires Network in France (http://talloires network.tufts.edu), an international association of engaged universities; the Global University Network for Innovation (http://www.guninetwork.org), an international network of higher education universities; the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (http://www.pria.org), an international center for learning with over 1500 alumni from 25 countries; and the International Development Research Center (http://www.idrc.ca), founded by the Canadian government to support research in developing countries (Community Based Research Canada, n.d.).

One of Canada's contributions to the development of an international community-university engagement network is the Global Alliance on Community-Engaged Research (GACER) (http://www.gacer.org). This organization was born

out of the Community-University Expo held in Victoria, British Columbia in 2008

which brought together representatives from 14 nations around the world

(GACER, n.d.). Growing out of GACER, the UNESCO Chair in Community-Based

Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education was created in 2012

(UNESCO, n.d.). The UNESCO Chair strengthens the Global Alliance for

Community-Engaged Research and supports community-university partnerships

around the globe.

The networks noted above espouse similar aims. Many of these

partnerships, such as Engagement Australia, aim to create "inclusive forums for

discussion and development of engagement promoting practice, fostering

awareness, building capacity and developing resources" (Engagement Australia,

n.d. a, para. 3). The three strategic aims highlighted by the National Coordinating

Center for Public Engagement (NCCPE), while specific to their organization,

summarize the aims of many of these networks. They include:

> (1) To inspire a shift in culture by supporting universities in bringing about strategic change that embeds public engagement and by identifying, developing and disseminating evidence-informed practice;
> (2) To increase capacity for public engagement by brokering and encouraging the sharing of effective practice and by capturing learning from the beacons and beyond and sharing it widely;
> (3) To build effective partnerships to encourage partners to embed public engagement in their work by informing, influencing and interpreting policy and by raising the status of public engagement.
>
> (NCCPE, "Vision, Mission, and Aims", n.d., para. 3)

Facilitating the sharing of knowledge across continents furthers the impact

of community-based research on real world issues. By so doing, these global

networks build the institutional capacity of both higher institutions and community

partners; identify effective practices in community based research; contribute to the training of community-engaged scholars and community-based researchers; and promote community-engaged research as an important part in evidence-based decision making.

<div align="center">**Community-Based Research in Canada**</div>

SSHRC has played an important role in Canada in bringing community-university partnerships to the foreground of research creating various funding opportunities for partnership research. In 1997, a SSHRC study entitled *Community Research and Information at the Crossroads* (CRIC) was undertaken to study how to apply the Holland model (Dunnett, 2004). Building on this science shop model, SSHRC introduced the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) in 1999 (Dunnett, 2004). If successful at the letter of intent stage, projects could receive a $20 000 development grant to develop a CURA proposal (SSHRC, "Community-University Research Alliances", n.d.). If successful with the CURA application, CURA project recipients were eligible for $200 000 per year over a period of five years (SSHRC, "Community-University Research Alliances", n.d.). Between 1999 and 2010, a search of the SSHRC grant search engine reveals that the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) program of SSHRC awarded a total of 939 grants to a broad range of community-university partnerships across Canada (SSHRC, "Awards Search Engine", n.d.). In 2010, SSHRC introduced a new program architecture (SSHRC, 2010). With SSHRC's new program architecture model, all funding fell under three umbrella programs: talent, insight, and connection (SSHRC, 2010).

The document entitled *Briefing on SSHRC's Renewed Program Architecture* (2010) explains the goals of each of these umbrella programs. For example, the goal of the Talent program is "to support graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in an effort to develop the next generation of researchers and leaders needed in academia and across public, private and not-for-profit sectors" (p. 3). The goal of the Insight program is "to build knowledge and understanding about people, societies and the world by supporting research activities according to the approach best suited to addressing the nature of the research" (p. 3). In this program "funding is available to individuals and teams, as well as to formal partnerships involving researchers and their partners across agencies, institutions, and the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. Funding supports ongoing or new research activities involving disciplinary, interdisciplinary and/or cross-sector perspectives" (p. 3). The goal of the Connections program is "to realize the potential of social sciences and humanities research for intellectual, cultural, social and economic influence, benefit and impact on and beyond the campus, by supporting specific activities and tools that facilitate the multidirectional flow of knowledge"(p. 4). In this new program architecture model, community-university partnerships have the potential to engage in even longer funded partnerships than the CURA with even greater numbers of funding opportunities.

The importance of community-based research is taking hold in Canada with universities establishing offices of community-based research such as the one at the University of Victoria. The Office of Community Based Research

(OCBR) at the University of Victoria, established in 2007, evolved in June 2013 to include two structures: the Research Partnerships and Knowledge Mobilization Unit and the Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community University Engagement (ISICUE). As the University of Victoria website explains, the ISICUE "is a research centre providing a space for the study and practice of engaged scholarship and interdisciplinary innovation" (University of Victoria. Institute, n.d., para. 2). At the other end of the country in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, the Harris Centre at Memorial University coordinates and facilitates the university's educational, research, and outreach activities in the area of regional policy and development (Memorial University, n.d.). The Harris Centre works with faculties and departments within the university and is also an access point for community partners wishing to work with the university on matters related to regional policy and development (Memorial University, n.d.).

A multitude of web-based networks is being created to further enhance the knowledge mobilization agenda such as the Research Impact website (www.researchimpact.ca). Moreover, Community Based Research Canada (CBRC) (www.communityresearchcanada.ca) has as its vision to be a national facilitator for community-based research. Its steering committee is comprised of key players from numerous university-community partnerships. CBRC is a network which builds capacity among universities and community partners to engage in collaborative research.

Conferences and Journals Related to Community-Based Research

The number of conferences and journals around the world related to the scholarship of engagement is indicative of the trajectory of community-university partnerships. The interest in mutually beneficial community-university partnerships is on the rise resulting in an increased demand for conferences and journals devoted exclusively to the engaged scholarship field.

With respect to conferences, an increasing number can be identified around the globe focussed entirely on community engaged scholarship. For example, the Community-University Exposition is Canadian led and hosted biannually to showcase community-campus partnerships worldwide. It was hosted at Memorial University, Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook, NL in 2013 and was last hosted in May, 2015 at Carlton University in Ottawa (CuExpo2013, n.d; CuExpo2015, n.d.). In July 2014, Engagement Australia hosted the 2014 International Conference of Engaged Scholars and Practitioners at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, New South Wales (Engagement Australia, n.d. b). The conference provided a forum for interactive discussion about university engagement, the sharing of best practices, and how to better sustain community-university partnerships. In October 2014, scholars, professional staff, and academic administrators met in Edmonton as a part of the Engagement Scholarship Consortium Conference, *Engagement for Change: Changing for Engagement* to discuss documenting community engaged scholarship and making a case for it in the promotion and tenure process (Engagement Scholarship, n.d.).

Various journals are dedicated to collaborative research and the
scholarship of engagement. Some of these include: *Centre for Urban Research
and Learning – Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and
Engagement* (http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/journals/index.php/ijcre/index); the
Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship (http://jces.ua.edu/); the
Journal of Community Engagement and Higher Education
(http://discovery.indstate.edu/jcehe/index.php/joce); the *Journal of Higher
Education Outreach and Engagement*
(http://openjournals.libs.uga.edu/index.php/jheoe); and the *Australasian Journal
of University-Community Engagement*
(http://www.engagementaustralia.org.au/ajuce_journal.html). In the fall of 2014
the University of Saskatchewan launched the first Canadian peer-reviewed
journal in community-university engagement and scholarship entitled the
Engaged Scholar Journal (http://www.usask.ca/engagedscholar/).

Summary

This literature review began with an overview of the scholarship of
engagement and collaborative research. Similarities between both bodies of
literature were highlighted in an attempt to link these fields of research which
have remained for the most part in isolation from one another. The value of
community-university partnerships, the challenges associated with such
partnerships, and their sustainability were then explored. The literature review
concludes with an examination of global community-university networks which
are growing around the world, followed by a glance at the state of community-

based research in Canada, and an examination of the conferences and journals dedicated solely to community engaged scholarship.

The review reveals the value of collaborative research depends largely on the perspective of the participant. For some participants, collaborative research is highly valued, while for others it does not carry much value. More study is required to include community partners' perspectives on community-university engagement in the literature. Many challenges with respect to collaborative research were explored, with promotion and tenure policies at universities being viewed as one of the biggest challenges to community-university partnerships. A number of factors have been identified to encourage the sustainability of community-university partnerships. Some of these include: strong leadership; mutual interest; clear expectations; consensus decision-making; mutual respect and trust; capacity-building; adequate allocation of time and resources; and shared power. While these factors are widely supported in the literature and viewed as essential for success, they are not easy to create in practice. The literature suggests that the documentation of lessons learned and sharing best practices for the sustainability of partnerships requires further study.

Chapter 3

Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology of the study is discussed. The chapter is divided into sections including: research orientation, research design and participants, data sources, data collection techniques, data analysis, the role of the researcher, ethical considerations, and biases and limitations of the study.

Research Orientation

Research, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is "a careful study of a subject, especially in order to discover new facts or information about it" (Research, n.d.). But, research is much more than just "a set of methods, skills, and procedures applied to a defined research problem" (Usher, 1996, p. 9). Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) explain, research "is concerned with understanding the world and that this is informed by how we view our world(s), what we take understanding to be, and what we see as the purposes of understanding" (p. 3). Therefore, in order to develop a research methodology, the researcher must examine his/her beliefs and assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the phenomena to be researched (Cohen et al., 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

For this study, I have chosen a qualitative, interpretive approach to describe my experiences and those of the participants involved since that paradigm seems congruent with the questions I want to explore, and the ways I want to approach the analysis.

The interpretive paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Interpretivists "assume a world in which universal, absolute realities are unknowable, and the objects of inquiry are individual perspectives or constructions of reality" (Hatch, 2002, p. 15). As Gage (2007) explains, "interpretive researchers regard individuals as able to construct their own social reality, rather than having reality always be the determiner of the individual's perceptions" (p. 153). The interpretive paradigm "strives to view situations through the eyes of the participants, to catch their intentionality and their interpretations of frequently complex situations, their meaning systems and the dynamics of the interaction as it unfolds" (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 293). Drawing upon a constructivist philosophical stance, researchers from the interpretive orientation seek to understand phenomena, and to interpret meaning within the social and cultural context of the natural setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Understanding that inquiry is contextually and socio-temporally bound, as well as value-centred, the interpretive researcher seeks a broad range of inputs and interpretations. Central to the interpretive paradigm is the idea of realities being created in the form of abstract mental constructions that are based on shared experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Espousing a subjectivist epistemology, interpretivists maintain the researcher and participants engage in the co-creation of understandings which reflects not only the participant's subjective perceptions, but also the subjectivity of the researcher's views (Cohen et al., 2000). Using the self as an instrument, the interpretive researcher "engages the situation and makes sense of it" (Eisner, 1998, p. 34).

Research Design and Participants

Careful consideration was given in designing and choosing a study population (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002; Cohen et al., 2000; Stake, 2000; Wiersma & Jurs, 2005). Since this interpretive study intends to provide insight into the challenges of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement for academic researchers, I decided that academic researchers and community partners from a Community University Research Alliance (CURA) project in a Faculty of Education at a Canadian university would provide a suitable study population. The participants (both academic researchers and community partners) held senior positions in their institutions with most holding a PhD degree. Upon further contemplation, I decided to include, where possible, both present and past participants since some CURA participants had moved to other jobs, and therefore, were no longer participants of the CURA project, but their combined experiences could shed valuable light on the research questions.   I also decided to include a CURA fellow student since this individual's experiences would offer a graduate student's view of the research questions. Similarly, gaining the perspective of other university personnel (e.g., a representative from a knowledge mobilization (KM) unit at the university and a CURA project manager) added depth to this study. A SSHRC official was contacted to gain insights into the vision of the collaborative research model, and its intended impact on academics and practitioners.

The research design included document analysis, observations and interviews. Reports, SSHRC proposals, minutes from partner meetings, and other

documents produced from the CURA project (e.g., publicity documents) were analyzed over a five year period (2004-2009) to gain insights into formulating the research questions. Of particular importance was a self-study report of the project, completed after two years by the project manager who interviewed CURA participants to determine the successes and challenges of the community-university research alliance to that date. This report was intended for community-university research alliance participants as an update in how the project was progressing. Furthermore, as a CURA doctoral fellow I was a part of actual partner discussions (e.g., meetings between academic researchers and community partners to shape the research agendas). I attended multiple CURA partner meetings for observation purposes (2004-2009). During these observation sessions, I took extensive field notes.

Interviews were conducted with the study population. In total, sixteen interviews were conducted. All interviews were taped, transcribed, and assigned appropriate codes. The majority of interviews took place via telephone while several did take place face-to-face. Interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix A for interview protocols), as defined by Fontana and Frey (2000), in order to "understand the complex behaviour of members of society without imposing any a priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry" (p. 653).

Data Sources

As noted above, the main data sources for this study included: document analysis, observation and interviews. Wellington (2000) asserts that the use of documentary sources has a number of advantages in any research project in

education such as providing an important historical perspective, and providing an additional source of data (thereby forming a means of triangulation; helping to increase the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of research). In addition to the documents gathered in relation to the CURA project, I did an extensive literature review (see Chapter Two) that assisted in gaining a better understanding of the challenges of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement for academic researchers.

Other data sources for this study included extensive interviews and some observations. Wellington (2000) maintains that together these latter two data sources "allow a picture to be built up of the case being studied which allows a piece of research to capture the texture of reality so important in providing a useful presentation when findings are disseminated" (p. 94). Likewise, Hatch (2002) concludes that "when interviews are used in conjunction with observation, they provide ways to explore more deeply participants' perspectives on actions observed by researchers" (p. 91).

Cohen et al. (2000) explain that observational data are attractive since they afford "the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' data from 'live' situations" (p. 305). This enables researchers to see things that might otherwise be missed, to discover things that participants may not talk about freely, and to move beyond opinions stated in interviews.

All research whether it is scientific, interpretive, or critical should be examined for adherence to rigorous, disciplined research procedures. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) explain that "terms such as credibility, transferability,

dependability, and confirmability replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (p. 21). Similarly, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that interpretive researchers are concerned with: the credibility of their findings (internal validity); the transferability or how well their hypotheses would fit into another context (external validity); the dependability or testing for consistency by a second evaluator (reliability); and the confirmability of the data (objectivity). These reconceptualised ideas of trustworthiness have been applied to this research study.

Credibility in qualitative research suggests that findings must accurately describe the phenomena being researched (Cohen et al., 2000). There is general agreement (Cohen et al., 2000; Janesick, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984) that credibility in interpretive inquiry can be addressed by procedures such as prolonged engagement in the field, or member checking to assess intentionality and triangulation (cross-checking data and interpretations).

In order to address validity issues in this study, I used data "triangulation" (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 668) by incorporating different data sources including document analysis, interviews, and observations. Trustworthiness was further enhanced by the use of engagement in the field. I kept field notes from my document analyses, interviews, and observations. The observations were a method of confirming or contradicting the participants' descriptions from the interviews and document analyses. Another method that I utilized was debriefing my findings with my doctoral team.

Generalizability in qualitative research is interpreted as transferability (Cohen et al., 2000). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that qualitative researchers should be more concerned with providing rich data so that researchers can determine whether transferability is possible. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) assert, it is not a researcher's "task to provide an index of transferability; it is his or her responsibility to provide a data base that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers" (p. 316). In this way, transferability requires "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). Thick descriptions allow readers to determine the "fit" of findings with other contexts. By being immersed in a particular context over time, qualitative researchers can develop a more holistic view of the interrelationship of factors as they emerge. To further assess the transferability of findings, qualitative researchers may strive to investigate as wide as possible of a range of people and events in their study to determine representativeness (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

This study is intended to be a thick description of the challenges of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement for academic researchers. By using the research design as described, it is hoped that this increases its representativeness. Whether or not the findings of this research will be transferable or generalizable to other contexts will have to be determined by its readers.

The notion of reliability is construed as dependability in qualitative inquiry. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggest that many qualitative researchers "tend to view reliability as a fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs

in the setting under study, rather than the literal consistency across different observations" (p. 40). As suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), I attempted to increase dependability in this study by engaging in such procedures as triangulation, reflexive journals, engagement in the field, and debriefing with my doctoral team.

Since data must go through a researcher's mind, the worry about subjectivity arises in qualitative research. To increase confirmability, interpretivists attempt to objectively study the subjective states of their subjects. To guard against their own biases, interpretive researchers record detailed field notes that include reflections on their own subjectivity (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Some interpretive researchers work in teams and have colleagues critique their work. Interpretivists can also have participants review and cross-check findings. Furthermore, prolonged and repeated observations are used to reduce researcher effect. Additionally, interpretive researchers try to interact with their subjects in a natural, non-threatening manner. Interviews should be more like a conversation than a formal question and answer session. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) conclude "researchers can never eliminate all of their own effects on subjects or obtain a perfect correspondence between what they wish to study-the natural setting-and what they actually study-a setting with a researcher present" (p. 39). However, interpretive researchers can recognize their effect on subjects and use this understanding to generate additional insights into their findings.

In this study, confirmability was earned by engaging in many of the activities suggested above. I have worked closely with my doctoral team who have been able to critique my work.

Data Collection Techniques

Wellington (2000) explains that the study of documents can often be used in a study in conjunction with interviews and observations. Documents can add value at various stages in the research process such as to open up and explore the field; to complement other research approaches and/or to conclude or consolidate the research. For the purposes of this study, I used the document analysis process in the exploratory stage. In such a way, it was hoped that the documents would sensitize the researcher to the key problems and issues in the field (e.g., value of collaborative research, challenges of collaborative research, sustainability of collaborative research). Angell and Freedman (as cited in Wellington, 2000) suggest the greatest value of document analysis at this stage is "in giving investigators a feel for the data and thus producing hunches with respect to the most fruitful ways of conceptualizing the problem" (p. 114).

In searching for meaning of documents, Giddens (as cited in Wellington, 2000) explains that documents do "not have a single objective inner, essential meaning…its meaning depends on the intentions of the author and the perspectives of the reader" (p. 115). Scott (as cited in Wellington, 2000) further purports "documents must be studied and analyzed as socially situated products" (p. 115).   Meaning then is a matter of interpretation.   Wellington (2000) suggests a seven point framework for document analysis. In this framework, the literal

reading of a document must be accompanied by an examination of the document's content; authorship; intended audiences; intentions and purposes; vested interests; genre, style and tone; and presentation and appearance (Wellington, 2000). Usher (1996) concludes there are four aspects of documents which require interrogation and interpretation including: context (the author's position); pretext (that which exists before the document); subtext (that which is beneath the text); and intertext (the relation of the text to other texts).

There are many reasons to use interviews. Wellington (2000) suggests that "interviewing allows a researcher to investigate and prompt things that we cannot observe" (p. 71). Similarly, Verma and Mallick (1999) assert "a trained, experienced and skilful interviewer can probe responses, investigate feelings, motives, experiences and attitudes which no other investigative technique can reach" (pp. 128-129). Cohen et al. (2000) maintain that "the interview is a social, interpersonal encounter, not merely a data collection exercise" (p. 279). As such, the interviewer needs to establish an appropriate atmosphere so that participants can feel comfortable to talk freely. In this study, interviews were conducted in a conversation style.

The literature suggests that the sequence and framing of interview questions must be considered (Cohen et al., 2000; Kvale, 1996; Patton, 1980). Specifically, easier and less controversial questions should be addressed earlier in the interview process in order to put participants at ease (Patton, 1980). This might mean that the 'what' questions precede the 'how' and 'why' questions. Knowing when and how to prompt the participant to explore an idea in greater

depth is the key to being a skilled interviewer. In this study, participants were forwarded a copy of interview questions prior to the interview so that they could gather their thoughts on the subject prior to the interview. During the interviews, participants were prompted from time to time to explore an idea in greater detail.

Cohen et al. (2000) posit that there are a number of problems in the actual conduct of the interview that can be anticipated and possibly avoided by preparing for them. These issues include: avoiding interruptions; minimizing distractions; avoiding awkward questions; jumping from one topic to another; giving advice or opinions rather than active listening; and finishing an interview too soon.

In an attempt to conduct good interviews, I was guided by Kvale's (1996) quality criteria guidelines for ideal interviews which include:

(1) The extent of spontaneous, rich, specific, and relevant answers from the interviewee.
(2) The shorter the interviewer's questions and the longer the subject's answers, the better.
(3) The degree to which the interviewer follows up and clarifies the meanings of the relevant aspects of the answers.
(4) The ideal interview is to a large extent interpreted throughout the interview.
(5) The interviewer attempts to verify his or her interpretations of the subject's answers in the course of the interview.
(6) The interview is 'self-communicating'—it is a story contained in itself that hardly requires much extra descriptions and explanations. (p. 145)

The observational method, often used in combination with interviews, is a tool for collecting information without direct questioning of participants by the researcher (Verma & Mallick, 1999). As Verma and Mallick (1999) explain, "the investigator's observations of the respondent's behaviour may be a help in

formulating questions and in interpreting the meaning and significance of the respondent's answers to questions in the interview" (p. 129).   Observation techniques, like interviews, can range between very structured and less structured (Cohen et al., 2000). For this study, I have chosen a less structured format. As such, observations were reviewed before suggesting an explanation for the phenomena being observed. As the researcher, I adopted a participant-observer role in my involvement with the CURA project, documenting and recording what was happening for research purposes. As Cohen et al. (2000) conclude, "such immersion in the field facilitates the generation of thick descriptions which lend themselves to accurate explanation and interpretation of events rather than relying on the researcher's own inferences" (p. 311).

LeCompte and Preissle (1993) provide a useful set of guidelines for observing activities and events. They suggest observations should include answers to such questions as: who is taking part; what is taking place; how routine are the behaviours observed; what resources are being used; what are the roles of participants; what is being discussed; what non-verbal communication is taking place; and what meanings are the participants attributing to what is happening.

As suggested by Kirk and Miller (1986), I tried to keep four sets of observational data including: detailed notes throughout the meetings; expanded notes made as soon as possible after each observation period; journal notes to record issues and ideas that emerged during this aspect of the field-work; and a running record of ongoing analysis.

Data Analysis

Eisner (1998) likens the job of the qualitative researcher to that of an artist who attempts to craft a picture of the person, situation, or community they have studied. Similarly, Ely (1991) suggests to analyze data is to tease out what we consider to be the essential meaning in the raw data thereby creating a product that speaks to the heart of what has been learned. This portrait of what I observed and experienced was crafted by the identification, coding, and categorizing of emerging themes.

Transcriptions from voice to text of the audio-taped interviews were completed as quickly as possible after the interviews so that initial analysis and coding of information could begin. These verbatim transcriptions were edited for grammar and appear written in literary style when used as quotations in the study. For anonymity purposes, I interchange the use of "he/she" and "his/her" when discussing participants. During the transcription phase, I began the process of coding the information by jotting down key words or phrases in the transcript margins to identify possible themes or categories (e.g., administrative challenges, relationship-related challenges, organizational challenges). A master chart of these themes and categories was also developed. In the same manner, I reread and coded my field notes, interview notes, and personal journal entries. As themes were clarified, I looked for further patterns and identified anomalies in the data. Emerging categories were further merged or clustered. I triangulated the information across the data sources.

Using a constant comparison approach, devised by Glaser and Straus (as cited in LeCompte & Preissle, 1993), I compared phenomena as they were recorded and classified. Additional questions emerging from the data collection were analysed. LeCompte and Preissle (1993) explain, "as events are constantly compared with previous events, new typological dimensions as well as new relationships may be discovered" (p. 256).

Role of the Researcher

In the interpretive paradigm, it is recognized that reflexivity plays an essential role. Researchers are unavoidably a part of the social world they are researching, and this social world is already an interpreted world by the actors (Cohen et al., 2000). As Hatch (2002) confirms, "researchers are a part of the world they study: the knower and the known are taken to be inseparable" (p. 10). Schwandt (1990), using the term "complementarity" (p. 272), explains that the inquirer complements the inquiry, thus making it complete. Schwandt (1990) further concludes "to understand what is distinctly human in shared experience, the knower must participate in the known" (Schwandt, 1990, p. 272). Without such participation, there can be no interpretive inquiry (Schwandt, 1990).

Reflexive researchers are aware of the ways that their perceptions and background shape the research. By its very nature, reflexivity suggests that researchers should acknowledge and disclose themselves in the research (Cohen et al., 2000). Consequently, it is important that I, the researcher, reveal to you, the reader, who I am. I present the following brief biography in an attempt to achieve that goal.

I have been an educator in the K-12 system in Newfoundland and Labrador for 25 years. I have nearly two decades of experience in administration fulfilling roles of both vice-principal and principal at a primary school in this province. Prior to this administrative experience, I taught primarily French Immersion/Core French with experience at most grade levels.   I have been an active member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association holding various positions including communications officer and school representative. I have served as president of the NLTA School Administrators' Council for Labrador for a number of years. I have also served on numerous local and provincial committees including the Provincial Safe and Caring Schools Committee. From 2004 to 2010, I was very involved in a CURA project at Memorial University. I worked as a research assistant to help write the original proposal in 2004, the resubmission during the summer of 2005, and the Milestone Report during the summer of 2006. In 2007, I was awarded a PhD fellowship from the CURA project, and upon my return to MUN as a PhD student in 2007, I worked as a researcher with the CURA Aboriginal Study and scribe for partner meetings. Since 2004, I, also, at varying times, have been a course lecturer and intern supervisor for the Faculty of Education at MUN. I am deeply committed to the vision of collaborative research.

Ethical Considerations

There are three main areas of ethical concern related to conducting research as outlined in this study including: informed consent, confidentiality, and the consequences of the research (Kvale, 1996). To address these issues, forms

requesting authorization to conduct educational research were developed for

study participants (See Appendix B). These forms were submitted for approval to

the Ethics Review Committee at Memorial University.

The forms identified the purpose of the project, the interview and

observation procedures, and the researcher involved in the project. All

participants were made aware of their right to refuse to answer questions during

the interview, their right to withdraw from the project at any time, the confidential

nature of the project, and the goal of the research – to write a doctoral thesis.

Participants were informed that no individuals would be identified by quotations

within the body of the report. Each voluntary participant was asked to read, and

sign a letter containing the above information. The audio-taped interviews and

transcripts have been maintained in strict confidence, and kept in a secure area.

The standard authorization procedure involved:

- contacting by email the Dean of Education for authorization to contact
  CURA academic researchers as outlined in the participant section

- contacting by email the appropriate officials of the community partner
  groups for authorization to contact CURA community partners as
  outlined in the participant section

- seeking written authorization from the individual academic researchers,
  community partners, a CURA fellow student, a CURA project manager,
  a knowledge mobilization representative, and a SSHRC representative
  to participate in the study prior to conducting the interviews and
  engaging in observation sessions

Biases and Limitations of the Study

Wolcott (1994) gives a reminder that in writing a report, no matter how faithful one tries to be in describing what has been observed, one is still attempting to recreate something that has never been created before. At best, what is created can be similar to what was observed, but not exactly the same. I have chosen an interpretive approach to this study incorporating a variety of methods to increase the credibility of the study. However, my analysis involved the subjective use of codes and the identification of themes which undoubtedly reflect personal values and beliefs, consequently leaving my work open to criticism from the reader.

This study is further limited to the participation of the study population. Unaccounted for in this study will be the perspectives of other CURA participants in other projects throughout the country who may have had different experiences.

Despite these biases and limitations, I have attempted to provide thorough details of my methods so that the reader can judge the quality and relevance of my work. I believe that I have approached this work with the rigour required to contribute to the knowledge base about the impact of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement on academic researchers and community partners.

Chapter 4

Findings Related to the Value of Collaborative Research

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges associated with collaborative research particularly for academic researchers, to determine the value placed on collaborative research by both academics and community partners, and to investigate how community-university partnerships can be sustained. The interview participants were asked to respond to a number of research questions (varying from 9-15 questions depending on the role of the participant).

What follows is a presentation of the participants' responses to these questions during the interviews. The findings are presented in three chapters which include: Findings Related to the Value of Collaborative Research, Findings Related to the Challenges of Collaborative Research, and Findings Related to the Sustainability of Collaborative Research. This chapter begins with an introduction to the participants of the study, and is followed by a discussion of the value placed on collaborative research by all the participants.

Demographics

The 16 participants consisted of eight academic researchers, four community partners, one project manager, one knowledge mobilization representative, one graduate student, and one SSHRC representative.

Participants' Philosophies of Research

Before examining the participants' views on the value of collaborative

research it is important to have a sense of where the academic researchers are

coming from with respect to their philosophies of research.

The principal investigator of this community-university research alliance

has a strong commitment to collaborative research believing that the co-creation

of research with practitioners is extremely valuable. As the PI explained:

> I think it is really the correct way to not sort of see yourself as the expert in
> all matters relating to the research, but work collaboratively to get them
> (the community partners) to help create a research design that
> encompasses the knowledge of the practitioner, as well as the knowledge
> of the university researcher.

Views of interviewed academics towards research varied. Some were

reluctant to talk about philosophies of research preferring to call it more their

approach to research. One participant divided research into two categories, that

which the researcher does on his/her own and that which the individual engages

in with others. For some, research was seen very much as a collaborative

process with community partners. It was obvious that some participants

preferred quantitative to qualitative research. In the case of one academic,

qualitative research was viewed as "good supporting data…but it is soft data from

my perspective." Some were more grounded in practice than others. For most,

there was some expression of the need for the research to be meaningful. As

one academic noted, "I do not do research for the sake of it. I do it because of

the need somewhere or because of an identified interest I want to pursue that will

lead to something practical." Another added, "for me it boils down to the need to do research that is relevant to policy and practice."

A sense of empowerment of marginalized people was viewed by several academics as the role of the researcher. In defining the role of the researcher, one academic purported her role as researcher as "breaking down the walls of the academy and bringing it out to the people. I often say jokingly before they come into us, 'I think it is our responsibility to reach out to the community'."

One senior academic with a background as a practitioner maintained, "my research has very much been grounded in practice…meaning what does the research evidence [say], how might this in the long term speak to practice, influence practice". For this researcher, there must be a balance because research cannot be about advocacy for a particular focus, but rather the research has to be empirically based. In such a partnership, the role of the researcher is very distinct, as this academic explained, "I am interested in being a partner, but the partnership is one that has to be very clear; my role is one of an objective observer rather than one who advocates for a particular perspective." In a similar vein, another academic viewed successful research as informed practice. As this academic conveyed, "the whole purpose (of research) is to inform practice and give us insights."

Value of Collaborative Research

When asked to reflect on the concept of collaborative research, the principal investigator (PI) summed it up in this way:

I am more committed than ever I think to the concept. I think I am much more realistic about how difficult it is to pull it off. It is a very, very difficult philosophy to implement. I think that there's an awful lot of challenges because what you are doing is you are confronting a paradigm of research which existed for a very long time within the university and it is not going to end, you know, the one of the expert researcher who will go out and do his thing; that is always going to be with us and I do not think for one minute that all research should be collaborative research. I think there is certainly a place for researchers who go out and do their own thing. I think that is a part of the research world, however, I think it is really important that we do collaborative research. I think that in our society too much research has been funded which is esoteric, that does not look at what the practitioners in whatever field are experiencing. I think universities just got to get away from this notion that we have such autonomy as academics; we are the ones who call the shots, who can sort of say this is a research question so we have total autonomy. I really believe our role in society should be that we work with people to help find the solutions that the community we are dealing with…need. So, if anything, I am more conscious of the difficulties. I think that it is harder than I thought it would be and …I knew it would be a bit of a struggle. I think it is more difficult than I realized and I am not sure about answers as to how we overcome some of these obstacles. But I think the ideal must be one that we keep to and how close we come to that ideal, I do not know. If I had another 30 years ahead of me, I would not waiver. I would still do this kind of research.

For some academics, working with community partners was viewed as an excellent way to improve data collection with response rates in some cases soaring to eighty or ninety percent in such a model, compared to very dismal response rates in the expert model. For these individuals, the value of working in a collaborative model was clearly positive.

It was noted by various participants that community partner involvement in the development of surveys could help ask the right questions and get at the right information. As one community partner indicated, "we have some opportunity to influence regarding some topics that may be pursued and providing some clarity or clarification where someone may want to go with some research, and that

certainly is valuable to us, even more so than someone doing it in isolation, and

we are simply the subjects of the research." Sometimes it is a matter of knowing

the right questions to ask to uncover the truth. In one particular project this was

exactly the case. The academic met with community partners to discuss

questions on the survey, and what was discovered was that completely different

questions needed to be asked to get at the heart of the issue. As one community

partner noted:

> I would like to think that as a result of a little adjustment on the questions that were being asked, [the researcher] probably ended up with data that was going to lead to a more objective conclusion…The sharing that goes on at least gives researchers an opportunity to think through the research they are doing and maybe there might have been some gaps that we have prevented. I would like to think that.

For others, the value of collaborative research was two-sided; having both

positive and negative characteristics. One academic, reflecting on the whole

experience, maintained:

> I love working with other researchers; I love team-writing; I love team-teaching, but to do something as big as this community-university research alliance again, I do not know. I would have to think long and hard about it. That is not to say that it has not been good and fun, that I have not learned something from it or enjoyed it. I have all of that, but they are so big. I do not think I would ever be a principal investigator on a community-university research alliance…I will come out of this process with this community-university research alliance much more informed, aware and sensitive to the process, the dynamics and to the interactions I already have so it has been worthwhile.

In a similar vein, another academic, comparing partnership research with

one partner versus multiple partners, considered the size of a community-

university research alliance as somewhat unmanageable and thereby lessening

the value of such a partnership. As the academic added:

> I think that the previous 10 years working in partnership research was a little different than working in an official community-university research alliance. I think the partner's research that I did previously was more you go in and you work with one partner and …there are goals that you both want to achieve.

For this university researcher, the community-university alliance

> Becomes such a large structure because you have multiple partners and some of those partners might be less committed than others. So if you go in and you work with one partner, and you both establish the parameters and so on, I think that is easier to do. At least in my experience that has been more positive.

> The community-university research alliance, on the other hand, for this

researcher presented a unique challenge in itself. While this senior academic is a

proponent of the partnership model and views partner research as very

worthwhile, the individual was not sold that this particular partnership alliance

was a success due to its very defined and restrictive nature. Furthermore, this

researcher would be reluctant to recommend such a model of research to a new

academic given university tenure and promotion policies. As the academic

explained:

> I am certainly not saying that I would not support it…I am a strong supporter of the partnership model…Partner research is very worthwhile. The community-university research alliance research is a partnership research, but the nature of it is different and I would be reluctant to recommend, for example, to a new academic that this is something that they might begin with…The research that I do at the end of my career most likely will be collaborative research. I believe in it. I believe that it is quite important. Having said that, it would be highly unlikely that I would engage in the kind of partnership research that we have been doing in the community-university research alliance. I think that for me too much is defined; it is restrictive. I do not think we have had the buy in from either side in the current initiative…I am not sure that the partnership is properly focused in really accomplishing what partnership research should do. Yes, I will continue to be involved in partnership research, but I will be very careful in getting involved in any kind of mega partnership.

Many academics expressed gratitude for the funding received through such a partnership which allowed them to advance their research agendas, but some did not view the community partners as being able to contribute beyond the research questions and facilitating data collection in their organizations. Data analysis, writing, and dissemination were viewed by some individuals as "the work" of the academic.

Several academics were reluctant to respond when asked if they thought community partners valued collaborative research. There was suspicion by some participants that it was not valued by community partners since they were not sure that the research was making a difference. One academic responded in this way, "I think it is really dependent upon the partner…while we have some really strong partners, we have some others that are not very strong, and they support our work only superficially, and therefore value the result minimally." Similarly, another academic noted:

> It depends on who the community partner is. I think a lot of this comes back to relationships. Relationships depend on personality and disposition so a lot of it has to do with individuals. Some individuals value it more than others. I think the other thing is I go back to scarce resources. In some cases folks are unable to appreciate the value of collaboration because there are no resources dedicated to collaboration. So, it is dependent on the individual context and the resources that are available.

One academic, reflecting on the perceived community value of this alliance studied, stated, "it is not seen as very essential. It is just seen as nice to do as opposed to something that would really be essential to how one does one's job, therefore it is put on the backburner." While another participant noted:

Partners are only going to see the value if it responds to the needs that they articulate and it has the potential to impact their decision-making, and their policy, and their way of doing things or informs about new and exciting innovations… So, if they can see that, then they are going to be very interested. But, if we are not responding to their needs or if we are not flexible enough to alter our agenda somewhat to meet their needs, and if we are not open enough to listen to them and respect the suggestions that they give us, then we are not going to be very relevant to them at all.

Community partners interviewed, in general, claimed that there was value in their involvement in the community-university research alliance, however, their views did vary somewhat. One community partner stated they found much value in the evidence that the academic researchers were able to deliver to them. Another community partner added that the research data have given them confidence in some of the things they have been doing as a district, noting:

> We work in an evidence-based environment, a data-based environment…being involved with a community-university research alliance has been a tremendous asset for me and for our district in terms of becoming more informed…It has not been as specific as look we did A, B, C because of the community-university research alliance. It has been more like a grounding mechanism; a kind of a benchmark.

This partner went on to indicate working in a collaborative model is:

> Sort of like having windows as opposed to not having windows. It automatically opens you up to the broader perspective. I have just seen so many valuable things for the world of practice coming out of the collaborative research venture…It is extremely valuable. It is not the only avenue, but one of the best avenues towards continued professional learning for those in the field. So I have come to the view over time…research is more embedded in practice and conclusions are more embedded in the world of practice than sometimes researchers realize in that researchers study what is going on now. What is going on now at any given point in time are the implementations of specific government initiatives and government directions that are anchored to a certain context and so research …can never be disconnected from its context nor can the conclusions.

For one community partner, collaborative research was viewed as critical since for this individual it is best to undertake practice with a theoretical grounding. This community partner viewed the union as "a good marriage when you have a good theoretical understanding of the field." This individual had mixed feelings about the collaborative experience engaged in since it was felt that there had been missed opportunities to build and grow the partnership. As the partner maintained, "I think the faculty has really missed something because there is a longevity in research that could have taken hold regardless if there was a community-university research alliance or not. There could have been a longevity of relationship set up if they would have bought into the value of doing this." While this individual's initial experience was good, disappointment was expressed over what could have been. As explained, "did I have a good experience, I had a great experience. But, could it have been something better? Absolutely. It started off really good for me and I think I had a lot of expectations that it was going to be."

Research relevancy was an important factor for all community members. As one partner concluded, "it is telling us certain messages that confirm whether in a positive or negative way something that is occurring, but because it is relevant, and that is a key piece there, because it is relevant to what we do, it then becomes the tool for us to possibly initiate change or affirm and confirm that we have a good practice in place in a certain area." Community members also believed that their involvement in such research added relevancy to the projects. As one community partner explained, "I think we (community partners) have a

practical knowledge or expertise that brings a relevance to the research faculty members would take on, and therefore I think it is important not just to us, but to faculty members as well."

While all community members expressed the value of the collaborative research, it was clear that the research was not the primary priority for all. As one community partner succinctly put it:

> I would say that it certainly helps guide us in some higher level decision making processes in policies or direction setting that could unfold from such research. Is it important in terms of the day to day operations? Probably not. In my world, no, it is not something that is going to change, perhaps, how I do things because we are controlled by regulation and bureaucracy. It may help me be more informed.

The knowledge mobilization unit representative spoke very positively of the value of collaborative research, stating:

> You ground your research; you get human beings who are involved in the issues that you are researching, giving you feedback, and input as to whether your emerging data (your emerging theories) make sense. People out there know something, and the product will be better, and indeed in most areas, while it takes time to do that work, it will also lead to better papers that will contribute to publication, so it should be a win-win. And, finally for the business or community or government or outside the university stakeholders, collaborative research enables them to access the expertise and resources of the universities which is an enormous resource. It does not guarantee they will get results in the time and in the way they need; the university is not a consulting company, but it enables them to access those resources, and they need the receptor capability or the manager capability on their end to put it to good use. So, there are lots of qualifications there, but it can definitely benefit all of the above.

Similarly, a graduate student involved with the community-university partnership noted that working in partnership could yield better results than either group working in isolation. As stated, "university researchers have the experience and knowledge of doing good research; that in combination with what

the community has to offer means better research than just one of these partners doing the research." The community group provides that vital link of connecting the researchers to what is happening in the "real world".

The value placed on collaborative research by such granting agencies as SSHRC was very evident in the SSHRC representative's responses. The SSHRC participant noted that collaborative research in the last 15 years has become more entrenched in the research landscape; not only gaining currency in Canada, but also noting internationally there has been an explosion of this approach to research with a number of funding agencies having funding in place for research that is conducted in such a manner.

SSHRC has seen an evolution in its partnerships programs. When asked about the change in this research landscape (in 2010), the SSHRC official interviewed contended:

> It is definitely an approach that has been growing and developing and gaining more legitimacy over the years…So I think the fact that we started investing in this kind of thing 12-15 years ago, since we started the major collaborative research initiative which was big in interdisciplinary partnerships. Then we extended into the CURA model which was inter-sectoral partnerships, and then it has just grown from there around the world. There is no value judgement in that we are not expecting everybody to work in this way, but it has become an option which has become much more established and viewed as legitimate and one that is also seen as offering a lot of creativity and an opportunity to build in that engagement and uptake of research from the get-go in terms of mobilization of knowledge.

This individual went on to explain that these community-university partnerships are not an end in themselves, but a means to an end which could be to advance

research, advance mobilization of knowledge, make connections, and create value of knowledge.

Making valuable connections between universities and community partners is seen as an important role of the SSHRC mandate. As the SSHRC official interviewed explained:

> I think we have really solidified our commitment to community-university partnerships, and I would say community broadly defined in a very general sense of local communities, profit and not-for-profit sectors. This idea of a broadened out campus community relationship, and we have really mainstreamed a lot of that partnership work in our new program architecture…It is something we have really built up. So we have sort of entrenched it more firmly in our vision. Obviously we are not saying everybody has to work this way. It is an option. But, we are providing greater flexibility and more avenues for creative community-university partnerships.

The SSHRC official listed two primary reasons for the changes that took place in 2010 with respect to SSHRC collaborative research funding. The first "why" included methodological versatility. As was explained, participants are able to experiment with a different methodological approach and learn about what is gained from such partnerships. The second "why" is a desire to have a greater impact and benefit related to the research that goes beyond the research community itself (i.e., to include the larger society).

Perspectives on Most Rewarding Aspect of Collaborative Research

Many participants viewed the relationship fostered between academics and community partners as the most rewarding aspect of collaborative research, coupled with the knowledge created that informs practice. As one community partner added:

I would go further and say that it is the growth that occurs through connections with others. Collaborative research, really for those involved in it in whatever role, is really providing a space to think and talk about things in an evidence-based way. That kind of personal growth is extremely important and, to that degree, if one is in a leadership position, you bring that personal growth hopefully to your organizational context. The other thing I would say about that is it is just the pleasure of working with people whom you have worked with in the past, with whom you have in many cases a long standing relationship in other capacities, and continuing to nurture that relationship for future projects and other things of that nature.

The sharing of knowledge as a rewarding aspect of collaborative research was a common theme that ran through a number of the responses. One academic maintained the most rewarding part is "seeing that the info is out there; seeing the product that goes out and that informs other people". This participant went on to add that as a result of the work that had been completed in their study, they were now getting calls from other regions of Canada regarding the results and to possibly engage in similar research in their area.

Creating knowledge that is driven by community partner needs and that reflects current realities was especially rewarding for many academics. As one senior academic explained, "we are adding to the empirical evidence…but at the same time we are shaping the practice…in a meaningful way. For me that is exciting and energizing." Voicing a similar attitude, another academic added:

Working with community partners when I am able to produce something, and somebody comes back and says, 'well, that is great, we will do this differently now because of what you have found', or 'we would like to know more about that'. Engagement with the partner - they indicate there is some impact on what they are doing. That is rewarding for me.

This sentiment was echoed by some community partners. As one partner noted, "some of the immediate data could be interpreted to allow the district to adjust itself in the course it was taking."

Using unconventional modes of dissemination, and thereby appealing to a broader audience was viewed by one academic as the most rewarding part of the collaborative research. Partnership research forced this individual to move beyond traditional dissemination modes to find ways to step out of the box and get to the audience that really can use the findings.

For the PI and project manager, one of the most rewarding aspects of this community-university research alliance was student training; the ability to fund master's and doctoral fellowships. This was viewed as a way to enhance community engagement since it allowed community members in the field the occasion to take time away from their busy jobs and be a part of the research. Additionally, these students have been able to engage in high level research tasks, present at international and national conferences, and publish their findings. See Table 1 for a summary of participant views on the value of collaborative research.

Table 1. Summary Chart – Value of Collaborative Research

Negatives	*Positives*
Very difficult philosophy to implement (the process, dynamics and interactions are sensitive)	Excellent way to improve university researcher's data collection as community partner involvement helps shape questions (produces better product)
Size of partnership can be unmanageable	Funding helps advance research agendas (adding to empirical evidence and shaping practice)
Very defined and restrictive in nature	Source of professional learning

Difficult to recommend to new academics due to university promotion and tenure policies	Relationships between community and university partners fostered (vital link which connects the world of academia to the world of practice; sharing and creation of knowledge)
Dependent on individual context (relationships) and resources	Provides methodological versatility (adds creativity to research)
Lack of understanding regarding collaborative nature (data analysis, writing, and dissemination viewed by some individuals as "the work" of the academics)	Creates interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral partnerships
Viewed by some academics as "soft data"	Greater impact and benefit to larger community
	Unconventional models of dissemination
	Promotes student training

Chapter 5

Findings Related to the Challenges of Collaborative Research

As mentioned in the literature review, a part of the impetus for this research was based on the Dunnett (2004) finding that individuals engaged in collaborative research can encounter various barriers to success such as partnership-related, methodological, organizational, and ethical challenges. To determine the types of challenges encountered while engaging in community-university partnerships, study participants were asked to reflect upon their own experiences and outline these barriers. The perspectives on challenges will be examined from both an introspective eye from various points of view within a community-university research alliance, as well as from an extrospective organizational view of funding such research.

Administrative Challenges

The community-university research alliance studied had a total of nine research projects which included 15 co-investigators (12 university researchers and three partner researchers), 10 community collaborators, and 12 community partner organizations. A project of this size understandably would have several layers of administration. These included: the overseeing of all of the individual projects by the principal investigator (PI) and project manager (PM), and then the administration of each individual project by the co-investigators in collaboration with community partners. The PI herself noted the enormity of the partnership, indicating, "I am absolutely amazed I took it on because I do not think I realized it would be as massive as it turned out to be."

The sheer administration of such a large collaborative research project was noted as bringing its own unique challenges. Numerous participants in this study commented on the enormous task it must be to be a principal investigator in such a large research project. One academic likened the experience to "herding cats" or "being a forecaster in the midwest with five hurricanes coming towards you at once". This individual went on to explain:

> It is such a large system; everyone is off doing radically different things with constantly changing clients, and schedules, and stakeholders. It is just such a circus to see it unfold and try to create communication and especially since people are at radically different points with research; some clueing up and others just kicking in…how you get your mind around so many different swirling ideas.

Similarly, reflecting on the relationship aspect of a community-university research alliance, another academic compared the partnership to marriage explaining:

> Collaboration is very much like any relationship. It has all the pitfalls, and positives, and benefits, and negatives that relationships do. One of the things I certainly observed…is that sometimes collaborations do not work out (the same as marriage). Sometimes you get divorced; sometimes you get separated. So you really got to work at it to make collaboration work. It is not something where you can sit idly by; a passive process. Collaboration is an active process. Unless it is front and center then I think you will have trouble in collaboration.

In order for people to engage in collaborative research a willingness to participate or a spirit of collaboration must be present. This means being proactive and keeping a dialogue going beyond the confines of a one-time meeting whether that is additional face to face meetings, newsletters, emails, blogs, and twitter. This sometimes means a change in behaviour for academics away from the norms of how some would normally conduct research. Trying to

change people's behaviours can certainly be challenging, and not always

successful.

One of the administrative challenges highlighted was the importance of

clarity by all participants of their expectations in the partnership. One of the

recommendations made by the granting agency, and conveyed by the PI and

project manager early on in the project, was for members of each partnership to

draw up protocol agreements outlining the partnership. My inquiry revealed that

these protocols did not come to fruition. While multiple meetings were held

during the course of the project with university researchers and community

partners in attendance, and particularly in its infancy, and the importance of such

items discussed, it was felt by some participants that more work needed to be

done in that area. As one academic expressed:

> It was kind of broadly defined, but the finer details never really worked out, so we were kind of into this before all of this was really clearly delineated so it never really ever was. So we were midstream before we really started talking about those things, and we never really got to the point where the interests of the academic researchers really lined up with, clearly lined up with, the stakeholders.

As a CURA doctoral fellow, I was invited to attend all meetings of the

project teams and also meetings with partners. From observations (recorded in

my field notes) at these events, and also the analysis of the interviews I

conducted, I concluded that collaborative research was not fully understood by all

participants (academics and community partners). For example, some

community partners talked of their role as "facilitators" of research as opposed to

being fully engaged in all aspects of the research process. Conversely, some

academics were reluctant to see the role of community partners in all aspects of the research such as data analysis. Trying to then massage partnerships with this lack of understanding was seen to be challenging.

Another identified administrative challenge was adequately engaging community partners. The self-study report of this community-university research alliance revealed that many of the partners did not feel that they had been engaged adequately, or on an ongoing basis, and that while annual general meetings were held, there had not been enough follow up on some of the suggestions or recommendations made at these meetings. For example, one of the recommendations made early in the project was for each project to set up a formalized sub-committee, however, for the most part this did not happen.

Another difficult challenge is finding ways within the constraints of the university financial services to administer the budget so that academics can receive credit for monies received for research projects. Academics need to be able to demonstrate in their curriculum vitae what research funding they have received, so if the research money was recorded as research money for the principal investigator alone, this would be problematic. As the PI noted, "it was a really big issue because if they (academics) had not been able to use that for promotion and tenure, they would really have been reluctant to put any time in on it, and rightly so, because if they could not use it for promotion and tenure, it would have been career suicide." Secondly, the PI and project manager explained the importance of the project manager and PI maintaining control of budget expenditures so that monies were spent in accordance with the granting

agency. For example, certain items were non-negotiable in terms of how they could be spent, such as student training.

Finally, being the principal investigator of a community-university partnership puts that individual in a very difficult position. On the one hand, the PI is constantly trying to create buy-in to the project from all participants, but then the PI is also committed to the spirit of the community-university research alliance, and needs to move that agenda forward. That means, at times, the principal investigator can be at odds with colleagues if they are not fulfilling the required collaborative role in the partnership.

Two Different Worlds

One of the key challenges identified by both academics and community partners alike regarding their efforts to engage in collaborative research was the fact that they seemingly live in two different worlds. As one participant highlighted, it is very difficult to "blend organizational cultures." Practitioners want effective answers immediately that can guide their decision-making processes. Academics live in a world of academia where research takes time adhering to a rigid and systematic approach. As one community partner remarked, "we live in different worlds. It is not necessarily a bad thing; it is just that my world is different from the researcher's world." This community partner concluded, maybe the two worlds were not meant to engage. As this individual stated:

> It is one of the most challenging dilemmas that you face trying to take theory and apply it to practice, and often it does not really work. It does not really mesh because they were not really intended for that. The research piece is about acquiring knowledge and gaining knowledge, and it is not

necessarily meant to be taken then and put into a practitioner's handbook or used in the day to day operations.

The recurring theme of conflict surfaced in multiple interviews. One academic maintained:

> Academics and practitioners have an inherent conflict. I don't think academics are good collaborators, and I don't think practitioners are good academics. We have different strengths. We need to work closer building the team and building attunement to the process. The reason why I do not think academics are good collaborators is because there is not a lot of collaboration done. My observations of academics are they tend to be isolationists; tend to be very myopic in their perspectives. They have their research areas, and tend not to cross over in other areas.

One of the sources of conflict identified was related to dissemination. Peer-reviewed publications, the fruits of academic labour, are often of little to no interest to community partners. As one senior academic added:

> Success in an academic environment remains publish in peer-reviewed journals or perish. You either succeed as an academic or not on the basis of what you publish. The partner is not concerned at all about publication. They are concerned about how it impacts practice…They may never read the academic piece. What they are looking for is, so tell me what are the findings, and what does this mean for me as a practitioner, as a leader. So then how might it shape my practice; how might it bring about improvement in my organization.

Finding ways to disseminate findings to community partners and the public in general, other than the traditional peer-reviewed journals can be challenging for some academics.

There was a sense that members in both worlds did not necessarily have a good understanding of each other's reality. When discussing the labour intensity of even just getting surveys ready for mail out, for example, one academic explained, "I do not think there is a real appreciation for that outside the

university. But, I think that really could go to the cultural element. I think there are

varying degrees of understanding of say what I do."

Similarly, the PI discussed the possible lack of understanding on the part

of academics for the pressures of the community partner's world, and the need to

have answers now since the academic's mindset is still very much in tune with

the pace and culture of the world of academia. The project manager reiterated

these thoughts by stating:

> There are regulations and processes within a university with the office of
> research, for example, for approving research, getting ethical clearance,
> and of course, all that takes time so our partners out in the field do not
> always recognize or understand…they probably do not have an
> understanding of how slowly the bureaucracy of the university turns, and
> that is a reality that our researchers have to deal with…It is all a part of
> that university culture; university way of operating.

The lack of community involvement in data collection, analysis, and

dissemination was viewed by many academics as a real challenge. When

explaining why community partners may not be so involved in these aspects of

research, one academic purported:

> Academics have a full teaching load, and other research, and service
> commitments. It is not as if the academic is moving into the school for five
> years and working with them. You are juggling this along with committees,
> the teaching semester, and other duties. Then, there are the realities of
> the schools…can't meet until after school…The logistics of having access
> to one another complicates that.

Time, or the lack thereof, was seen as a major contributing factor to

partners' abilities to get involved in the partnership. As the PI indicated, "even

those who are the most interested, I feel, and would most like to be involved, time

is always an issue." This idea was reiterated by another academic who

maintained that the lack of responses sometimes by community partners could

be related to the project being lower on their priority list. For several academics,

there was a sense that community partners did not give their involvement in this

research alliance priority. As explained, "there was no real priority given to it, and

that I do not blame on anyone in particular. Collaboration was just not front and

center." Another academic questioned community partners' willingness to

change, by stating:

> I suspect that they (community partners) are so engaged in dealing with
> the trees out there that they feel they do not have time to change anything.
> Unless they are willing to change, there is no sense in getting new info and
> data that suggests they should change something because it is like water
> off a ducks back; it just rolls off and nothing happens.

> Some community partners felt that while their involvement in data

collection, analysis, and dissemination had been minimal, this was acceptable.

As one community partner explained:

> In my role as a community partner, having been minimally involved in
> some of those things is not necessarily a bad thing…Practitioners live in a
> very busy world…that is the way it is. There is a sense in which for
> practitioners to give the best they can give, the table has to be set a little
> by somebody else…I think the important contribution that we can make
> can only be made if indeed it is organized, and many of the organizational
> pieces are done at the university level. Now we can organize other things
> like if you want to disseminate research, we can do that. If you want to do
> research and you need to identify people…we can probably do that a lot
> easier, and with a lot less time than sometimes the academics can do.

> The sentiment was expressed by several community members that it was

not necessary to be in attendance at every project meeting to know what was

going on. In fact, one partner indicated, "these partnerships were not necessarily

about the community partners being involved in every meeting that the

researchers were in anymore than it would involve the researchers attending

every meeting that we (community partners) had."

For one community partner, it was felt that academics reverted to their

traditional ways of doing things once the project was underway. This community

partner, at the beginning, had felt very engaged in the project, but then felt that

the project moved from collaborative work to faculty work. As was maintained:

> I think it was really good at the beginning. I think it has lost ground. When
> it was originally set up the practitioners or partners had a very formal role.
> There were open sessions with us on understanding of what research
> dimensions needed to happen, and then it went off into project activities. I
> think then it went on to more faculty work than the practitioner-faculty
> work. That check in with the partners did not happen as much…I think they
> quickly went into that comfort zone because the work with the practitioner
> was not comfortable.

Promotion and Tenure

Repeatedly, academics voiced concerns with respect to promotion and

tenure in a university culture based on traditional models. Collaborative research

was viewed as a barrier to advancing in the ivory tower since in that culture

single-authored papers in peer-reviewed journals appear to hold more value than

co-authored reports. Unfortunately, the evidence suggests that in many current

university climates, meetings with partners or the production of partner

newsletters do not hold much value in one's curriculum vitae.

One academic cut to the heart of the matter when discussing the whole

issue of promotion and tenure by stating:

> What it boils down to; the cold hard truth…is that the criteria for promotion
> and tenure are spelled out in the collective agreement, and it is research,
> teaching, and service…40, 40, 20. Forty percent of my time is research,
> forty percent is teaching, and twenty percent is service. The culture of the

academy in the 21st century is one that values externally funded peer-reviewed research funding. So some types of academic work is even valued over…People get awards for teaching. There is no question about that, and teaching is valued…but money talks, and when I apply for research funding from a granting council…there are no $300 000 three year grants for teaching…so it's a question of what we value…If the institution, the whole promotion and tenure process does not value it, that does not encourage me to value it unless I have some altruistic reason for valuing it.

The move to embrace collaborative research within a university context has been slow-moving. While it was pointed out that some universities now are developing knowledge mobilization units to help better connect universities and communities, change takes time. For one academic the question was raised as to whether universities are slow to adopt the collaborative research model, or if maybe it might be specific disciplines such as education that are slower to adopt it as an approach to research. It was noted, for example, that the field of medicine is heavily engaged in collaborative research, and much of the literature on community-university partnerships that exists comes from the health field. For this individual, the problem of being slow to engage in collaborative research could be related to people's perspectives of what constitutes good research in the social sciences.

Given current university landscapes, finding ways within a collaborative model to allow academics to receive credit for research conducted can be challenging. The principal investigator outlined the issue by noting:

The university has a long tradition and a distinctive culture that is not consistent with the Alliance Model. One of our first challenges was to devise a way in which co-investigators could receive academic credit for their work for promotion and tenure. Although they can obtain credit through published research in refereed journals, the preference there is for

single-authored papers based on the traditional expert model. It is a new role for many academic researchers to work as part of a team, where community partners are involved in research design (including the identification of research questions and methodology), in collection and interpretation of data, and dissemination of findings. Most academic researchers have been trained to fly solely, and many of them have achieved academic success by doing so. If they work with a co-investigator, normally it is clearly defined research roles. Our experience is that there is a constant tension by academics between the mandate to collaborate in the Alliance Model, and the wish for total autonomy in the expert model. In a culture where some researchers resist any hint of control by the Principal Investigator or the Project Coordinator, it becomes an exercise in maintaining the delicate balance between pressure and support, and in creating an environment where autonomy is respected yet the parameters of a collaborative mandate are paramount. Overcoming the boundaries of traditional practice requires much discussion, reflection, and strategic planning.

Collaborative research, therefore, presents challenges particularly for new academics. New academics hoping to advance their curriculum vitae need peer-reviewed articles. So new academics would be less attracted to engaging in a community-university partnership where there would be expectations for diverse dissemination that would not always count for advancement in the university. As one senior academic explained:

> What I would say to new academics is you must find an appropriate balance between collaborative partnership research and traditional research, that is, if you are inclined to engage in partnership research. Find an appropriate balance and make sure that you recognize the culture of the academic institution that you are in…It would be very difficult for you to continue to be a practitioner at heart and a successful academic. It's a real challenge…There's very much a cultural divide, and in the academic community if you want to engage in partnership research the challenge is finding that balance, and the challenge is not thinking like a practitioner. You have to leave the practice to the practitioners. What you are doing is working with them to collect data to give them info; to give them evidence to help inform their practice. I think finding an appropriate balance is the most difficult challenge, and would be particularly difficult for beginning academics.

One way to include new academics in the collaborative partnership would be to invite them to work with a senior academic and their community partner, but again this poses challenges because the senior academic may be reluctant to share research funding. Of course, creating such a mentoring project could be beneficial in the long run since there is an added individual working with the community partner and, therefore, more of a likelihood of ongoing engagement with the partner.

Continuity of Participants

Lack of continuity can be problematic in a partnership agreement. A number of participants noted that there had been a lack of continuity with the involvement of some community partners and that added to the difficulties associated with the partnerships. Turnover in partner personnel can cause real issues since these individuals may not feel as connected with the project as their predecessors may have been. This can translate into a lack of commitment to the project. Trying to bring these "newcomers" up to speed when the project is well underway can be challenging for the project organizers. The principal investigator's comments regarding this issue summarized it well:

> A major problem we are encountering is frequent personnel changes among community partners. The university researchers are quite stable, the only changes being brought in as needed. Within the community, however, there has been a significant turnover of major players…When projects were initially created, those who were partners at that time had ownership and were involved. However, the feedback we have received indicates that people currently in these leadership positions no longer feel involved. For example, we were told by a new Director that it was not his project, that it belonged to his predecessor. How to maintain ownership and commitment when the players keep changing becomes a key question. We have learned that ownership and commitment are created

by involving people in key decision-making. However, if decisions are made with the predecessor, there is no guarantee that the information is passed on to the new person, or that the new person will embrace these decisions. How do you ensure that organizations assume the commitment, and that it is outside the personal agendas of those in office at a particular time? How do you avoid that the project is seen as the predecessor's legacy, and therefore not an appealing project for current position-holders who have their own agendas? We now realize that formal Memoranda of Understanding must be developed and we actively seek other solutions.

Following in a similar vein, another participant reiterated these thoughts concerning participant continuity by stating:

The people who came and replaced (the community partner leaders) in those leadership positions did not have the ownership. It was not their project; it was not their thing. You know what happens when somebody comes into a leadership position. They want to put their own stamp on things. They have their own agenda and are fairly reluctant to take on, or adopt the baby of their predecessor.

While the continuity of academic partners was fairly consistent throughout the life of the project, there were a couple of instances where the duties of academics changed which may have contributed to changes in the working relationships with the community partners as these individuals would not have had the same time to devote to the projects.

Relationship-Related Challenges

Communication between partners was echoed throughout the interview process as a huge component to achieving success in a collaborative research partnership. Open communication helps build trust in a relationship, but it is hard work, and takes a lot of time and energy. Even in relationships where communication is strong, there can still be differences of opinion that can lead partners to being at odds if structures are not in place to deal with how differing

opinions will be handled in the alliance. For example, if partners differ in the conceptual framework of the research, this could lead to difficulties in the partnership.

Some participants noted that they would have liked to have seen more meetings between partners and to extend the meetings to include dialogue with individuals at another layer down in the organization. As one community partner stated, "to be honest I would have liked to have seen a little more. I do not know if more would have added any, but I wondered because I found the last one to be valuable, and I wondered if we came back some time would we have gone broader or deeper." This community partner also noted that perhaps if there had been more dialogue between researchers and partners they may have been able to assist them more in asking the right questions:

> In some of the instances in some of the surveys that were done, I think it would have been beneficial if they had to have been shared with (the community partner) first before they came through as part of this is what we are doing…I think if I had seen that earlier and had a chance to sit with the researcher and said look you do not realize this is happening, and this is the kind of data you are going to get, and it is not going to reveal what is accurate or truthful.

Many participants noted the challenges of dealing with the communication lulls in between large group meetings. When the project first began there was a lot of momentum and excitement; a group synergy that helped move the project forward. However, as participants went their own ways to work on their piece of the larger project, the larger momentum and interest can die. Finding ways to combat this challenge was described as a crucial part that could lead to more successful relationships.

Overcoming and managing power differentials as they relate to universities and community organizations can be difficult. There are many examples of researchers going into community organizations, conducting their research, and then the participants hear nothing more about it. As one academic explained, "there has long been a mistrust and if I can go so far as to say dislike of academia out there…There are a lot of issues out there. One is the sense that always as a professor you are going out to evaluate, even if that is not your intention." This academic explained that this community attitude of professional mistrust may have been developed when some academics have gone out into communities portraying themselves as the "expert", telling people what to do. Money was also highlighted as a source of power differential since it is the university in many instances that has control of the budget in such partnerships. To alleviate some of these challenges, all partners need to have a sense of ownership for the collaboration. Without it, imbalance occurs, mistrust comes into play, and individuals can develop defensive attitudes. Additionally, it helps if there is already an established working relationship between the partners coming into the project.

Several participants (both academic and community partners) raised the issue of the difficulty of getting their counterparts to respond to commitments in a timely manner, for example, setting up meetings, sending feedback, and the like. As one academic explained, "I recognize that partners can be very busy and have other commitments. Sometimes it can take two months to get a meeting."

This time delay, of course, has implications for promotion and tenure as one academic added:

> If a partner cannot let me know in a six month period whether or not we are going to be able to conduct interviews for a study, I quickly go on to something else because especially in a pressurized academic environment where everything is tied to promotion and tenure. Your livelihood, our jobs depend on our ability to get the data collected and publish it. So I do not have time for these kinds of delays.

Breakdowns in communication can be quite devastating to the success of collaborative projects. As was witnessed in one university-community partnership in this research alliance, communication came to a halt, and the partnership ended up being one in name only. When academics and community partners involved in this project were questioned as to why this happened, it would appear the absence of constant ongoing dialogue may have played a role in its demise. When participants go silent, other group members are not necessarily aware as to why this is occurring. So for academics, when feedback is requested from community partners, and there is none, this could be perceived as a lack of interest. For community partners, when a long period of time goes by, and there are no updates on the project, again this could be perceived as a lack of interest, or being shut out of the project. Whatever the reasoning for how the project evolved to that stage, it is clear that mechanisms must be put in place so that the relationship is not allowed to deteriorate to that point.

In describing the relationship between academics and community partners, one academic summed it up in this way:

> When doing collaborative research there is a qualitative component even though you might be doing quantitative stats. You are into human

dynamics, human engagement, partnerships, consultations, collaborations, and power dynamics. I do not think a lot of academics are well-versed in a lot of that…The attitude of the academic is that I am the one who does the analysis. I am doing the writing. I am guilty of this myself. I go into lockdown mode to churn a paper out. I tend to share the writing by saying you do this part, and I do this part, but we do not engage the stakeholders in that. I do not know how we do that. The logistics of team writing would be a nightmare. Some of that is just inherent to how we work.

Engagement of community partners was a challenge identified by several academics. Community partner involvement in research design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination in this community-university research alliance was noted as a barrier to success. While many participants noted the community partners had been involved in the original shaping of the research questions, and were very good in supporting the facilitation of the collection of data, it would appear that in many cases this is where the partnership involvement ended. As one academic concluded, "they (community partners) have pretty much determined the agenda. They have not determined the approach that we might take to the research. They have left that more to the researcher." In describing another alliance, the same academic maintained that while the cooperation in organizing the facilitation of research was tremendous, "we (academic researchers) are still very much determining the agenda, and I cannot very much put my finger on why that is so…I think they (community partners) are so very busy doing their own thing and meeting their own accountabilities, our agenda…is a very small piece of what they do, and I think that is probably the issue." Another academic did not view equality between partners as achievable as, "(community partners) really do not have the personnel or time to give.

Secondly, they do not have the expertise. None of them could touch data analysis." Reflecting upon the community organizational changes brought about as a result of findings in one particular project, this academic added, "the follow through…it collapses when there is a need for action based on the results…In as far as I can tell, no action has been taken (in community organizations) based on results of four years of research so far." Another academic frustrated with partner involvement in the project reiterated these thoughts adding, "nobody really cares."

Even finding mutually agreeable research questions could, at times, be challenging for the partnerships. What might be identified as a research topic by community partners may not be viewed as a viable research topic, or important by academics. Additionally, because the research landscape can change so quickly depending on the topic, what may have been important at the outset of the research project may no longer be applicable. As one respondent stated, "they (community partners) may have different expectations or desire different outcomes from what we may have in mind. Making sure we are working in a direction that is mutually beneficial is a challenge." Another participant noted, "one of the difficulties with doing long-term research …is that the landscape changes so quickly and the priorities that were identified five or six years ago…may be quite different from today." This participant went on to indicate the importance of the university being able to adapt to change. As stated, "I guess a part of the university culture is that it does not really adapt to change very quickly,

and maybe for any organization it may be totally important to adapt to change quickly because the landscape is just changing at an incredible pace."

Methodological Challenges

One academic researcher pointed out that it can be more difficult to do qualitative research in a partnership environment than quantitative research due to confidentiality and anonymity concerns. For this individual, if researchers collect data through surveys, they are dealing with numbers so there are not many confidentiality issues. However, it was noted that interviews and observations automatically bring academic researchers and community partners in closer contact with each other. For this individual, "it gets much more challenging when you do partner research in that way (collaborative research), as it often makes the partner become more concerned…People are more willing to accept an anonymous response about something." Finding ways to address these methodological concerns becomes challenging.

Cultural Challenges (Expectations)

Differences in expectations were put forth as a challenge in dealing with collaborative research. Due to the many and different lenses looking at the same research project, what people see as research as well as what they expect to get from research can vary greatly. This, of course, also depends at what point the individual may have joined the project, or how far removed from the project the individual stands. Dealing with a community-university research alliance of a large monetary value can certainly create expectations (realistic and unrealistic) from both academics and community partners alike. From an academic point of

view, this could include things like the amount of available funding to carry out

research, the number of course remissions granted, or the ability to attend

conferences for dissemination purposes. For community partners, this could

include such things as expectations for monetary recompense for participation,

"kickbacks", funding to attend conferences, or additional research conducted in

exchange for funding capital. When one participant believes they were promised

something or would receive something in return for monetary contributions, but

do not receive it, this breaks the trust, and can put a major strain on the

partnership. Several participants in this study (both academic and community

partners) noted that they felt somewhat let down in their partnerships since they

believed they would receive certain compensations, but in the end that did not

happen. This resulted in these individuals feeling less motivated and becoming

less engaged in the project.

Timelines for research project completion dates in such a large alliance

can also become unrealistic, as partners may not necessarily understand the

time needed to define the research agenda, seek ethics approval, conduct the

research, analyze the data, and disseminate findings. As the PI explained:

> When people are there during the initial consultation, and they put the
> goals and these kind of research questions that they wanted answered,
> they do not think about timelines, and so expectations were fairly high I
> think by those who were engaged…I think they anticipated the questions
> would be answered quickly. Whereas what happens, and we know this so
> well in a university environment, once you identify the research questions,
> and start the research process, it takes time.

Expectations to add additional research to the research agenda as the

project progresses becomes unrealistic. While community partners may move on

to new and exciting things happening in their organizations that they may like researched, it becomes very difficult with respect to time and money to add this to the agenda because university researchers are still engaged in completing the original research. As the PI suggested, "I can understand why partners may feel a bit let down because what they anticipated would be ongoing research is not going to happen because at this stage now the projects that were identified early on are the ones that are being finished."

Another issue that was raised by one community member was the frequency of requests that are received from various universities to conduct research in general in that particular organization. Finding ways to balance opportunities for researchers to conduct research without overtaxing a system can be a challenge.

Ethical Challenges

A number of ethical challenges were noted by participants in the study. Firstly, the issue was raised with respect to findings that may not be favourable to the community partners. Reporting these findings can potentially break the trust relationship established between the researcher and the partner, however, there is also a need to be accurate in reporting. Dealing with such a delicate fine line can be tricky, and the success of the relationship can hang in the balance. As one academic purported, "community partners do not want us to study them, and come back and say they are not doing a good job…you will lose partners very quickly if it is embarrassing to them". Without well-established memorandums of understanding this can become difficult to manage. In fact, in this case study,

one of the projects did experience such a quandary, and the end result was that while much time and money were invested into a particular project, none of it saw the light of day because the community partner did not allow the study to continue. As one academic researcher explained, "the person simply said this research is not going as well as I had hoped so I am going to eliminate that particular project. Of course, that ended two years investigation of research, limited what we could publish of it in the final analysis, and that for the researcher, of course, is quite problematic."

Secondly, presenting unfavourable findings to a group can present its own challenges, particularly when the findings might be directly related to some of the individuals in the group. As one academic posited:

> In some cases you might have a (partner) who says 'thank you very much, I will use this, but I do not want you to present it'. You can only hope in that case that the (partner) will use the data to improve…You would also hope because you not only have an obligation to the (partner), but you also have an obligation to the people who completed the surveys; who told you what they thought was the truth, and they wanted to see something come out of it. They are a part of the partnership as well. So here is the ethical dilemma. Which direction do you go? The (partner) decides I am going to bury this, and others saying, 'we took time to complete this, now you are not doing anything with this'.

Unfavourable findings can present a real dilemma for researchers in deciding what to publish, and what not to publish.

A third ethical challenge noted by several academics was the difficulty obtaining consent for students to be involved in research. Due to the rules and regulations in a number of the partner organizations, obtaining consent, particularly as it related to students, was viewed as a long, extensive process,

making it extremely difficult, at times, to gain such consent. This, of course, can undoubtedly have an effect on what research eventually gets carried out.

Challenges from a Grant-Funding Perspective

Discussing the challenges that SSHRC has experienced along the way in the development of the collaborative program, the SSHRC representative noted that a new way of working brings its unique issues. The individual summed it up, quoting Angie Hart from the United Kingdom who is involved in a community-university partnership program there, "we speak different languages, the resources are never sufficient, and power issues are complex." This SSHRC individual went on to explain, "there is learning to talk processes, never mind across disciplines, talking across sectors is even more challenging. Resources, of course, no one ever has enough resources…It is the power issues. Are the researchers coming from the academic environment working with people who are as powerful, less powerful, or more powerful than they are?"

One of the other challenges described for SSHRC as a granting agency was who can access the funding. Sometimes there are pressures to fund certain groups when that may not necessarily be the mandate of the program. In this way, SSHRC must remain very neutral in its decision-making progress, and not take on any ideological position.

Another issue noted was getting non-academic community participants involved in the peer-review process. While SSHRC has managed to get some people from government and not-for-profits involved, engaging the private sector

was described as a bit more of a struggle since people are not always available

to partake in these reviews.

When asked if certain faculties were more inclined to apply for community-

university research alliance funding than others, the response was that there are

certain trends. It was noted that professionally-oriented faculties such as

Education and Social Work perhaps have more of a presence than other

faculties. As the SSHRC participant stated:

> Those disciplines emerged from professional practice so they are newer
> disciplines…They have a different culture than disciplines which are more
> removed from the idea of professional practice where sometimes the idea
> of getting out there is not as well seen or valued…I think the larger
> question of campus community engagement is actually not as nested in
> certain disciplines as we might think when we start to look at the evidence.
> It is more habits of applying.

It was explained that one of the things that SSHRC has tried to achieve with the

new partnership architecture was to bring CURA "out of the closet" so that it is

more well-known and mainstreamed. In this way, it is not just certain "niche

communities that knew and were interested in CURA", but it becomes more

discipline neutral. See Table 2 for a summary of challenges associated with

collaborative research.

Table 2. Summary Chart – Challenges of Collaborative Research

Administrative	*Relationship-Related*	*Cultural/Organizational*	*Ethical*
Size of partnerships	Effective communication (dealing with communication lulls; breakdowns in communication;	Blending organizational cultures of university and community partners (needing immediate answers vs. rigid, systematic research)	Dealing with findings that may not be favourable

	differences of opinion)		
Changing partners/leadership	Continuity of partners (ownership; commitment)	Understanding each other's realities (world of academia vs. world of practitioner)	
Reluctant "buy in"/unclear understanding of collaborative research	Willingness to participate (return to comfort zones)	Differences in expectations (findings; course remissions; ability to attend conferences; monetary recompense; adding additional research topics)	
Clarity of expectations	Power differentials (relationships; money; resources)	Unrealistic timelines	
Lining up academic and community interests	Finding mutually agreeable questions	Differences in dissemination	
Adequate engagement of community partners	Research relevancy		
Administration of budget	Learning to talk across disciplines		
Promotion and tenure			

Chapter 6

Findings Related to Sustainability of Collaborative Research

Within the previous chapter, my analysis of participant comments revealed that there are many challenges associated with community-university partnerships. These challenges can be of an administrative, relationship-related, methodological, cultural and ethical nature. To determine how to increase the success of community-university partnerships, study participants were asked to reflect upon their own experiences, and speculate on what they thought could help grow and strengthen collaborative partnerships. In response, participants discussed at length elements, in their view, that would help to sustain collaborative research.

Relationships

Partnerships need to be based on win-win situations. All stakeholders need to get something positive out of the partnership, or else people will be less likely to engage, and remain engaged. As one participant noted:

> Everybody, both sides, has to see something in it for that is human nature. So university researchers are not going to put an enormous amount of extra effort because it does take a huge effort to make this collaboration piece work. The university researchers, the academics are very busy; they have a lot of responsibilities, the same as our partners. There has to be some kind of reward in it for anybody to expect any effort.

Manageable numbers of partnerships were noted as a characteristic that could contribute to the success of partnership research. As one academic pointed out:

> I would say that if at all possible, minimize the number of partners. You know sometimes multiple partners will help you get the funding, but

sometimes it is better not to get the funding if you cannot manage the partnership milieu. I think what it does is it creates a huge, huge challenge to try and coordinate all this, and make it something that is of primary importance to all the partners. I think that has been perhaps the biggest challenge we have experienced as a result of this current project that we have. We are so diverse; we have even been challenged to have researchers work together because the thing is so diverse.

Effective communication mechanisms both formal (large group meetings) and informal (dialogue over coffee or lunch) were viewed as crucial to the sustainability of the partnership process. One academic purported, "I would think the most important thing is just dialogue, being able to have conversations with our partners. Having good conversations with the partners is really the critical part." Another academic concluded:

Effective communication has to be central there somewhere, and not just here is what we are going to do. You need ongoing communication processes as people change; move in, and out of jobs. There has to be a way of transitioning people, and transitioning information. There has to be a proactive plan establishing the team, making the team fluid and effective; monitoring the success of the team; making sure people have input. You got to build communication parameters up front that reflect the realities of systems, schedules, jobs.

 The need for this continuous communication mechanism was reiterated in the comments of another academic who noted, "I am not sure that by the time we got the funding, got organized, and got going that those questions were the same ones that were even relevant anymore." One community partner pointed out the need for ongoing communication infrastructure like newsletters, white papers, and the like.

The synergies created by relationships can help build sustainability in partnerships. As the SSHRC official referenced, "I think there are synergies that

happen through the kind of research process and related activities that create communities of practice, networks. They require nurturing to keep going." In a similar vein, reflecting upon some of the meetings that were held as a part of the project studied, one academic described them as energizing since "you learn about what is being done; you hear what others are doing; you see the opportunities for research findings to cross pollinate other research projects."

Finding the "right fit" between partners with respect to personality and work style was noted as another important feature leading to successful collaborative research relationships. Building trust between partners is hard work that takes time and much effort. It is an attribute that one has to choose to build, it does not come automatically. Timely follow up is crucial. As one participant concluded, "if you do not do timely and expeditious follow up then what kind of impression does that leave." This participant also added, "there has to be that trust and respect. There has to be that trust there, and when that gets broken, people become shyer to sign up."

Capacity-Building

Collective strong leadership was identified as an important element in the partnership development. This includes strong leadership at both the university, and in the partner organizations to help facilitate buy-in for the collaborative research model. One academic reflected upon the need for the appointment of lead individuals in the community organizations to take ownership for research projects. As this academic explained, "I think the interest was there, but there was no mechanism, nobody there, no lead person, no one to say that is great,

let's do some of that. Then, you could work with them to do it, to actually develop

the initiative, or whatever it is." Another academic added, "the precursor for all

this is leaders in organizations seeing it as important." Another participant

reiterated the importance of leadership by stating, "it has to be leadership that

goes beyond just the personalities that are in place at that time. It has to be a

leadership that is defined for each of the organizations no matter who is in the

position of authority. If you do not do that, these types of alliances are very

fragile."

The SSHRC official interviewed echoed the need for strong leadership for

sustainability of collaborative research. As discussed, the official maintained:

> I think what they (collaborative research groups) really need is the
> leadership, the clear governance, and strategic planning. It is sort of a
> leadership and management issue that really sets them apart from the
> others because it is about getting a bunch of people to work together, and
> so clarity of objectives of what people are trying to achieve, so the
> management issue is key.

Mutual understanding and acceptance of the benefits of collaborative

research between partners are critical to sustainability. If stakeholders do not

believe in it, then it is doubtful that they will carry the torch for it. If academics

engage in this type of research solely to access funding, but do not subscribe to

the espoused philosophy of collaborative research, then it is unlikely that the

partnerships will thrive.

There needs to be a better understanding among partners and the public

of what research is, and what can be accomplished in research. As one

academic explained, "for community partners to successfully participate in

research, I think they probably might need some grounding, some education in what is research, and how research can be conducted." Expectations need to be realistic.

Collaborative partnerships need time to grow and develop buy-in from all participants. As one community partner explained:

> I am not sure if the community-university research alliance is a long enough grant to allow that to happen. It almost needs to be longer in longevity, and start off smaller and then build based on collaboration as opposed to starting off with all guns, and people are gone off in all directions; behaviours are not changed, and then people just get annoyed, and the partners are gone away from the process. Partnerships are personal. You have to build a trust with the person; you have to build a relationship with them. Faculty members got to buy into it. The practitioner also has to be realistic about what they expect.

The same individual went on to explain, "it takes time to build up those personal relationships. If you do not take time for that, then I do not think the relationship happens. You quickly go down the path of doing it like you would have done it in the past. Then the change has not occurred, and the spirit of the relationship has not been fostered."

Financial Support

Collaborative partnerships are difficult to sustain without financial support. Researchers need funding to conduct research - everything from funding for web designers to design websites to research assistants to carry out the research. As the knowledge mobilization unit representative explained, "without a base of core funding, you are never really able to be effective, and ultimately you will fail, so I think that is the bottom line, but you also need to have good processes, you need

to build trust, you need to develop your network, you need to deliver on your commitments, and you have to add value."

More time release (for both academics and community partners) was noted as an important element that is needed in fostering better partnerships. As one academic explained, "it needs time support for people to be released so they can actually take part in the activities." In this way partnerships can grow and develop.

In considering the whole question of finances, one of the community partners queried if different terminology should be used to attract more dollars. For example, instead of saying collaborative research perhaps it would be more powerful to use the term "collaborative implementation and research". As the community partner explained:

> Have we gone far enough symbolically, practically emphasizing the relationships between the university and the field. What that does, as well, is that it serves to draw the university more and more into the world of practice, and the world of practice more and more into the world of research. I am wondering if we have gone far enough to symbolically represent, and practically represent the importance of our relationship.

While it was noted that many of the community partners did not have dedicated funding to research in their respective organizations, it was suggested that meeting costs could be minimized by piggybacking on partners coming together for other meetings. This was achieved on several occasions during the alliance that was studied.

Supports need to be available for community partners so that they can be in a position to participate. That may mean that the academic researcher may

have to take a lead role in organizing the collaboration to better facilitate bringing

the community partners to the table. As one community partner maintained, "I

think a greater part of the initiative, the organizational piece probably needs to

come from the research world."

Support from the institution was noted by the project manager and SSHRC

official as being crucial to the success of a collaborative research project. For

example, the ability to use the university's financial services made a huge

positive difference in the alliance studied.

Upfront and Ongoing Discussions

Due to the fact that academics and community partners enter community-

university partnerships with varying degrees of understanding of what constitutes

collaborative research, many participants agreed that frank, upfront discussions

were needed to discuss what it really means to do collaborative research. As one

researcher stated:

> I do not remember sitting down at any point and having a conversation
> around how do we handle power differentials when we do collaborative
> research; how do we engage stakeholders in data analysis, and the
> presentation of findings, and engage partners in formulating the research
> questions. We have not had any pragmatic conversations around how we
> do what we are doing. It is all an assumption around what we are doing.
> Conversely, how do we help the stakeholders articulate what it is they
> want to get out of the research?

A community partner furthered this discussion by adding, "more collaborative

work up front to build the partnerships, the relationships, build the parameters,

set up the responsibilities on a project basis was needed." This partner went on

to explain, "I think they did a really good job with the upfront meetings, but they

did not keep them going." These upfront and ongoing discussions can go a long way in helping to build trust between partners.

Coupled in these discussions is hammering out a better understanding of each other's worlds (the world of practice and the world of academia), and respecting each other's realities. As one academic explained, "there is a disconnect between the understanding of each other's worlds." Similarly, a community partner noted, "the more that we can have empathy for each other's positions, I do not mean each other's views, I mean each other's roles, the greater the chance for collaboration." One way to achieve this is, of course, by having academics have more experiences in the partner's organizations, and vice versa.

One community member suggested a checklist for research alliance administration to use to ensure that individual projects were following the requirements of the collaborative process. This would be the basis for ongoing discussions with project teams to ensure that a spirit of collaboration was guiding the research.

Memorandum of Understanding

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) encompassing a process plan for collaboration surfaced in a number of the interviews. The SSHRC official particularly spoke to this point by indicating that clarity of shared purpose, objectives, and clear governance were extremely important, and need to be outlined. This individual noted that the projects that fail "are the ones where those things are not clear – a partnership in search of a purpose."

Of utmost importance in the memorandum of understanding would be defining how monetary recompense is going to be handled, and clearly outlining the contribution of each partner. Clearly defining monetary recompense not only helps build incentives for people to participate, but also helps to build trust. Similarly, if community partners are contributing monies to the research project then a memorandum of understanding could outline the deliverables for that contribution. This memorandum of understanding would be applicable at both the macro and micro levels of a community-university partnership meaning protocols would need to be drawn up between the principal investigator, co-investigators, and community partners outlining expectations of all involved. Similarly, protocols would be established between co-investigators and community partners. For one academic, engaging in another collaborative research project would mean putting a process plan in place that included:

> How are we going to plan to make collaborative research work; how are we going to monitor the collaborative piece; how are we going to streamline the consultation piece; what is our communication plan; what is our plan of engagement; how are we going to draw these stakeholders in at all points not just data collection; how do we get them to open up their minds as well as their doors. We subconsciously expect them (community partners) to open up their doors; we do not expect them to open up their minds to acquire a new skill set to do their own research; we do not leave them empowered with knowledge at the end.

Similarly, a community partner added some thoughts on what to include in a MOU such as "what are we going to do if we get the money; how are we going to set up the projects; how are we going to staff them; how are we going to resource them; what are the terms of reference; and what is the dissemination back to the partners."

With respect to the delicate issue of publishing findings that may be less favourable for community partners, a plan must be discussed upfront to deal with this if it occurs. One senior academic noted, "you have to set up contexts where there is, at least to the extent possible, a degree of anonymity in any of what you publish in the public forum". This difficult situation does occur sometimes in partnerships, and a plan needs to be in place to navigate these muddy waters.

It was noted to help facilitate the development of MOUs, templates could be developed either by grant funding agencies, or the administration of the research alliance. This would make it more user-friendly for project groups to then develop these protocols.

Research Project Manager

One of the key lessons learned by the PI from this community-university research alliance was the necessity of a project manager to deal with the day-to-day operations of such a large partnership. This sentiment was echoed by the SSHRC official interviewed who noted the importance of having dedicated staff to deal with the daily management of the project. In the particular project studied, the person hired was a community member so in that way was helpful in that the views of the community could be represented throughout the process. As a faculty member, the PI did not have previous experience in dealing with such large budgets nor did the PI really have time to be dealing with the daily administration of the grant, and all that encompasses it given teaching and other faculty responsibilities. The PI acknowledged:

One of the things I think that really helped me considerably, and in fact I am not sure how the project would have unfolded without the present project manager. I think one of the key and most important decisions I made early on was to hire a project manager. As a faculty member, I still have to be a faculty member. The most that my university will allow me to buy out in any given year is two courses to do research which means that I was still responsible for teaching three courses. It is very difficult to do the work that is required. You got to be on top of the financial part of the project, and that does not come easy to most academics. I have no experience with very large budgets.

In dealing with the budget, the project manager was responsible for working with university financial services, the university body responsible for administering grant monies. The PI noted that working with financial services alone would not have been sufficient to administer the budget because it needed to be broken down further to track individual project expenditures. Fortunately, the project manager, in this project, was familiar with accounting, and therefore was able to put proper procedures in place for maintaining the budget, approving and tracking expenditures. Similar arrangements should be in place in any collaborative research alliance.

The project manager, in conjunction with university financial services, can be vital in finding a way to administer the budget so that academics receive credit for project funding. This is a key element in sustaining academic participation in such alliances since such funding is a huge determining factor in promotion and tenure decisions. The project manager can also play an important role in identifying opportunities for leverage that allow for accessing other sources of funding.

Advisory Committee

One means for furthering partner input is the establishment of research

advisory committees. In this way, community partners and academics meet

regularly to exchange ideas, and discuss the research agenda. Long lulls in

communication exchanges are less likely to occur with such an arrangement.

This also gives those academics, who may not be naturally inclined to have

informal discussions with partners, a formal mechanism to keep the dialogue

going, and keep them on track.

Face-to-Face Meetings

Another method identified for better sustainability of collaborative research

partnerships was more face-to-face meetings of key stakeholders. This would

include full group meetings that assist in keeping all team members abreast of

respective projects, as well as individual project group meetings to discuss

ongoing research. As one academic stated, "when you are sitting across the

table it makes a lot of difference in terms of soliciting support, and getting people

to do things when you want them to do it." Additionally, face-to-face meetings can

help get to the crux of the issue as opposed to sending overly long emails with an

enormous amount of reading attached. As one community partner commented,

"the amount of stuff they sent me was just onerous. They would have been

better off saying come and see me, and saying here is where we are." The

importance of scheduling these meetings well in advance so that it is built into

stakeholders' schedules was noted by a number of the participants. Given that

all participants have such busy schedules, keeping these meetings succinct and

to the point was seen as being extremely important.

The knowledge mobilization unit representative summarized sustainability

of collaborative research well by stating:

> You need to get people in the room together. Ultimately, in my eyes, this is a contact sport so you get faculty, staff, and students in the room with the community stakeholders. For collaborative projects, you need human beings to meet, and to build trust, and to pick up on the nuances of personal communication, and to clarify projects, and to build teams, and to clarify deliverables, to discuss findings, and clarify the reports, and communicate to other human beings.

Alignment of Interests

Several academic researchers pointed out the importance of research

interests aligning in a community-university research partnership to improve

success. Of course, there was recognition that these interests may not always

align due to misalignment in what the government funding agencies might see as

a relevant topic and what community partners might see as burning issues to be

researched. In describing the issue further, one academic maintained, "I think

that leads to our frustration sometimes because you have a partnership dealing

with a strategic issue that is perhaps not really. It is a strategic research issue,

but not really a primary strategic issue for the partner." The SSHRC official also

discussed the importance of mutual interests aligning for success.

Spirit of Collaboration

Engaging in collaborative research should mean that academics and

community partners are equally engaged in all aspects of the research. The

literature (Israel et al., 1998) suggests community partners should be in the

driver's seat of formulating the research agenda, and then collaboratively the other aspects of research should be developed by both partners.

Reflecting upon the overall collaborative process, several participants questioned the level of collaboration that had actually been achieved in this partnership. As one academic explained, "I think a lot of the researchers went in there with their own agendas and saying this is what I want to research. I am not sure that the agenda was driven as much by the partners' needs as much as it should have been. I do not think it really was." This academic further highlighted the importance of partner relevancy by stating, "when your research is publicly funded research, it should almost be directly benefitting the public, and it should be more relevant to the public." Another academic reflecting on the whole experience noted:

> I have learned that ownership is important. This whole notion of who is responsible for this research; who initiated it at the beginning; who is carrying it out; who is going to publish the results. The ownership will make a difference. Looking back on what I have done, if (the community partners) perhaps had more input into what I was doing, maybe I would have gotten a more positive response.

Several community members confirmed this lack of involvement, with one noting in particular, "really, we are not the ones who are the original seeds of thought in the development of these projects".

With respect to the spirit of collaboration in a project, sometimes tough decisions may have to be made as to who participates in the project, and who does not. Maintaining collaborative partnerships is tough, even at the best of times, with people who are very committed to the philosophy since all the forces

are at play that can hinder cultivating relationships (such as time, power, etc.).

As the principal investigator explained:

> [That puts us in] a very difficult position. On the one hand when we were sending in the proposal we had to build the proposal. We had to put together a team that was so good that you know we could do what we were suggesting we could do. So we did that and the team was strong. There was no doubt the team was strong, but the compromise that you make is that you realize, yes, they are a strong group of researchers, but when it comes to this vision of community-based research, of collaboration, of all this philosophy of research that we have been trying to foster, you realize …some of them will never be there.

The principal investigator further acknowledged:

> I think maybe I was too optimistic about changing researchers at the university. I think I thought if we get this funding, if we give them this opportunity, and the money is good that they will involve the community partners. They knew that this was what the CURA is supposed to do. They knew this was part of the program; the funding came with that understanding, and I guess I was a little bit too optimistic or not realistic enough to know how entrenched some of these people were. What it would have meant was excluding some people, and maybe that would not have been a bad idea looking back on it. You cannot once you get a CURA, the PI certainly cannot do this alone. You have to rely on your team. The whole idea is collaboration, and if you got people on your team with really rigid views about how research is done, I think your chances, especially if they are senior researchers, your chances of changing them are pretty slim. I guess that has been a learning thing for me. If I was doing it again and submitting a proposal again which I am not, but if I were, I think I would pay more attention to what the philosophy is now and just…not entertain the thought of including [traditional researchers] even if their CV is so strong that they could really enhance the project.

> Considering community partners' engagement, it was noted by some

academics that some partners just did not appear to have the time or interest to

commit to the project. As one academic purported:

> There are some folks who have not responded at all; have never responded to an email about the collaboration. If someone does not respond, how many times do I ask? It's like anything else. If you are interested you are going to respond, if not you are going to put it in your

trash bin or put it aside. So, some of our partners on paper have not participated. Of course, that does not encourage me to try very hard. Eventually, you got to get on with it…People are either engaged or they are not.

When engaging in such a model, there is a need to be surrounded by individuals who are totally committed to the collaborative philosophy. It is not a time to be overly optimistic about changing people's philosophies of research. If there is not a great deal of buy-in from a researcher with respect to collaborative research, and there is a sense that the individual is just going to continue using the traditional expert model, then while it may weaken the strength of the funding application, it may be best that individual is not invited to participate. Similarly, if there is not a lot of buy-in from a community member, and they clearly do not have the time to devote to the partnership, then the best option may be non-participation.

Equally important is a spirit of celebration that celebrates the work of academics and practitioners alike. Successes of partnership work should be celebrated as a joint effort applauding the efforts of all involved.

Dissemination

In keeping with the idea of public relevancy and accountability for public funding, it was noted that dissemination should move beyond conventional means (i.e., peer-reviewed journals and academic conferences), and enter the public domain using such medium as YouTube, Twitter, 2.0, blogs, webinars, video-conferencing, and the like. In many instances, as one community partner explained, "we should be able to condense that knowledge to its essence so it

becomes accessible to greater numbers of people, and doing that without simplifying the findings." Having communication officers at the universities whose jobs are to get the information about research out in various formats is essential. In this way, research can be disseminated to a broader, bigger audience. In the case of education, including pre-service teachers, and ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers in the field would be extremely important. Academics must become engaged scholars so that engagement is in all aspects of their teaching and learning.

Clearinghouse Agent (Manager)

Much discussion regarding sustainability focused on the importance of building relationships. For several academics, the need for an agent or agency to help grow those partnerships was expressed. As one academic explained:

> I think you really got to have a lot of resources for collaboration. You got to have someone who is really functioning as a clearinghouse manager, and managing the relationships; making the connections because I think there needs to be that person between the researchers and the person in the community. I really do not have time to build those relationships myself.

Another academic referenced the need for dedicated knowledge mobilization units within universities to act as the go between for the university and the community at large. This idea was reiterated by a community partner who indicated that such knowledge mobilization units could be used as brokers to bridge the gap between academics and community partners. In the community-university research alliance studied, while a knowledge mobilization unit was a partner in the project, their role was never really clearly defined. This was

perhaps a missed opportunity that in hindsight could have really helped to strengthen partnerships.

Changes to Promotion and Tenure

There was recognition in many participant responses that universities need to change their way of doing business. As one academic purported:

> Right now it is not working, and it should work. We got to get away from the traditional model. The university is going to implode because it is just becoming irrelevant. Just too many people doing research that has no value, no bearing on anything except for promotion and tenure for that particular instructor, and eventually that is going to wither on the vine.

In order for collaborative research to be sustainable, universities must recognize collaborative research efforts for academic promotion and tenure purposes. Academics will be less likely to engage in such partnerships if there is little gain in it for advancing their university careers. Of course, this does not mean that all research should be a collaborative model, in fact, as one academic noted, "maybe some parts of the university should be just pure research".

Orientation Meeting

One of the things that the PI and project manager found very useful in learning about dealing with a community-university research alliance of such a large magnitude was attending a national orientation meeting hosted by the national granting agency. What this did was it allowed people to share their experiences, and learn from each other about how to navigate the waters in such a landscape, particularly as it relates to budgets and relationship issues. Any group engaging in a collaborative research venture should definitely plan to partake in such an orientation session.

Succession Planning

One of the important points raised by a couple of the participants in this study was the importance of succession planning in collaborative research. Not only is it important that there is a strong commitment to collaborative research by all the participants in the project, but there should be a dedicated plan to engage emerging leaders in the respective organizations so that the trust that has been cultivated in the partnership does not die when the original individuals involved move on to other ventures or retire. As one community partner explained:

> It is almost as though those engaged in collaborative research need a kind of collective succession plan. This is about people, and people working together. If you take myself and (academic partner), we are not going to be there forever. We go back quite a number of years, and each thing we have done together has deepened that trust and relationship. The danger we face is this becomes a little bubble, a little thing that people pushed a little distance, and through people retiring, and leaving, and so on it sort of fades away a little bit, and somebody says well wasn't it great they were able to do that. There should be an embedded commitment within the organization to that. To sustain it is almost as though those of us involved in projects of this nature should be looking and saying OK here are the leaders coming up to continue that, and how can we nurture not only their individual leadership, but also to nurture the trust among the institutions, and the collaboration among the institutions that caused this to work.

Similarly, another participant added, "the organizations have to agree on continuing to do the research even though the personnel changes because it is the organization, not the individual that is supposed to be linked to the collaboration." Succession planning needs to move beyond individual organizational succession planning, and include inter-organizational planning as well. See Table 3 for a summary of factors contributing to the sustainability of collaborative research.

Table 3. Factors Contributing to the Success of Collaborative Research

Relationships	*Capacity-Building*
Establish win-win situations between university and community partners	Foster strong leadership and incorporate succession planning
Create manageable numbers of partnerships	Develop mutual understanding and acceptance of benefits of collaborative research between university and community partners
Look for the "right fit" between partners (both university and community partners' philosophies of research and research interests should align)	Create spirit of collaboration where community and university partners maximize their participation in various aspects of the research project and community-university partner successes are celebrated
Create research project manager position to manage day to day operations	Participation in national funding agency orientation session to learn from past community-university partnerships
Engage in effective and continuous communication (upfront discussions of what it means to do collaborative research; establish advisory committee; ongoing face-to-face meetings; use of clearinghouse agent/manager/knowledge mobilization unit to grow partnership; develop understanding of each other's worlds i.e., the world of practice and the world of academia; development of memorandums of understanding; develop checklist guide for ongoing discussions)	Availability of supports (time release for both academics and community partners to grow partnerships; university support through promotion and tenure practices that reward collaborative research involvement)
	Utilize non-conventional means of dissemination to grow the audience and interest

Chapter 7

Conclusion

As an administrator with close to 20 years of experience in educational administration and almost 25 years in education, I have observed that there seems to be a disconnect between the world of academia and the world where I live as a school principal. I would take courses and see the immense value of those courses to what I was doing in school, yet there did not appear to be a lot of partnerships between academic researchers and schools. While research projects did cross my desk, and as a school we did engage in some of these research initiatives, I was perplexed as to why more sustained partnerships between schools and universities did not exist. This query continued to be in the back of my mind throughout my career. When I had the opportunity to be involved in a Community-University Research Alliance a few years ago, I seized the learning opportunity to engage in such a partnership.

Frame this query against the backdrop of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement, two ideas that have been gaining currency around the world in recent years, and these are the kernels of the early development of this research study. Collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement offers much promise of breaking down the silos that exist between universities and community partners (since it gives academic researchers and practitioners the opportunity to be co-creators of knowledge). With this paradigm shift, however, also comes many questions. The purpose of this chapter is to provide

an overview of this study, a summary of the findings, implications of the study, the need for further research, and concluding thoughts.

The purpose of this study was to strive to determine the value of collaborative research, the challenges associated with collaborative research, and factors that may contribute to the sustainability of collaborative research. This investigation addressed the following two primary research questions:

(1)   How do collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement challenge academic researchers?

(2)   To what extent do community partners value collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement?

Sub-questions which grew out of these primary questions included:

   (a) What examples are there of successful community-university

       partnerships?

       (i) How are they created and nurtured?

       (ii) How is "successful" defined?

   (b) What philosophy of research is espoused by faculty researchers

       engaged in collaborative research?

   (c) What infrastructures are in place in order that community partners use

       research in their practice?

   (d) What are the challenges associated with collaborative research and the

       scholarship of engagement?

   (e) What strategies can be used to advance collaborative research and the

       scholarship of engagement? What kinds of capacities, resources, and

relationships should be fostered to create sustained interaction and collaboration between universities and community partners?

For this study, I chose a qualitative, interpretive approach to describe the participants' experiences and my reflections. Much consideration was given in designing and choosing a study population. Since the study intended to provide insight into the challenges of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement for academic researchers, I determined that academic researchers and community partners from a Community University Research Alliance (CURA) project in a Faculty of Education at a Canadian university would provide an excellent study population. In addition, I included a CURA fellow graduate student, a project manager, a representative from a knowledge mobilization unit at a university, and a SSHRC official to broaden the perspectives offered. The research design included document analysis, interviews, and personal observations. Sixteen interviews were conducted with the study population. All interviews were taped, transcribed, and assigned appropriate codes. The majority of interviews were conducted by phone while several, where possible, took place face-to-face. Initial analysis of information collected was grouped together by the background of the participants (academic researchers, community partners, graduate student, knowledge mobilization unit representative, project manager, and SSHRC representative). However, further analysis revealed that it was more appropriate to present the findings under three common themes: the value of collaborative research, the challenges of collaborative research, and the sustainability of collaborative research.

This study was intended to be a thick description of the challenges of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement for academic researchers. By using the research design as described, it is hoped that its representativeness has been increased. Whether or not the findings of this research are transferable or generalizable to other contexts will have to be determined by its readers.

Findings of the Study

The findings of this study are presented with three headings including: findings related to the value of collaborative research, findings related to challenges of collaborative research, and findings related to the sustainability of collaborative research.

Findings Related to the Value of Collaborative Research

Study participants had mixed views of the value of collaborative research depending on what their role was. Most academics expressed gratitude for the ability to access funding through the community-university research alliance which ultimately helped advance their research agendas. For some academics who clearly espouse a belief in the co-creation of research with practitioners as extremely valuable, collaborative research was viewed as an essential part of the way they do research. As a graduate student pointed out, community partners provide a vital link of connecting researchers to "the real world". Creating knowledge which is driven by community needs helps shape practice, and this was a very rewarding aspect of collaborative research for many academics. A number of academics noted one of the benefits of engaging in collaborative

research is the improvement in response rates to data collection. By involving community partners, they can help ensure that the right questions get asked that can lead to a more objective uncovering of the truth. For one academic, the most rewarding aspect of collaborative research was the ability to disseminate information using unconventional means; undoubtedly appealing to a broader audience who could use the findings. These findings are congruent with the Niks (2006) study that described "the potential collaboration has for enriching the process and product of research" (p. 175). Niks (2006) refers to the potential that collaborative research has to generate "richer" knowledge since such partnerships involve more than one perspective.

Consistent with the findings of the Niks (2006) study, the knowledge mobilization unit representative held collaborative research in high regard indicating that such research can lead to better research and ultimately more engaged papers. The KM representative pointed out that collaborative research affords community partners access to the expertise and resources of the university albeit it does not necessarily guarantee that they will get the results in the time or format needed.

Student training was viewed by the PI and project manager as a very valuable outcome of collaborative research since it was a way to enhance community engagement. The funding of master's and doctoral fellowships allowed community members in the field to step back from their busy jobs and engage in such a community-university research alliance. This finding is consistent with Hall and Tremblay (2012) who emphasize that student

involvement in collaborative research through research fellowships and research related support is one of the largest successes of community-university partnerships.

For the SSHRC official and for the PI also, collaborative research was viewed as a way to create methodological versatility in research, advance the mobilization of knowledge, make connections, and create value of knowledge by going beyond the research community to include the larger society. As the SSHRC representative reiterated, making connections between the world of academia and community partners is seen as an important role of the SSHRC mandate. While the official pointed out that SSHRC does not expect all researchers to engage in collaborative research, this type of research is certainly one that they have built up and mainstreamed in their program architecture. These findings are consistent with discussions in the literature regarding some of the positives associated with collaborative research (Etmanski et al., 2014; Van de Ven, 2007).

For the proponents of collaborative research in this study, the creation of knowledge is better when shared between academics and practitioners; research should be relevant to policy and practice, and not research driven purely out of curiosity. These participants recognize the difficulty in operationalizing such a philosophy of research.

Some academics were more reluctant to fully commit to community-university research alliances noting some of their negative characteristics. Its very defined and restrictive nature was one characteristic that caused concern.

The size of such partnerships for some researchers was just too unmanageable, and therefore lessened the value of the union. Furthermore, due to promotion and tenure policies at universities, collaborative research was seen as less valuable than other forms of research in advancing the careers of new academics. As some university researchers explained, typically, universities reward single authored, peer reviewed articles, while collaborative research lends itself more to multiple authored works that may be communicated in non-traditional ways. In fact, some academics felt that collaborative research was risky for the advancement of new academics' careers since proposal writing is very time-consuming and the success rates of proposals are so low. For other academics espousing more traditional views of research, the role of the community partner did not go beyond helping set the research questions and facilitating data collection in their organizations. For these individuals data analysis, writing, and dissemination were clearly viewed as the work of the academic. These responses with respect to promotion and tenure were consistent with those in the literature espoused by such authors as Bowan and Graham (2013), and Niks (2006).

Academic researchers had mixed views about the value of community partnerships. Some academics believed that some of the community partners did value the alliance, and that it did help shape their practice. Others felt it was very dependent on the partner, the individual context, and the resources available. It was pointed out that it would be understandable if community partners valued the partnership minimally if the research did not respond to their needs.

Community partner participants had varying viewpoints regarding the value of collaborative research. For some, the partnership was valued very highly as it provided data to guide practice and policy. This, they argued, in a data-driven environment where accountability is at the forefront, can be a huge asset. Such a marriage between theory and practice also helps provide theoretical grounding to the world of practice. This finding paralleled those findings of Hall and Tremblay (2012) with respect to knowledge co-created in collaborative research having the potential to influence policy direction. Additionally, community partners felt their involvement added relevancy to the research. Consistent with the findings of Brukhardt et al. (2006), some of the most rewarding aspects for one community partner were the connections with others since such an alliance affords academics and community partners the space to discuss issues in an evidence-based manner. For this community partner, the personal growth gained through such engagement had implications for those in leadership positions since such knowledge should return to the organization for further discussion and growth. This finding related to community capacity-building echoed the work of Etmanski et al. (2014), Hall and Tremblay (2012), Holland and Ramaley (2008), and Strand et al. (2003).

For other community partners, while the partnership was valued, it was felt that there had been missed opportunities between the academics and community partners. These individuals recounted missed occasions to grow the partnership, and thereby create research longevity. Furthermore, for one community partner, the community-research alliance, while valued, was not viewed as important to

the day-to-day operations of the organization. These varied viewpoints regarding

the value of collaborative research reflect the findings of Niks (2006) who

indicates that the value of community-university partnerships may vary depending

on the participant perspective.

Findings Related to the Challenges of Collaborative Research

Participants were asked to reflect on their experiences with collaborative

research and outline possible barriers to success. Administrative, relationship-

related, organizational, ethical, and grant-funding agency challenges were noted.

Table 4 presents a summary of those findings with related comments. Each

barrier is then discussed.

Table 4. Barriers to the Success of Collaborative Research

Challenges	Typical Comment
Administrative	
1. Alignment of mutual interests	"They (community partners) may have different expectations or desire different outcomes from what we may have in mind".
2. Clarity of expectations	"It was kind of broadly defined, but the finer details never really worked out, so we were kind of into this before all of this was really clearly delineated so it never really ever was".
3. Size of partnerships	"It is such a large system; everyone is off doing radically different things with constantly changing clients and schedules and stakeholders".
4. Buy-in	"So you really got to work at it to make collaboration work. It is not something where you can sit idly by; a passive process. Collaboration is an active process. Unless it is front and center

	then I think you will have trouble in collaboration".
5. Sufficient resources	"Resources, of course, no one ever has enough resources".
6. Continuity of partners	"How do you avoid that the project is seen as the predecessor's legacy, and therefore not an appealing project for current position-holders who have their own agendas?"
7. Adequate engagement	"We (academic researchers) are still very much determining the agenda and I cannot very much put my finger on why that is so. I think they (community partners) are so very busy doing their own thing and meeting their own accountabilities, our agenda is a very small piece of what they do, and I think that is probably the issue".
8. Promotion and tenure	"Promotion and tenure was a really big issue because if they (academics) had not been able to use that for promotion and tenure, they would really have been reluctant to put any time in on it, and rightly so, because if they could not use it for promotion and tenure, it would have been career suicide".
Relationship-Related	
9. Effective communication	"If a partner cannot let me know in a six month period whether or not we are going to be able to conduct interviews for a study, I quickly go on to something else especially in a pressurized academic environment where everything is tied to promotion and tenure".
10. Ownership	"The people who came and replaced (the community partner leaders) in those leadership positions did not have the ownership".
11. Willingness to participate	"There was no real priority given to it and that I do not blame on anyone in particular. Collaboration was just not

	front and center".
12. Power differentials	"There has long been a mistrust and if I can go so far as to say dislike of academia out there. There are a lot of issues out there. One is the sense that always as a professor you are going out to evaluate even if that is not your intention".
13. Finding mutually agreeable questions	"Making sure we are working in a direction that is mutually beneficial is a challenge".
14. Research relevancy	"One of the difficulties with doing long-term research is that the landscape changes so quickly and the priorities that were identified five to six years ago may be quite different from today".
15. Learning to talk across disciplines	"There is learning to talk processes, never mind across disciplines, talking across sectors is even more challenging".
Cultural/Organizational	
16. Blending organizational cultures	"We live in different worlds. It is not necessarily a bad thing; it is just my world is different from the researcher's world".
17. Understanding each other's realities	"I think there are varying degrees of understanding of say what I do".
18. Differences in expectations	"I can understand why partners may feel a bit let down because what they anticipated would be ongoing research is not going to happen because at this stage now the projects that were identified early on are the ones that are being finished".
19. Unrealistic timelines	"I think they (community partners) anticipated the questions would be answered quickly. Whereas what happens, and we know this so well in a university environment, once you

	identify the research questions, and start the research process, it takes time".
20. Differences in dissemination	"Success in an academic environment remains publish in peer-reviewed journals or perish. You either succeed as an academic or not on the basis of what you publish. The partner is not concerned at all about publication".
Ethical	
21. Dealing with unfavourable findings	"So here is the ethical dilemma. Which direction do you go? The (partner) decides I am going to bury this, and others (participants) saying, 'We took time to complete this, now you are not doing anything with this' ".
Grant-Funding Perspective	
22. Access to funding	"I think the other issue is who can access our funds or not. Sometimes we have these pressures. SSHRC should be neutral".
23. Community partner involvement in peer review of applications	"Having people participate from non-academic community participants in our processes in terms of peer-review, that's a bit of a struggle".

(1)   With respect to administrative challenges, alignment of mutual interests

was clearly viewed as a challenge. Community partners need near immediate

answers to existing problems. Academic researchers must follow the rigor of

university regulations to complete research projects on topics that are acceptable

for academic study. Sometimes what community partners need solutions for, and

what academics can study to receive academic credit do not align. In the

community-university partnership studied, there were many meetings held to try

to determine and align interests, yet several participants questioned whether the interests really lined up.

(2) Several participants noted that lack of clarity of expectations can cause difficulty in community-university partnerships. There was recognition that managing participants who have different understandings of collaborative research and contrasting beliefs of what constitutes "good" research, can be problematic. For example, some community partners referred to their role as "facilitators" rather than fully partners in all aspects of the research process. Moreover, some academics did not see the role of community partners in all aspects of research. On one hand some individuals may want to be a part of the project to access funding, yet those individuals may not truly buy into the philosophy of collaborative research. Trying to massage partnerships between individuals with varying degrees of understanding of collaborative research is a major challenge.

(3) Participants observed the administration of such a huge collaborative research project brings its own challenges. Due to the number of people and projects involved in such a partnership, the principal investigator and project manager pointed out just keeping track of the day-to-day operations and keeping all stakeholders engaged can be a difficult task. As these two individuals remarked, couple this with changing stakeholders and varying research schedules (some partnerships finishing while others just beginning), and you have the recipe for a potentially unmanageable system.

(4)   Total buy-in from academic researchers and community partners in such a partnership can be challenging. Participants enter a partnership with varying levels of understanding of collaborative research. As some community partners noted, it is very easy for academic researchers to revert back to their traditional modes of doing research which may be more comfortable for them instead of upholding the collaborative philosophy. Similarly, community partners may not have the time or may not fully understand collaborative research. The result is that participants may not put collaboration front and center, and this may negatively affect the success of the project.

It is important to note that the principal investigator in such situations is in a very difficult position. As was discussed by the principal investigator, one of the roles of the PI is to keep the research agenda moving forward and to create buy-in to the project from all participants. This, at times, can be a very challenging role since the principal investigator can be at odds with colleagues who may resort to traditional modes of research instead of being fully engaged in collaboration with community partners. The question then arises as to how to navigate those murky waters.

(5)   Resource issues are among the most important management challenges in a collaborative research partnership. Having ample funding to provide release time, bring partners together, hire research assistants to conduct research, disseminate findings, and the many more demands on funding can be difficult. Even the PI noted that while a million dollars is a lot of money, in the end when it is spread over five years and multiple projects, it is limited.

(6)   Continuity of participants, and particularly those in a leadership role, was

viewed by several participants as a major challenge to the success of

collaborative research. The principal investigator explained in this study there

was a major problem with the continuity of community partners with significant

turnover in a number of the projects. As a result of this, the PI postulated these

individuals may not have felt as connected to the project as their predecessors

might nor may the new leaders have been as committed to carrying the torch for

a project which was not their own. Additionally, there is the issue of bringing

these new participants up to date with the projects which may be several years

underway. As the principal investigator emphasized, creating shared vision,

ownership, and commitment in such cases can be very challenging. This finding

is congruent with the shared vision work of Senge (2006). As Senge (2006)

suggests "building shared vision must be seen as a central element of the daily

work of leaders. It is ongoing and never-ending" (p. 199).

In the community-university research alliance studied, several participants

acknowledged that there were some changes in the duties of academics in the

alliance throughout the life of the project. It was suggested this may have

contributed to changes in the working relationships with some community

partners as these individuals did not have as much time to spend on the project.

This, in turn, made those community partners feel disconnected from the project.

(7)   Involvement of community partners was viewed by some academics as a

huge challenge. While university researchers noted that community partners had

been involved in shaping the research questions and assisted with initial data

collection in their organizations, in many instances community involvement stopped there. Some academics felt that data analysis and dissemination were the work of academics so they were quite happy with the level of community partner involvement, at this stage, while other academics struggled with trying to include community partners more in other phases of the research process.

(8) The financial aspect of administration was also identified by the PI and project manager as being an obstacle to success especially for a principal investigator who does not have experience in managing a huge budget. Trying to find ways so that academics receive credit for research monies granted was new terrain. University promotion and tenure policies require academics to record research monies received. If academics are not able to do so, they would be very reluctant to participate in collaborative research projects as they would be committing "career suicide". At the same time, it is important for the principal investigator and project manager to maintain control of budget expenditures to ensure that grant monies are being spent according to granting agency requirements (i.e., student training was a non-negotiable budget line).

(9) A number of relationship-related challenges were identified by participants with effective communication being near the top of the list. Several participants noted that differences of opinion can occur in partnerships. If procedures are not in place to deal with such differences, this can make the relationship very strained. Several community partners maintained that they would have liked to have seen more face-to-face meetings and wondered if including dialogue with individuals at another layer in the organization could have resulted in more robust

findings. Furthermore, both academic and community partners pointed out the challenges associated with communication lulls in a partnership. As explained, at the beginning of the project there was a great deal of natural momentum moving the project forward, however when people settled into their piece of the project, interest started to wane, and even getting some partners to respond in a timely manner became a real challenge. In the case of one project in this study, a lull in communications broadened into a larger breakdown of communication, and the partnership devolved to a name-only entity.

(10)   Another relationship-related challenge involves ownership. Lack of ownership can happen for a variety of reasons such as participants joining the project after its initial start date, individuals not being fully bought into the concept of collaborative research in the first place, or changes in circumstances which result in participants no longer having the time to commit to the project. This study finds that trying to instill ownership once it is lost is extremely difficult, if not impossible. Multiple situations occurred in the partnership studied to help grow ownership of individuals, but despite many meetings, conversations, and dialogue, it was clear this is very difficult to achieve.

(11)   If a spirit of collaboration is not central in a community-university partnership, the success of the union can be at risk. For example, as some academic researchers noted, if community partners cannot respond in a timely manner, then they have to move on to the next project as their livelihood depends on it. Similarly, if the academic partner sends many pages of information by email for the partner's perusal without picking up the phone or talking to the partner

face-to-face, the relationship can become broken. Finding the time to build trust and respect in a partnership can be extremely challenging.

(12) Power differential in a relationship was a topic that was raised by multiple participants. As one academic pointed out, there is a perception among some community partners, that some academics take advantage of community partners to achieve their research goals with little or no follow up. In this way, academics may be viewed as having power over community partners since research has typically been more in their domain. Money was also viewed by both academics and community partners as a source of power differential since universities are often the institutions that control the budget in community-university research alliances. Mistrust, a sense of imbalance, and a feeling of one group having control over another can be the result. This finding is congruent with Sandmann and Kliewer's (2012) work that contends community-university partnerships exist within social and political contexts that naturally create differences in power. Learning to navigate this power differential is an important obstacle to be overcome.

(13) Other participants observed the difficulty in trying to find mutually agreeable research questions. University researchers and community partners may have different research interests and may differ in their perspectives on what constitutes a "good" question. Furthermore, what may have been very relevant during the proposal stage, or even in the first year or two of a five-year project, may not seem relevant or important to a practitioner in years three to five. On the other hand, the academic researcher has created an initial research design that

spans a four-year to five-year period, and therefore, has no additional research funding to create new designs for questions that emerge later in the project. Furthermore, researchers have obtained ethics approval for a specific design and made commitments to their partners (such as schools and school districts). Even if monies were available to change the research questions, it would not be so simple to alter the course of the research since a reapplication to the Ethics Committee would be necessary.

(14)   Another difficulty with community-university partner research is that by the time the research is completed the original research question may no longer be addressing a primary issue, and partner organizations may have moved on to new interests. While academic researchers may have completed the research as required by the academic institution, the research may have little relevancy to the community partner or to anyone else. This is a valid challenge, and one that various partners struggled with in this project.

(15)   The nature of collaborative research is a departure from traditional modes of academic research. One organization can have a certain language which is distinct from another organization. Learning to find common ground across organizations can be problematic. As a number of academic researchers observed, they are used to working in isolation, particularly in light of the promotion and tenure policies of universities that dictate single authored papers. Collaborative research is a new way of doing business, which some individuals are more comfortable with than others. Getting academic researchers and community partners to step back from their current "worlds" to work in an

atmosphere of collaboration which invites not only academics to work with other academics, but also to include community partners will have growing pains of adjustment.

(16) One of the cultural challenges reiterated by academics and community partners alike was the fact that academic researchers and practitioners exist in two different worlds (i.e., the world of academia and "the real world"). This finding is consistent with Sandy and Holland (2006) and Niks (2006) using the same metaphor to describe the differing cultures of the ivory tower and the community. Blending organizational cultures in two seemingly very different worlds can be difficult. Academics live in a world bound by ethics and systematic approaches to research which take time. Practitioners appear to want immediate answers to current issues to help guide practice.

The inherent conflict between academics and practitioners surfaced multiple times in this study. One academic postulated that academics do not make good practitioners nor do practitioners make good academics. For this individual, academics were not viewed as good collaborators since they tend to be isolationists. Furthermore, practitioners seem to want immediate answers which may run counter to the requirements for rigor in the conduct of academic research.

(17) Both academics and community partners in the study acknowledged that they do not have a good understanding of each other's realities, and this can be problematic in community-university research alliances. As some participants explained, practitioners may not fully understand the bureaucracy of the

university, and academics may not understand the pressures of the community

partner's world to have immediate answers to solve current issues. Siemens

(2012), as well as Weerts and Sandmann (2008), address this finding in their

literature indicating a two way engagement between academic researchers and

community partners should be developed through mutual understanding.

(18) Cultural differences were noted by academics and community partners

alike as potentially contributing to some of the challenges associated with the

community-university partnership. Differing organizational cultures can shape

how one views research, what one expects to get from research, and how one

approaches research.   By its nature an alliance of such a large monetary value

can create expectations some of which may be unrealistic. If a community

partner expects to receive certain benefits from the university researcher for

participation (such as monetary recompense or attendance at a conference), but

does not receive it, this can alter the relationship. Additionally, community

partners may feel let down by their inability to add additional research topics to

the established research agenda over the life of the project. Similarly, if an

academic expects to receive responses in a timely manner from the community

partner and does not, this can break the trust and put the partnership in jeopardy.

Furthermore, if the academic expects to receive certain funding or course

remissions from the project and does not, they can be less enthused or willing to

engage in the project.

(19) Another challenge that can be gleaned from this study relates to the

importance of establishing realistic timelines. As some participants noted,

community partners may have anticipated that the research questions would have been answered more quickly thereby opening up the possibility of further research in other areas. However, given the restraints of working in an academic environment, and the rigor entailed for conducting research, once the research agenda was determined, there is often little manoeuvrability for additional research topics. In that regard, some community partners felt let down by the lack of ability to continue to expand on research.

(20)   Dissemination was also viewed as a source of conflict between both groups. As a number of academics stated, university researchers traditionally publish findings in peer-reviewed journals and present at academic conferences. Finding ways to disseminate findings to the larger community in a way that will be useful for them can be challenging. This finding is congruent with the work of Cox (2006), Niks (2006), Weerts and Sandmann (2008), and others.

 (21)   One of the major ethical challenges highlighted by academics in this study was what to do when results are unfavourable to the community partner. Community partners may not want the findings published, yet for academics there is a need for academic fidelity in reporting. This finding echoes the ethical challenges highlighted by Minkler (2004). This scenario actually did play out in this research alliance. In one case a community partner objected to publication and dissemination as it did not reflect positively on them. This meant two years of research was not published or presented at an academic conference. This, of course, can be quite problematic for academics.

(22)   The SSHRC representative highlighted a number of challenges encountered along the way from a grant-funding perspective in the development of collaborative research grants. One such challenge was who gets access to funding. The SSHRC official commented that sometimes there can be pressures to fund certain groups and, as such, the granting agency must remain neutral in the decision-making process. The SSHRC representative acknowledged there were certain trends in particular university faculties getting funded more often than others, suggesting Education and Social Work seem to be funded more frequently, but that probably had something to do with established habits of applying. By adopting the new partnership architecture, SSHRC hopes to mainstream community-university partnership programs so that it becomes more discipline neutral.

(23)   Involvement of community partners in the peer-review process of grant-funding applications was also viewed as a challenge. In many instances it was noted as very difficult to find community partners to partake in such activities since they were too busy with other commitments.

Findings Related to the Sustainability of Collaborative Research

Participants openly discussed suggestions which in their opinions would help create more sustainable collaborative partnerships. Categories of these suggestions, coupled with typical comments regarding them, are outlined in Table 5 and discussed in detail after.

Table 5. Suggestions for Sustainable Collaborative Partnerships

Category	Typical Comment
1. Size of partnership	"I would say that if at all possible, minimize the number of partners. You know sometimes multiple partners will help you get the funding, but sometimes it is better not to get the funding if you cannot manage the partnership milieu".
2. Alignment of interests	"Being able to work in a way that is mutually beneficial, that's probably the lesson learned".
3. Mutual understanding	"The more that we can have empathy for each other's positions, I do not mean each other's views, I mean each other's roles, the greater the chance for collaboration".
4. Time to grow partnerships	"It almost needs to be longer in longevity, and start off smaller and then build based on collaboration. You have to build a trust with the person; you have to build a relationship with them".
5. Strong leadership	"The precursor for all of this is leaders in organizations seeing it as important".
6. Succession planning	"It is almost as though those engaged in collaborative research need a kind of collective succession plan. This is about people, and people working together".
7. Level of engagement	"I have learned that ownership is important. Ownership will make a difference".
8. Effective communication	"Effective communication has to be central there somewhere, and not just here is what we are going to do".
9. Creation of synergy	"I think there are synergies that happen through the kind of research process and related activities that create communities of practice, networks".

10. Dialogue	"I would think the most important thing is just dialogue, being able to have conversations with our partners. Having good conversations with the partners is really the critical part".
11. Memorandums of understanding	"The projects that fail are the ones where those things are not clear – a partnership in search of a purpose".
12. Realistic expectations	"We need clear expectations about who is getting what out of the partnership".
13. Advisory committees	"At one point we thought this is really not working so we need to have an advisory committee. We invited all of our partners to be a part of this committee. This was helpful".
14. Dissemination	"We should be able to condense that knowledge to its essence so it becomes accessible to greater numbers of people, and doing that without simplifying findings".
15. Financial support	"Without a base of core funding, you are never really able to be effective".
16. Project manager	"I think one of the key and most important decisions I made early on was to hire a project manager".
17. Clearinghouse agent	"You got to have someone who is really functioning as a clearinghouse manager, and managing the relationships; making the connections because I think there needs to be that person between the researchers and the person in the community".
18. Orientation session	"I really think the orientation meeting was valuable. It was really great to talk to other people who had CURAs. They came from all kinds of disciplines".
19. Changes to promotion and tenure	"If the institution, the whole promotion and tenure process does not value it, that does not encourage me to value it unless I have some altruistic reason for valuing it".

(1) With respect to relationships, several participants in this study emphasized that manageable numbers of partnerships are a necessity to successful community-university research alliances. While having multiple partners might help a project succeed at the proposal stage, it was noted that sometimes it might be better not to be successful in receiving the funding if the number of partnerships becomes unmanageable thereby lessening the ability of those involved to devote the time and effort needed to carefully develop the relationships. If projects become too large, partners get out of touch, and the sustainability factor diminishes.

(2) This study demonstrates that collaborative relationships are needed to create win-win situations. The interests of academic researchers and community partners should align to foster mutual benefits on behalf of all involved. Participants will be less likely to invest time if they feel they are not getting anything out of the partnership.

(3) A recurring theme in this study was that academic researchers and community partners exist in "different worlds". Organizational demands create very different realities for these participants. Practitioners want immediate answers to "real world" problems, while academics are bound by the rigor of the university which means that finding those answers takes time. Repeatedly, academics and practitioners admitted they needed to have a greater empathy for each other's worlds to help foster sustainability of partnerships.

(4) In order to grow relationships, time is needed to build trust and respect. Multiple participants concurred that perhaps such projects should be longer than five years to give ample time for relationships to grow.

(5) Strong leadership in both the university and community organizations was noted as being an important element in partnership development. This finding is in line with the work of Hall and Tremblay (2012) who contend that successful collaborative research requires strong leadership. As a number of participants pointed out, leaders in both the universities and community groups need to view collaborative research as important and lead the charge for it. At a university level this means leadership at the faculty level to foster collaborative research, but it also means leadership at the university administrative level so that collaborative research becomes valued in setting promotion and tenure policies. Otherwise, there are few career-oriented incentives for academic researchers to engage in such collaborative processes. The SSHRC representative maintained that strong leadership is needed in order to manage and facilitate relationship-building. Building relationships is an investment of time that can have huge payoffs. This emphasis on relationship-building in a respectful, trusting environment echoes the work of Burns (1978), O'Toole (1995), Kouzes and Posner (2003), Sheppard et al. (2009), and others.

(6) Even within a five-year time limit, study participants agreed that there needs to be succession planning that occurs so that a research project does not fade away when new players enter the leadership role. This finding is in line with the work of Hall and Tremblay (2012). In many instances when someone new

comes on the scene there is a tendency for them to want to put their mark on the position, and they may not feel ownership of the projects of their predecessor. This study demonstrates the need for buy-in from all participants, but in particular from individuals who come to the partnership after it is in progress. It is important to note, however, that buy-in is extremely difficult to achieve from individuals who join a partnership late. In this study, in one particular instance, despite multiple face-to-face meetings with an individual in a new leadership role, and other attempts to develop a relationship with that individual, buy-in was never achieved, and that partnership essentially withered.

(7)   Level of engagement was repeatedly described by study participants as an important factor in determining sustainability of community-university partnerships. Ownership of the project by both academic researchers and community partners makes a difference. If participants are not engaged or engaged at a minimal level, collaboration will not be front and center, hence the success of the project can be at risk.

(8)   Effective communication was identified by both academic and community partners as a necessary component to a successful relationship. Like any relationship, true dialogue where participants feel at ease to express their concerns is crucial, so that issues can be dealt with and resolved collaboratively. The facilitation of continuous communication, particularly when individuals move in and out of jobs, is essential so that the continuity and spirit of collaboration are not "lost in the shuffle". Furthermore, creating means of continuous partner input would be useful. This finding parallels the work of Senge (2006) who describes

team learning in terms of mastering the practice of dialogue and discussion. In

true dialogue, topics that otherwise would not be discussable become

discussable, due to the development of a deeper listening process.

(9)   Participants in this study noted that the natural synergy created in positive

relationships can be a contributing factor to ongoing sustainability of partnerships.

But this natural synergy requires much nurturing to grow and develop into its full

potential. Creating opportunities for partners to explore, share, create, and

ultimately move forward in a synergistic manner is an important part of

collaborative research. This does not happen without finding the "right fit"

between university researchers and community partners where trust has been

ever so carefully moulded and developed with a significant investment of time.

To determine best fits for research alliances, university researchers and

community partners need to communicate their research interests. Several

academic researchers and the SSHRC official spoke about the alignment of

mutual interests. One way to help align university researchers with community

interests is through knowledge mobilization units. Several academic and

community partners referenced knowledge brokers as being a useful bridge

between academics and community partners to foster and grow partnerships.

This finding corresponds with the importance Senge (2006) places on personal

and shared vision. As Senge (2006) explains, a shared vision is not shared until it

connects with the personal visions of people throughout the organization. Shared

visions take time to emerge, and they come from ongoing conversations where

people listen to each other's personal visions and co-create a sense of what is possible.

(10) Participants stated that after alliances have been decided, there should be sustained dialogue to discuss what collaborative research is, and is not, so that everyone is on the same page in terms of involvement, roles and responsibilities, expectations, and deliverables. It is clear from the results of this study that dealing with how disagreements will be handled should be a key element of this dialogue. Furthermore, partners need to spend time conversing about their different organizational contexts so that they come to a better understanding of each other's realities. Such dialogue goes a long way in building trust and longevity in a relationship. As several study participants explained, ongoing open dialogue between partners should continue so potential issues are explored and hammered out. The importance of continuously reflecting upon and learning from the research process was also noted. These findings correspond to the work of Banks and Armstrong (2014) who postulate there should be greater focus on collaborative reflexivity in community-university partnerships to enhance learning from the research process. Additionally, these findings are consistent with the work of Senge (2006) with respect to mental models. Senge (2006) contends that organizational members need to be given opportunities to explore their mental models that "are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (p. 8).

An effective way to achieve this dialogue is through face-to-face meetings of key stakeholders. Several participants noted that much more can be gained from a face-to-face meeting than through an email since it allows partners to cut to the heart of issues. Some participants maintained the time it would take to deal with an issue in a face-to-face meeting may be much less than through email, and there is greater opportunity for rapport building.

(11) One way of enhancing communication between partners is the development of memorandums of understanding. Such upfront agreements were clearly identified by a number of participants as having a valuable role in the sustainability of collaborative research since they provide clarity of purpose, objectives, and deliverables. Memorandums of understanding are applicable at both the macro and micro levels of community-university alliances, meaning that protocols can be developed between principal investigators, co-investigators, and community partners outlining roles, responsibilities, and governance. Similarly, protocols can be established between university researchers and community partners to discern purpose, outcomes, and deliverables. Discussions need to be held, at the outset on a range of matters, including the thorny issue of how the publishing of unfavourable results will be handled. While it is recognized that memorandums of understanding are extremely valuable in community-university partnerships, it should also be noted that they can be very difficult to establish. At the beginning of a partnership when participants are very enthusiastic, it can be difficult to forecast what the mood may be in year three or four of the project when the initial partners may have moved on, and new partners have taken their

place. Similarly, in the initial phase of the partnership it can be difficult to know exactly what to include in a MOU. It was suggested by some participants that MOU templates could be developed by national funding agencies such as SSHRC to make the process more user-friendly. This finding regarding the importance of memorandums of understanding echoes the work of Hall and Tremblay (2012), as well as Sandmann and Kliewer (2012).

(12)   A number of participants highlighted realistic expectations as an important feature in sustaining relationships. These expectations, of course, should be clearly communicated from the outset of the project. Both academics and community partners alike agreed that expectations need to be determined from the start so that neither feels let down by incongruent expectations of what they hope to gain from the partnership. A better understanding by all partners of what research is, how it is conducted, and what can be accomplished may help lead to more realistic expectations.

(13)   Advisory committees were noted by some participants as another mechanism to keep communication flowing between university researchers and community partners. Regular committee meetings facilitate ongoing discussions so that long lulls in communication exchanges are less likely to occur. This is particularly beneficial for those academics who may be less inclined to have informal discussions with partners.

(14)   Several participants explained that moving beyond the normal means of dissemination could contribute to the success of research alliances. By employing such modes of communication as blogs, YouTube, and the like, the

research can appeal to a much wider audience. The engagement of communication officers at universities, whose role is to diffuse this information in various formats, was viewed as extremely important by several participants.

 (15) Financial support is a key element when looking at the sustainability of collaborative partnerships. This was pointed out by many of the participants in this study. In order to carry out effective research, monies are required to hire research assistants to help conduct research, provide release time to participants to engage more readily in the research, and disseminate results. While some economies can be realized by scheduling face-to-face meetings so that they piggyback on other meetings or conducting meetings via the use of technology, core funding is a necessity if the research is to be successful.

(16)   A key lesson learned by the principal investigator from this research is the necessity of a project manager for larger research alliances. Without such a position the day-to-day operations of the project could become lost. The SSHRC official echoed this observation. The PI recognized that with all the academic teaching and other faculty responsibilities, there was little time left for the daily management of the project. This, coupled with the fact the PI had no experience with large budgets, made the decision to have a project manager with accounting experience a very wise choice. The project manager was able to liaise with the university financial services to determine the best way to administer the budget for promotion and tenure purposes of academics, as well as identify opportunities for leveraging funds. The project manager also played a crucial role in the day-to-day management of projects.

(17)   A number of participants in this study pointed to the need for a clearinghouse agent or knowledge mobilization unit as a means to connect academic researchers and community partners. Making connections takes time and is hard work. Having an organization to be able to assist with such connections could strengthen partnership foundations building alignment of interest, trust, and respect. While a knowledge mobilization unit was a partner in this community-university research alliance, it was acknowledged that there may have been a missed opportunity, and perhaps a bigger role could have been developed in the proposal for its involvement.

(18)   Another essential learning identified by both the PI and the project manager in this study was the importance of attending a national orientation meeting hosted by the national granting agency. This was viewed as extremely beneficial as it gave these individuals an opportunity to share experiences, discuss similar issues they were encountering, and navigate these circumstances.

(19)   Findings of this study suggest that if collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement are to be successful, changes may be necessary in university promotion and tenure policies so that it is more inclusive of community engaged scholarship and the types of engagement that entails (i.e., multiple authored papers; non-traditional methods of dissemination). Without such changes, it is completely understandable why academics would be very reluctant to engage in such unions.

In conclusion, collaborative research, by its very title, implies collaboration amongst its participants. The engagement of academics and community partners in collaborative research should mean that all are equally engaged in all aspects of research, thereby creating a sense of ownership. Partners can help formulate research questions and contribute to the creation of the research design. Researchers can gain significant support if partners assist in the data collection. Partners can provide insight in the analysis and interpretation of the data. Several academics and community partners in this study indicated that they did not think that the research agenda was driven by partners' needs, but rather by academic interests. This is problematic when considering the sustainability of collaborative research since it does not afford ownership to all participants.

Finally, tough decisions may have to be made regarding who to include in the project. Some individuals vying for participation may not espouse a collaborative philosophy. As several participants noted, lack of buy-in from either academics or community partners can sabotage the success of the project. Therefore, for optimal sustainability to occur, participants need to be fully committed to collaborative research, aware of the many challenges it may pose, but also fully knowledgeable of the many rewards that such arrangements can offer.

Implications

This study examined collaborative research by examining an actual collaborative research project, and by interviewing the principal investigator, academic researchers, community partners, the project manager, a

representative from a knowledge mobilization unit, a representative from a grant-funding agency, and a graduate student. It is neither possible nor desirable to generalize from such a small sample. However, the study does provide detailed descriptions of the value, as well as the challenges of collaborative research, grounded in specific examples. It is hoped that readers will be able to make their own links between the experiences of those whose ideas were used in this study and their own specific contexts. There are implications for all those interested in collaborative research. Implications will be divided into five parts including implications for: principal investigators, academic researchers, universities, community partners, and grant-funding agencies.

Implications for Principal Investigators

Principal investigators are in a difficult position when trying to manage a large scale community-university research alliance. From the outset there are hurdles that must be navigated when applying for this type of grant. On one hand PIs want to strengthen their funding application by having strong academic co-investigators in the alliance. On the other hand some potential co-investigators may not buy into the concept of collaborative research. Principal investigators are then faced with a dilemma. Do they allow the academic researcher with very traditional approaches to research to remain in the alliance and hope they will develop more collaborative skills, or do they exclude such individuals? How does one address the problem of researchers who want to be a part of the project, but once the grant monies are awarded return to an isolationist orientation? How does the principal investigator ensure that academic researchers continue to

engage community partners collaboratively throughout the project? This study illustrates why principal investigators must be prepared to make some tough decisions. While the grant application may be strengthened by adding strong academic co-investigators, including individuals who do not buy into the collaborative approach to research places the integrity of the project at risk. Principal investigators may need to be prepared to have some difficult conversations with colleagues if they find that researchers revert to traditional methodologies that lack community partner engagement.

In a similar vein, the involvement of community partners in this study illustrates the need for principal investigators to manage the level of their involvement. Due to the "different worlds" that academics and community partners live in, some community partners might not be interested in all the minute details of research or have the time or resources to engage in all aspects of the research (Flicker & Savan, 2006). What level of involvement is too little from community partners? Following Stoecker's (1999) lead, principal investigators might be best to determine the level of involvement that community partners are comfortable with, while still ensuring authentic community engagement. Striking a balance in this regard could be a determining factor in promoting successful community-university partnerships.

Another area of consideration for principal investigators is the size of the project. While involving a large number of participants in the project may at the outset strengthen the application, careful thought should be given to the manageability of the partnerships. The more participants involved, the greater

the potential for relationship problems to arise. Minimizing the number of partnerships may, in fact, contribute to the overall success of the alliance.

Managing the day-to-day operations and particularly the finances of such a large partnership can be a daunting task for the principal investigator. This study suggests the necessity in the application process for a project manager to be factored into the disbursement of grant monies. The project manager has a key role to play in moving the projects along, communicating with researchers and community partners, and liaising with university financial administration.

In an effort to attract academic researchers to such collaborative ventures, it is clear from comments from faculty researchers, they need to be given credit for their share of grant money. In that way, academic researchers can include these grants on their individual curriculum vitae. This is especially important in universities where traditional models of promotion and tenure exist (i.e., the "publish or perish" model). Without such an arrangement, it is unlikely that academics would participate in such alliances as they are somewhat inconsistent with these traditional constructs. This especially holds true for new academics hoping to establish their careers.

Once awarded funding for a university-community alliance PIs should attend any sessions offered by the grant-funding agency to better prepare them for what lies ahead in the partnership. These sessions are extremely beneficial for the principal investigator, project manager, and other project members since it provides an opportunity to learn from other principal investigators around the country, bring questions to the table, and develop a support base for the

experience. Moreover, affiliations with successful national and global networks such as Community-Based Research Canada (CBRC) and the Global Alliance for Community-Engaged Research (GACER) could provide increased opportunities to learn from other community-university partnerships, for knowledge exchange, and even encourage the development of future research collaborations.

To increase the success of community-university partnerships, it is crucial that principal investigators possess strong collaborative leadership qualities. Collaborative leaders practise transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 2007); have a strong personal vision (Senge, 2006); are leaders of leaders (O'Toole, 1995); can facilitate distributed leadership (Spillane, 2004, 2005a, 2005b; Spillane et al., 2003); are boundary spanners (Coldren & Spillane, 2007); possess good listening skills (O'Toole, 1995); and exhibit system thinking skills (Hall & Hord, 2006; Senge, 2006).

Building a culture of collaboration is a key element in demonstrating collaborative leadership qualities. Principal investigators, with a strong understanding of organizational culture, can create structures to promote a collaborative milieu. Senge's (2006) five disciplines (personal mastery, shared vision, mental models, team learning, and systems thinking) provide a useful framework to develop these collaborative structures.

Firstly, in order to successfully undertake such a large partnership the principal investigator will need to be completely committed to the philosophy of collaborative research. The road to successful partnerships can be long, and there will be many obstacles, but at all times the principal investigator remains a

role model helping to grow and foster community-university partnerships.

Secondly, the principal investigator should recognize that participants come into

the partnership with varying understandings of, and commitment to collaborative

research. As the principal investigator, it is important to provide opportunities for

participants to explore their beliefs and values regarding collaborative research

(articulate mental models and develop personal visions). Likewise, creating a

trusting environment where organizational members feel safe to raise questions

and resolve issues collaboratively as they move forward in the partnership to

reach their mutually beneficial goals should be a priority (building team learning

and creating shared vision). These opportunities for dialogue need to be frequent

and ongoing so that participants never feel "out of touch" with their partners, or

the project as a whole. By engaging in true dialogue, partners develop a deeper

level of trust and a better understanding of each other's points of views which are

essential in developing a space where university researchers and community

partners can co-create knowledge. This investment of time will have huge payoffs

in the development of organizational shared vision and systems thinking. As

Senge (2006) contends, a shared vision is not shared until it connects with the

personal visions of members throughout the organization.

Principal investigators also need to be very cognizant of the power

differentials that exist in community-university partnerships. To claim otherwise

would be foolish and self-defeating. To the extent possible, structures should be

implemented to equalize the balance of power. Governance structures based on

consensus decision-making and the establishment of memorandums of

understanding are essential to maintain a more equitable distribution of power. Additionally, establishing memorandums of understanding upfront that deal with how difficult situations will be navigated help build trust and respect, and create realistic expectations. It is much easier to deal with differences of opinion in an abstract manner before they actually occur than to deal with them when emotions run high. For example, the ethical question of publishing unfavourable findings to the community should be discussed in advance so that if such a situation occurs it is easier to manage. Similarly, having such discussions upfront lessens the likelihood of an individual feeling let down if their expectations for compensation (i.e., course remissions, funding for conferences, monetary recompense for participation, additional research in exchange for funding capital, etc.), are different from what they thought was promised them.

Another issue that warrants discussion is how principal investigators should deal with the lack of continuity in participants. Given the length of community-university partnerships which can last for several years (in the case of this CURA it was a five-year partnership), it is entirely reasonable to expect that there will be some turnover in participants. Some individuals go on to new jobs, other members retire, and the like. It is imperative that the principal investigator consider a plan for engaging new participants when there are changes in the partners. Individuals who come to the project after the fact need to be brought up to date; but the more arduous task is how to ensure new participants have input into the project to help create ownership. Succession planning should be an integral part of any community-university alliance such that emerging leaders in

the respective organizations are nurtured, as well as further developing the trust between institutions.

Implications for Academic Researchers

Collaborative research is hard work, taking much time, effort, and commitment and requires a strong commitment to its philosophy (personal vision). It is essential that co-investigators espouse the belief that the knowledge co-created in such community-university partnerships is valuable. It is not sufficient to say that one will adopt a collaborative philosophy, and then resort to traditional methodologies, abandoning the community engagement aspect.

Finding the "right fit" between academic researchers and community partners is an important feature that can lead to successful collaborative research relationships. Consideration should be given to personalities and work style before committing to working together. Once the partnership is decided, building up those personal relationships takes time and financial support. Of course, if an academic researcher already has an established working relationship with a community partner, this can be an asset in continuing and growing the partnership.

Like the principal investigator, academic researchers should be aware of the power differentials that can exist between universities and community partners. Seeking partner input through the establishment of advisory committees, and using a shared governance model in research projects, can help to keep the balance of power more equitably distributed.

Establishing means for ongoing communication with community partners is an absolute necessity. Whether this is through formal sub-committees that meet regularly or informal chats over coffee that allow partners to "check in" on the project, frequent and ongoing dialogue helps build trust and respect. It also keeps the momentum of the project alive so that interest does not wane or communication lulls occur. Equally crucial is developing a better understanding of each other's worlds, that is, the world of academia and the practitioner's world. Academics live in a world where research must adhere to a very rigid, systematic approach. Practitioners live in a world where they want immediate answers to guide their practices. Forging more empathetic views of each other's worlds can lead to increased collaboration. For example, academics may need to recognize that the organizational component might best come from the academic world in order to better facilitate the participation of community partners.

Due to the nature of university promotion and tenure policies that favour single-authored papers in peer-reviewed journals rather than co-authored reports, engaging in collaborative research for new academics comes with a cautionary note. New academics hoping to advance their curriculum vitae need peer-reviewed articles. Therefore, engaging in a community-university partnership (where there would be expectations for research dissemination in forms that may not always count for advancement in the university) can be problematic. Academics need to be aware of the promotion and tenure policies at their particular university to determine if community engagement is supported in policy and practice. In universities where traditional promotion and tenure policies

remain, it may be best for new academics not to be involved with community-university research alliances in the proposal writing stage. Senior academics may have a role to play in this regard by inviting new academics into collaborative projects with community partners once funding has been secured. Creating such a mentoring project could be beneficial in the long term since there is an added person working with the community partner and, therefore, more of a likelihood of ongoing engagement with the partner. The downside is that senior academics may be reluctant to share research funding.

Implications for Universities

This research suggests a need for universities to re-examine ideas, platforms, and conventions around knowledge production which has caused some disconnect between universities and community organizations over the years. A wider recognition of the different sources of knowledge creation and expertise should be part of this re-examination. Community partners possess expertise in the field and, as such, have an important role to play in the creation of knowledge. Universities need to look inward and outward to better deliver their mission of service to the community. In a world of increasing accountability for the use of resources, it is imperative that universities remain relevant by staying in touch with the needs of society. If universities want to become sustainable, they need to demonstrate to the community that what they are doing is having a positive effect.

Scott (2007) and others (e.g., Munck et al., 2014) suggest that universities are becoming more accepting of collaborative research as a valuable way of

doing research. However, this enthusiasm for collaborative research often stops short of its inclusion in institutional promotion and tenure policies. In many universities, community-university partnerships are viewed more in the realm of public service, volunteerism, or community outreach. This can negatively impact the level of financial support community-engaged scholars can leverage for their community-based projects. More work needs to be done in closing the gap between university mission statements that call for community engagement and university policies and practices that may inadvertently work against engaged partnerships. To become sustainable, engagement will need to become a part of the very fabric of universities, thereby integrating it into all key institutional processes.

Administrators at universities have a major role to play in advancing collaborative research in universities around the world. If universities are to get serious about collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement, then this study suggests they need to change their way of doing business. As Scott (2007) posits, university leaders must learn to "walk the walk as well as talk the talk in leading engaged institutions" (p. 4).

At the university organizational level it means engaging in true dialogue on engaged scholarship; making the scholarship of engagement a priority in the academy; changing promotion and tenure policies to be more inclusive of community engaged scholarship (multiple authored papers and varying methods of dissemination need to be included); and creating support mechanisms (through research funding and institutional supports) for increased collaboration

within faculties, across faculties, and between universities and community

partners. Universities can foster an organizational culture in which the vision of

community-university partnerships can grow and be fostered. Without such

changes, academics, and in particular new researchers, will be reluctant to

engage in such activities which may yield a limited return on their investment of

time towards career advancement.

How does community engagement translate at the ground level at

universities? First of all, Scott (2007) argues the scholarship of engagement has

to become a core value of a university's academic mission and be a key element

in its strategic plan. The university's leaders need to take a lead role in realigning

the university's culture with community engagement. Deans and faculties should

be starting conversations on the scholarship of engagement so that terms related

to engagement are understood across and within universities. Consideration

should be given to what this scholarship will look like in the different disciplines

since community engagement in the pure disciplines may look different than in

the applied disciplines. For some faculties, this may mean starting at the basics

with some related professional development. A culture of collaboration can be

cultivated starting small, growing both inwardly and outwardly. A more engaged

university can be created by encouraging dialogue among diverse populations

(governing bodies, students, community members, etc.) to educate individuals

about collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement. For example,

experts on the scholarship of engagement could be invited to speak on campus.

Furthermore, engagement could become the focus of some university courses

giving both undergraduate and graduate students exposure to engaged scholarship.

Secondly, promotion and tenure policies would have to be recalibrated so that engaged scholars are rewarded for their work with the community and not just regarded as doing good service work with no tangible rewards. As Scott (2007) explains, "how faculty are evaluated and rewarded is the big gorilla in the room when it comes to promoting engaged-community research" (p. 11). Guidelines for promotion and tenure policies should be developed that recognize community engagement as a valued form of research. These guidelines should allow for alternate forms of dissemination than the traditional peer-reviewed journals and include examples of collaborative activities that could count for credit towards promotion and tenure. If peer-reviewed journals continue to be a measure of academic scholarly work, then engaged scholarship journals will need to be recognized in the world of academia (Townson, 2009). Academics engaging in community partnerships should become familiar with journals such as the *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*, the *Journal of Community Engagement and Higher Education,* and others that disseminate research of this type.

Thirdly, to increase the number of engaged scholars at universities, consideration could be given in university hiring practices to attract individuals at all levels of the organization with a demonstrated interest in the scholarship of engagement. While I am not suggesting that everyone should practice community engagement, if it is to be promoted, having individuals committed to

the philosophy of the scholarship of engagement throughout the university could assist in making it institutionalized in the world of academia.

Fourthly, consideration would have to be given to the allocation of university resources for community research partnerships or other forms of engagement (Scott, 2007). Research grants specific to community engagement, release time for scholars to engage in community-university partnerships, and funding to attend conferences with a community engagement focus could be another means of supporting and promoting engaged scholarship. Furthermore, financial support for interdisciplinary university teams working with community partners would be beneficial since this could potentially give researchers working in the pure disciplines access to community partners they may not have had, as well interdisciplinary teams working together could be more equipped to deal with the research issues (Townson, 2009). Providing financial support for community partnerships would send a clear message that the university takes engagement seriously.

Fifthly, to further enhance scholarship of engagement efforts, universities would have to establish dedicated knowledge mobilization units or offices of engagement to connect academics and community partners. The literature suggests such an office of engagement should be linked to the top academic official in the university so that community engagement is a part of the university's academic mission (Scott, 2007). As Scott (2007) points out:

> Such a center needs to be well-connected to the community served by the university and have a good pulse on the community's needs. It also needs

to be skilled at collaborative problem-solving and managing multiple stakeholders. (p. 17)

In addition to being a clearinghouse putting academic researchers and community partners of similar interests in touch, such a unit could serve as a resource with respect to engaged scholarship information (what it is; getting started info; best practices; etc.). The unit could provide training on sustaining community-university partnerships, provide linkages to national and global engagement organizations, and help with seeking external sources of engagement funding. In so doing, universities would be building capacity.

Excellent examples of knowledge mobilization units and offices of engagement doing great work at bringing academic researchers and community partners together in the co-creation of knowledge include the Harris Centre at Memorial University in Newfoundland and the Research Partnerships Knowledge Mobilization Unit/Institute for studies and Innovation in Community-University Engagement (formerly the Office of Community-Based Research) at the University of Victoria in British Columbia.

As President Gary Kachanoski of Memorial University states:

> The Harris Centre plays a unique role in making those connections—unique not only to this university, but also in the country. As these snapshots from around the province clearly demonstrate, the Harris Centre, as Memorial's primary conduit for regional development and public policy, is the bridge to connect faculty, staff and students with the community. These connections enable us all to make this an even better province, and enable Memorial to fulfil its role as a public university serving the public good. (Memorial University, 2014, para.1)

Similarly, Jackson, from Carleton University, referencing the Office of

Community-Based Research (OCBR) on the University of Victoria website,

explains:

> There's no doubt that the OCBR in Victoria has been the prime catalyst of a resurgence of interest in community-based research across Canada, making a significant impact on granting councils, universities and networks of researchers in every part of the country. OCBR has also played an important effective role in taking UVic innovation to the world. OCBR has served as a model for universities everywhere to better organize themselves for productive partnerships with local and regional organizations. (University of Victoria, n.d., para.1)

Both of these examples would be excellent resources to study as models of such

units for other universities.

Finally, Scott (2007) concludes that creating institutional awards to

recognize the success of community-university partnerships would be a step in

the right direction. It is important that such successes are celebrated.

Implications for Community Partners

If university-community partnerships are to continue, then consideration

should be given to the following points with respect to implications for community

partners. First and foremost, this study illustrates the need for community

partners to believe in the philosophy of collaborative research, and that there are

mutual benefits to engaging in such a form of research. Community partners

need to have a clear understanding of what collaborative research is, and what

their role in the partnership will be. This means that if community members are

unclear about a particular aspect of the research, then they need to ask

questions. To enhance clarity of all participants, memorandums of understanding should be developed to clearly define roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

Community partners need to develop a good understanding of the world of academia. As a community partner needing immediate answers to "real world" problems, it may be difficult to understand the very slow moving process of research. Community partners need to understand the rigid process associated with research which takes time. In addition, while research needs may change during the life of the project, it may not be possible to reshape the research agenda so that it changes with the project after a certain period of time has passed.

Consideration should be given in community organizations to succession planning for community-university partnerships. In the life of such projects, it is realistic to assume that individuals may retire or move on to other positions. In order to facilitate a smooth transition to a successor community leader, it is important that organizational members, and in particular emerging leaders, buy into the project. One way this could be achieved is by inviting aspiring leaders to play a role in the partnership so they are aware of the happenings of the project and have input into the direction of the research. This would help build ownership and trust.

Community partners will need to determine their level of involvement with the project. Not all community partners will have the time or even want to be involved in some aspects of the research. Decisions will need to be made to

determine the key parts of the research that will become the focus for their involvement if they are unable to be involved in all facets.

Consideration should also be given to the power differential that exists in such partnerships. If community partners feel that there is an imbalance of power, this needs to be brought to the forefront so that it can be dealt with. For example, if community partners believe the finances of the project are not being distributed in an equitable and fair manner, this should be discussed and resolved at the outset.

Building a trusting rapport with university researchers is an important part of helping to grow and sustain the partnership. Engaging in more face-to-face discussions, and thereby avoiding the need for overly long emails, could foster a more trusting relationship.   Additionally, when feedback is requested, it is important that a timely response is given. Without it, partners may think there is a lack of interest, and alliances can quickly become "out of touch".

Implications for Grant-Funding Agencies

Traditionally certain university faculties such as medicine have been more involved in community-university partnerships. While that trend is changing, and more faculties such as Education and Social Work seem to be applying for and receiving such grants, the grant-funding agencies need to ensure that such funding opportunities are well publicized. In this way, participation becomes more discipline-neutral.

Consideration should be given to ways of involving non-academic community participants in the peer-review process of grant-funding. While it is

recognized that individuals in the private sector may not always have time to partake in these reviews, thought could be given to incentives to attract their involvement. Ongoing discussions are required between the granting agencies and non-academic community participants to determine how such involvement might be fostered.

The importance of facilitating orientation sessions for principal investigators in community-university research alliances is paramount. Such meetings create a space for PIs from around the country to share experiences, learn from each other, and network so they have a support system upon return to their respective organizations. Extending these sessions to not only include PIs, but to include as many participants as possible from community-university partnerships would help to build further capacity. In so doing, co-investigators and community partners might be better equipped to deal with some of the challenges that can arise in such partnerships.

It is essential that funding for student training continues to be a large part of community-university partnerships. As has been gleaned from this study, student training is one of the huge successes of community-university alliances. In fact, I would argue that finding ways to explore further enhancement of student training funding in such projects could have huge payoffs in the development of more community-engaged scholars. More and more graduate programs are churning out graduates by distance education. Distance education affords graduate students the ability to stay at home, to continue working at their jobs, while doing courses that earn them credits towards a graduate degree. Offering

student fellowships in masters and doctoral programs opens up the possibility of

individuals being able to leave their workplaces for a period of time to have a

more immersed graduate experience. Speaking as an individual who has

completed courses both by distance and on campus, I would argue that being

able to attend courses on campus and to participate in the university milieu first

hand is a very enriching experience.

Need for Further Research

This study is based on the findings from 16 participants, many of whom

were involved in a Community-University Research Alliance at one Canadian

University. It is important that researchers continue to document such

community-university partnerships so that those interested in collaborative

research learn about the value placed on collaborative research, the challenges

associated with it, and how to increase the success of community-university

alliances. In this way, academic researchers, community partners, and grant-

funding agencies will collectively be able to better navigate such relationships

and move collaborative research forward to the benefit of all society. Examining

possible differences that may exist depending on the discipline involved in the

research project could also give insight into who is more likely to engage in

collaborative research.

As was identified in the literature review, there is little current research

documenting the views of community partners with respect to community-

university partnerships (Wenger et al., 2011). While this study attempts to

address that gap, it would be useful if further studies continued to investigate

community partner perspectives to better guide future practice in the field of collaborative research.

Many comments were made in this study about promotion and tenure policies hindering the advancement of the scholarship of engagement in universities. Continued research regarding best ways to delineate community engagement in promotion and tenure policies is needed. Exploration of how the scholarship of engagement might be different across disciplines would also be useful to give scholars exemplars of how to proceed. Full recognition of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement in promotion and tenure policies will allow universities to adjust their practices to reflect a more open and engaged institution; one in which student and faculty work has more meaning and social relevance (Scott, 2007).

One of the findings of this study highlights the need for an agent or brokering agency to help bridge the gap and build partnerships between academic researchers and community needs. Research to study best practices of model knowledge mobilization units in universities such as those found at the Harris Centre at Memorial University and the Research Partnerships Knowledge Mobilization Unit/Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community-University Engagement (formerly the Office of Community Based Research) at the University of Victoria could help to establish similar units in other universities.

Conclusions

(1) Value of Collaborative Research Depends on the Individual

The findings of this study suggest that the value of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement depend on the perspective of the participant. For some participants, collaborative research holds much value, while for others it is not viewed as their primary priority. Some researchers welcome the possibility to work with community partners to co-create knowledge, recognizing that both academics and community partners have expertise to bring to the table with the end result being a more enriched product. Other academics find it very difficult to abandon traditional research to adopt more collaborative processes. While they may sometimes engage in such collaborative work to gain access to funding, they do not appear to be entirely committed to its philosophy. Similarly, community partners convey varying levels of buy-in with respect to the value of collaborative research in their organizations. Some community partners value the research produced in collaboration to guide their practice, while others place little value on it. The level of buy-in to collaborative research has a definite effect on the success of sustaining community-university partnerships. Fostering buy-in in those individuals who do not value collaborative research is extremely difficult to achieve.

(2) Collaborative Research Is Challenging Work

Collaborative research takes much time and effort, presenting many challenges in the process. Administrative, relationship-related, cultural, and ethical challenges were highlighted in this study. From an administrative

perspective, it can be extremely difficult to manage a partnership with multiple projects going in many directions and with players who have varying levels of buy-in to, and understanding of collaborative research. Over the life of the project its parameters can change which makes the job of project management more difficult. One of the most challenging administrative challenges is dealing with the changeover of players, and in particular, finding ways to engage these new participants who come to the project after the course of the research agenda has been set. Clarity of expectations can be challenging in collaborative engagement since even when one attempts to delineate protocols upfront, in some instances it is hard to predict what could become an issue several years down the road. Differences in expectations can also be an administrative challenge when individuals expect certain recompense, but do not receive it. This can create mistrust and a lack of motivation to engage further.

Building relationships is hard work, as was clearly delineated in this study. Even the establishment of a mutually agreeable research question can take much discussion, and in the end, the group may never truly settle on a research agenda that is relevant for community partners and meets the rigor of the academy. Ownership is very important in community-university partnerships, and sometimes, due to continuity of partners, changes in partners' work assignments or the like, people may become less committed to the project. Similarly, after the initial phase, participants may return to their comfort zones; for some academics this may mean a return to traditional research where community partners have a lessened role to play. Effective communication was a huge challenge identified

by most participants. When dealing with human nature, differences of opinion, communication lulls, and breakdowns in communication are very real, taking much effort to navigate these muddy waters.

A recurring theme in this study was that university researchers and community partners are situated in two different contexts. With that comes many cultural or organizational challenges. Different organizations have different ways of communicating, and hence the first order of the day in partnership work is sitting down in the same room face-to-face and learning to talk to one another. This, of course, creates difficulties when it comes to the dissemination of the research since community partners are not necessarily interested in peer-reviewed journals (a requirement in the world of the academic if they are to receive credit for their community engagement work). This study clearly demonstrates that academics and community partners really do not have a good understanding of each other's realities which at times can be the root cause of frustration when participants do not understand why the other partner makes certain demands (i.e., community partners needing immediate answers; academic researchers conforming to the rigors of the world of academia which take time). This lack of understanding can also account for differences in expectations. For example, community partners may want to add topics for additional research as the research project moves on, even though the resources may have already been allocated.

Dealing with findings that may not be favourable for community partners creates certain ethical dilemmas. Reporting these findings can break the trust

relationship established between the researcher and the community partner, with the success of the partnership hanging in the balance.

(3) Building Successful Partnerships

A number of factors contributing to the potential success of collaborative partnerships were highlighted in this study (relationship-building, capacity-building, provision of supports, ongoing communication, creation of memorandums of understanding, hiring of a project manager, establishment of an advisory committee, alignment of interests, diverse dissemination, creation of a clearinghouse agent, changes to promotion and tenure, and succession planning).

From a relationship perspective, it is important to establish win-win situations between university and community partners where effective and continuous communication is a mainstay. It is crucial not to underestimate the value of these relationships, and the trust and respect that must underlie them. Participants need to be sensitive to the process, dynamics and interactions. Interestingly, people do not always remember what was discussed at the beginning of the process. The establishment of memorandums of understanding and advisory committees can assist in this regard. As was learned from this study, there may be some resistance to the establishment of these protocols or advisory groups, since some participants may not see the need for them. The creation of a project manager position to help manage day-to-day operations and relationships is a necessity. Limiting the number of partnerships may, in fact, lead to a more successful project. Looking for the "right fit" between partners

where philosophies of interest and research interests align (with a defined focus) could help sustain the relationship. The establishment of knowledge mobilization units at universities, serving as brokering agencies to align partners and assist with growing the partnerships, could be very beneficial. It is important to note that more than five years may be needed to grow sustainable partnerships.

From a capacity-building point of view, this study demonstrates the importance of fostering strong leadership, incorporating succession planning, and the need for ongoing dialogue to help engage participants and create ownership. Availability of supports through time release for both academics and community partners to grow partnerships, and university support through promotion and tenure practices that reward collaborative research involvement can help sustain community-university partnerships. One of the most important implications of this study relates to promotion and tenure policies at universities that need to be adjusted to recognize work with community partners and practitioner focused publications if collaborative research is to succeed.

While including these elements in community-university partnerships do not necessarily guarantee success, not considering these factors in its implementation will likely decrease the probability of sustained collaborative partnerships.

(4) Future Directions for Collaborative Research

Universities have an important societal role to play. As Gaffield (2007) opines, universities can no longer be ivory towers; sole producers of knowledge. By becoming institutions that are more engaged with community partners and

recognizing that there are multiple sources for knowledge creation, universities in partnership with community expertise have the potential to create a transformative effect on society. Momentum is gathering around the world with respect to collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement. With strong leadership in universities and community groups, and the financial support of grant-funding agencies for such collaborative engagement, this interest to better connect research and practice may continue to flourish.

Post Script

I first began my involvement with a Community-University Research Alliance at a Canadian university in the winter of 2004. I had taken a year's deferred salary leave from my principalship and the plan had been for my husband and I to relax (my husband was also on deferred salary leave from his teaching position). That was all great for about the first two months (experiencing my first September in 31 years not being at school), but then I yearned for something more. A visit to the university to express my interest in any work that might become available in research projects led me to the office of the principal investigator of the project studied. What ensued was an amazing experience which spanned from 2004 to 2010. I got to participate first hand as a research assistant and later as a CURA fellow in the various stages of the research process, an experience which surely has been the best professional development and training that anyone could ever receive in preparation for a PhD program. Of course, I was only able to take the leap of faith and return to university some years after my initial experience to work on my doctorate due to the student fellowships offered by the CURA program. Without that financial support I would have never been able to take leave from my job to return full time to university.

When I first began working on the Community-University Research Alliance I had never heard of the terms collaborative research or the scholarship of engagement. In fact, it was not until a few years later that I was introduced to the concept of the scholarship of engagement when Lorilee Sandmann did a presentation at this university. What I soon discovered was that there were many

similarities between collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement, and wondered why the literature for both appeared to be developing in isolation from each other.

When I first began this study there was very little literature in existence documenting collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement, and what did exist was mostly in the field of medicine. In fact, I remember having to go to the medical library on campus to find Minkler's (2004) work on collaborative research. I am happy to report that as my research has continued and spanned multiple years, the literature is growing in the field which undoubtedly will help to shape the future of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement.

One of the things that I noted when I spoke to participants of this study about collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement was that participants were more reluctant to talk about the scholarship of engagement and preferred to use the terminology of collaborative research. This may be indicative that the term "scholarship of engagement" is not well-known, and therefore, less recognized than that of collaborative research. In this study while I use both terms, collaborative research is perhaps more frequently used than that of the scholarship of engagement.

I take away so many positive experiences from this opportunity to complete my doctorate. The fact that I was able to spend two full years on campus to immerse myself in the world of academia and all that entails has been very enlightening. Having come from the fast-paced world of practice where near immediate answers are required, I struggled, at times, with the slow pace of

making things happen at the university. It certainly gave me a much better understanding of the workings of the university. I also felt that I was able to bring the world of academia and the world of practice more closely together by having the opportunity to teach some educational administration/educational leadership courses. In so doing, I was able to impart my practical knowledge to students and hopefully make their courses very "real" from an administrator's point of view.

At the end of this study I am more committed than ever to the philosophy of collaborative research. For me, relevancy to real world problems is essential. I recognize that knowledge can be produced in multiple forums, that is, the university is not the sole producer of knowledge. Practitioner knowledge is a very valued knowledge, which can vary from that attributed the university. While I am not sure where my career choices will take me next, what I do know is that I am a proponent for "engaged scholarship". I have lived in both worlds, the world of the academic and the world of practice, and for me the two will always need to be connected. I am more aware than ever of the difficulties associated with pulling off collaborative research. Coming into this as an administrator, I did not understand why more alliances did not exist between universities and schools. I now have a better understanding of why that is so. It is hard work! There are many challenges associated with collaborative research, and many factors determine the sustainability of such community-university partnerships.

Appendix A

Interview Protocol – Academic Researchers

1.   What is your philosophy of research? How do you define "successful" research?

2.   What is your level of experience with collaborative research?

3.   How does collaborative research differ from traditional research?

4.   What does it mean to you to be an "engaged scholar"?

5.   Has your philosophy of research changed as a result of your involvement in community-university partnerships?

6.   Have the community-university partnerships you have had with community partners been successful? Expand.

7.   To what extent do you believe community partners value collaborative research?

8.   How involved would you say community partners have typically been in the research design, data collection, analysis of the data, and dissemination?

9.   What is the most rewarding aspect for you when you engage in community-university partnerships? Why?

10.   What are the challenges associated with collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement? Methodological? Ethical? Partnership-related? Administrative? Cultural? What is the most challenging? Why?

11.   What sorts of infrastructure is needed to support more effective knowledge mobilization?

12.   In your opinion, what are some strategies that could be used to advance collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement?

13.   What kinds of capacities, resources and relationships should be fostered to create sustained interaction and collaboration between universities and community partners?

14. What lessons have you learned from your involvement in community-university partnerships?

15. How likely are you to engage in collaborative research in the future?

Interview Protocol – Community Partners

1. Is collaborative research important to your organization? Do you believe in this kind of approach to research?

2. What is your level of experience with collaborative research? Expand.

3. Have the partnerships you have had with academic researchers been successful? Expand.

4. When involved in community-university partnerships, how involved have you, as a community partner, been in the research design, data collection, analysis of the data, and dissemination of the data?

5. What sorts of dissemination activities have you used in community-university partnerships?

6. What is the most rewarding aspect for you when you engage in community-university partnerships? Why?

7. What are the challenges associated with collaborative research? Methodological? Ethical? Partnership-related? Administrative? Cultural? What is the most challenging? Why?

8. What sorts of infrastructure is needed to support more effective knowledge mobilization?

9. In your opinion, what are some strategies that could be used to advance collaborative research?

10. What kinds of capacities, resources and relationships should be fostered to create sustained interaction and collaboration between universities and community partners?

11. What lessons have you learned from your involvement in community-university partnerships?

12. How likely are you to engage in collaborative research in the future?

Interview Protocol – Knowledge Mobilization Unit Representative

1. What value do you see in collaborative research between the community and the university?

2. What are the challenges in making this happen? Methodological? Ethical? Partnership-related? Administrative? Cultural?

3. In your opinion, what is the most challenging? Why?

4. What is the role of the knowledge mobilization unit at this university?

5. What external pressures are on the university to be more "engaged"? Is there an emphasis on scholarship of engagement at this university?

6. What is this university doing to be an "engaged university"?

7. What sorts of infrastructure is needed to support more effective knowledge mobilization?

8. In your opinion, what are some strategies that could be used to advance collaborative research?

9. What kinds of capacities, resources and relationships should be fostered to create sustained interaction and collaboration between universities and community partners?

Interview Protocol – SSHRC Official

1. Discuss the SSHRC vision of increased community-university partnerships.

2. Why has there been this change in the research landscape?

3. What have been the challenges for SSHRC in the development of the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) program?

4. Is the vision of the CURA program valued across the country? Around the world? Expand.

5. Are certain university faculties more inclined to apply for CURA funding than others? If so, why do you think this is so?

6. What have you learned about successful community-university partnerships through the CURA program?

7. How are these "successful" partnerships created and nurtured?

8. How is "successful" defined?

9. What are the challenges associated with collaborative research?

10. What strategies can be used to advance collaborative research?

11. What kinds of capacities, resources and relationships should be fostered to create sustained interaction and collaboration between universities and community partners?

Interview Protocol – CURA Fellow Student

1. Why did you become involved with the CURA project?

2. What is your level of experience with collaborative research?

3. What is your philosophy of research? How do you define "successful" research?

4. Has your philosophy of research changed as a result of your involvement in community-university partnerships?

5. Have the community-university partnerships you have had with community partners been successful? Expand.

6. How involved would you say community partners have typically been in the research design, data collection, analysis of the data, and dissemination?

7. What sorts of dissemination activities have you used when engaged in community-university partnerships?

8. Has the way you approach research changed as a result of collaborative research?

9. What is the most rewarding aspect for you when you engage in community-university partnerships? Why?

10. What are the challenges associated with collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement? Methodological? Ethical? Partnership-related? Administrative? Cultural? What is the most challenging? Why?

11.   What sorts of infrastructure is needed to support more effective knowledge mobilization?

12.   In your opinion, what are some strategies that could be used to advance collaborative research?

13.   What kinds of capacities, resources and relationships should be fostered to create sustained interaction and collaboration between universities and community partners?

14.   What lessons have you learned from your involvement in community-university partnerships?

15.   How likely are you to engage in collaborative research in the future?

Appendix B

Research Study – Letter of Introduction

September 15, 2009

Rose Neville (PhD Candidate)
Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland
G.A. Hickman Building
St. John's, NL
A1B 3X8

To Whom It May Concern:

I am conducting a study to examine the challenges of collaborative research and the scholarship of engagement on academic researchers. The extent to which community partners value community-university partnerships will also be sought. The study is being conducted through Memorial University of Newfoundland and has been reviewed and approved by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR). This letter of introduction will explain the focus of this project and your possible role, should you wish to participate.

In recent years there has been a widespread interest to better connect research and practice which has resulted in a changing research landscape. Proponents of this new research topography advocate increased collaborations between university researchers and the community.   Broadening the traditional views of scholarship, these advocates argue that university scholarship must move from being a uni-directional approach of delivering knowledge to the public to become a reciprocal, two-way interactive model. As a result, the concepts of scholarship of engagement and collaborative research have been gaining currency. This vision of increased community-university partnerships is echoed in the Community University Research Alliance (CURA) program from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). While some study has been done to document best practices of engaged institutions through the use of collaborative research, there is a recognition in the literature that more needs to be done to determine the true impact of these partnerships. The purpose of this study is to examine the challenges associated with engaging in collaborative research, with a particular emphasis on the challenges for academic researchers to engage in such community-university partnerships.

In this study I will be interviewing academic researchers and community

partner representatives of the CURA project you are currently (or have been) involved in. As a part of the study, I will also be interviewing CURA fellowship students, representatives of the university knowledge mobilization unit, and representatives of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for their perspectives on the challenges associated with engaging in collaborative research. You are asked to provide consent for your participation. Should you agree to participate I ask that you sign this form and return it to me. You will then be contacted to participate in an interview. That interview will be approximately 60 minutes in length and will consist of a series of open-ended questions. The interviewer will maintain notes and will also audio tape the session to ensure that your opinions are accurately identified. This audio tape will only be used by the interviewer in writing the report. Your participation in the study is voluntary and at no point will you be identified. You have the right to refuse to answer any question, leave the interview at any point and withdraw your consent to participate should you become uncomfortable.

Information will be collected in a way to ensure anonymity and all data (including signed consent forms) will be treated as confidential and destroyed five years after publication of the final report.

Your signature on this form (below) indicates that you have agreed to participate in this study and that you understand how information will be utilized. If you have any concerns or questions please feel free to contact me at (709) 944-5556 or by email at rneville@mun.ca.

The proposal for this research has been approved by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research at Memorial University. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at (709)737-8368.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Rose Neville (PhD Candidate)

Participant's Signature   :   Date:

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