

**GENERATION NEXT
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFORDANCE AND THE CAPACITY BUILDING OF A NEW
WORKFORCE IN NORTHWEST BRITISH COLUMBIA**

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to develop a better understanding of the issues surrounding the capacity development of the next workforce in Northwest British Columbia. This project undertook a closer look at the affordances, constraints, and the outcomes of education as they are currently, and identified the pressing demands of multi-billion dollar projects on the horizon.

Research revealed that the outcomes in education were identified as being interconnected by the vulnerability of children as they developed in the early years of life before entering the education system. Some of the strongest indicators of the connectedness between vulnerability and affordances were identified by the affordance of family and time.

The success of human capital development and economic sustainability should be built on the strong foundation of preparedness in education. The outcomes of industry rely on a readily available labour market and this is only made possible by the cohesive cooperation of community, industry, and education partners.

Undertaking a comprehensive review of literature, reports, and statistics provided by Stats BC, this project identified the recommendations for reviews on existing family policies, engaged communication from leadership, and a commitment from industry to become involved in the sustainable outcomes of communities.

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My time in the MBA Program can be attributed to the encouragement and support of several people in my life. I would like to acknowledge the new found friends in my cohort who have shared their experiences and not only taught me a great deal about business but also a great deal about whom I am and what I am capable of achieving. I'd like to especially acknowledge my Father, it was his genuine support, mentorship, and encouragement that has carried me to this place.

This project came about out of a desire to tackle a need not only on the other side of the world but in my children's classroom. We often think of children who are starving and hurting in Africa and so often it is the little girl who sits beside your son that needs a person to reach out with a kind word, a meal, or a smile of support. I am thankful for Dr. Rick Tallman who always evoked the tough questions and made me come to terms that the answer in fact is often found not in others but within our own selves. To quote Dr. Tallman, "It's been this way for a hundred years; it's not going to change." One of the greatest lessons I've learned is that change will happen when we desire it to happen.

I'm thankful for the listening ear and great advice of Dr. Steven Cronshaw and Dr. Bruce Bidgood. These gentlemen always pushed me to ask the next question and to understand how the pieces of the puzzle fit together. I have appreciated that they have held me accountable and that they never expected anything less than my best work.

For my family, I could not have accomplished this without them. For Luke and Ryan, and for my parents, who have been my biggest fans.

Chapter One

Introduction and Overview

The focus of this project has been to examine the relationship between environmental affordances in the home through socioeconomic status as defined by race/ethnicity, gender and employment status and to understand the challenges in applied skill development through education and the capacity to build the next workforce in Northwest British Columbia.

Northwest British Columbia is currently undergoing an unprecedented time of change as defined by industrial development through mining, oil and gas export, and the expansion of the Asia Pacific gateway. This opportunity is not only seized through the development of infrastructure, but the development of human talent as research states, (Stalk and McMillan, 2013)

Thousands of technical workers will be needed to build facilities and maintain operations once the construction phase is completed. Northwest British Columbia is unprepared to handle such employment forecasts that demand this type of workforce as identified by, (Northwest Regional Workforce Table, 2012). Upon further examination of the populations that make up this region we find some of the highest rates in the Province for high school drop outs, single parents, and poor education attainment.

This project has been structured to look at what is causing these concerning statistics to exist in a region where so much potential exists and to examine if enough is being done to build the foundation of healthy homes to increase educational attainment and ultimately a diversified and sustainable workforce in Northwest British Columbia.

There is ample literature and research studies that exist which bring to light the relationship between environmental affordances and long term success in education and the capacity building of regional workforces such as that reviewed by Harper-Anderson. One of the main issues that continued to surface within the research for this paper was the notion of success and values. Success can have many different meanings depending on the desired outcomes of those who have defined and dictated its measurements to be reached, whereas values are reflected in culture. Whether values are taught, learned, or intrinsically within our very being they define what's important and govern the direction of our perceived and real outcomes as identified in literature reviewed, (McInerney and Van Etten, 2002).

Throughout this paper I continued to draw on ideas of success and the adoption of values as they affect the capacity development of the regional workforce, and the culture that defines Northwest British Columbia.

Numerous perspectives can be adopted when evaluating the relationship between environmental affordances and long term predictors of employment success. First it helps to understand the different elements that define affordances which contribute to the overall make up of socioeconomic status. Affordances can be defined as outlined by James Gibson's Theory,

The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill. (Chemero, 2003)

This definition could suggest that affordances could be seen as a resource that the environment provides to evoke a reaction or a desired behavior. A thought to be mindful of would be how are affordances perceived given the value of the desired outcome?

Affordances for the sake of this paper can be highlighted as financial, nutritional, education, physical, and family. Research from this study will also examine the value of one or more affordance as compared to others and how they contribute to desired outcomes.

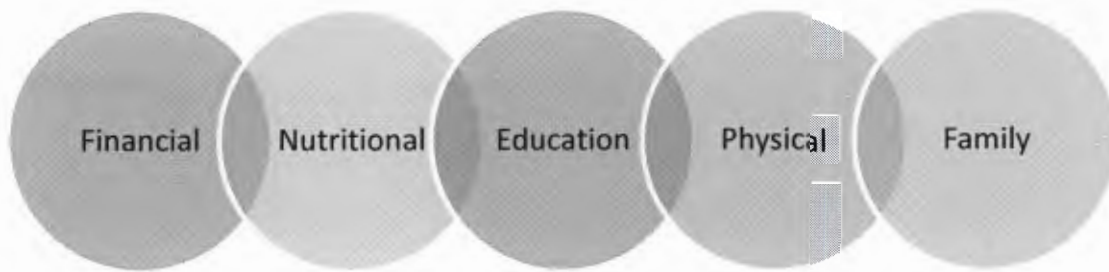


Chart 1 – Affordances Impacting on the Development of Children

Another perspective that can be adopted focuses on perceived values as they relate to affordances. It is not a secret that Northwest British Columbia is steeped rich in the culture of First Nations. So how does that culture and the perceived value of the identified affordances impact issues that surround human capital, a need for education as it affects regional development, and ultimately job readiness?

Research has shown that the values among organizations and individuals must align to achieve desired outcomes that are beneficial for all who are involved. Ideas and perceptions of what works in one region or Province may not necessarily provide the same results in other Provinces, and so new theories and models must be developed to eliminate critical gaps in employment, create engagement in the classroom and build on the idea that the capacity of a successful and sustainable workforce can be created and is critical to positive economic outcomes.

Existing research as indicated below has provided much insight on how environmental affordance can impact the development of children and create preparedness for the classroom.

Literature such as that developed by George Clement Bond goes on to report,

They claim that poverty contributes towards educational failure, not simply because poor children are “culturally disadvantaged” but because their health and nutritional status is inadequate to allow mental development and for the realization of their educational potential. (Bond, 1981)

In response to the demands of preparing children for education, the Province of British Columbia has committed millions of dollars to the Headstart as well as Strong Start programs to strengthen affordances to families and provide the added support to parents who face socioeconomic challenges. The Province of British Columbia also plans to tackle the pending crisis of vacant jobs in the Province through the BC Job Action Plan. The Province of British Columbia recognizes with the vast development of the Asia Pacific Gateway, Northwest British Columbia is poised for unprecedented growth and new economic development will demand thousands of trained skilled workers, (Northwest Regional Workforce Table, 2012).

In the BC Job Action Plan, Premier Christy Clark goes on to say,

As countries around the world struggle economically, British Columbia is using its position of strength to defend and create jobs in every community. The BC Jobs Plan is about building on our advantages – our proximity to the biggest markets on the globe; our sound fiscal fundamentals – to lead our province and country like never before. (Canada Starts Here - The BC Jobs Plan, 2012)

Reports for many years have been submitted warning of the requirement of a diversified workforce and still minimal preparation has been approached for a healthy and holistic economy looking at the foundation of our future, our children.

The purpose of this paper is to identify where some of the critical weaknesses in affordances lay in the home as well as in the classroom and what measurements currently exist to mitigate some of the continued undesired outcomes. Going forward, we look to how we can change the story to achieve the engagement, development, and retention of a new workforce.

Through a detailed literature review, comprehensive analysis of existing Provincial reports, and the help of Statistics British Columbia, and Statistics Canada, the questions to be addressed are as follows,

1. What are the primary environmental affordances affecting successful education outcomes as they relate to Coast Mountain School District #82?
2. Would changes to government policy aid families in the successful outcomes of a child's education?
3. Is the BC Jobs Plan adding up and can Northwest British Columbia close the labour skills gap in time, resulting in sustainable communities for future generations?

The next chapter will take a comprehensive look at the existing literature examining affordances and structures designed to evaluate socioeconomic outcomes. This literature will also provide increased depth to what is going on within the boundaries of Coast Mountain School District #82, and how affordances affect desired outcomes. The third chapter will take a look at how identified affordances influence the success of education. I will examine key performance indicators set by the Province and existing literature that determine if the measurement of success is or is not aligned with objective outcomes of the region through the use of the Early Development Instrument designed by the University of British Columbia with a focus on the populations within Coast Mountain School District #82.

In chapter four I continue to probe for understanding in human capital development. Is there even an awareness of how actions affect the long term outcomes within the communities locally and regionally within Coast Mountain School District #82? If preparations are not being encouraged in the home, whose job is it? What policies exist or need to exist to put structures in place to guide for and achieve the desired outcomes?

Chapter five looks to the existing Provincial research to understand if communities and individuals have done enough to be ready for successful and sustainable employment. What does the BC Job Action Plan outline as indicators of preparedness and how will these goals be accomplished? Is the BC Jobs Plan a proactive approach, or is it reactive, understanding that industry doesn't have time to wait for employees to train and attain the necessary experience to meet project deadlines.

I will also examine regional preparedness; can we fill the approaching employment gaps in Northwest British Columbia? What educational resources exist and are individuals paying attention to the opportunities as they relate to future outcomes. And finally chapter six will look to conclude this study and bring to light the need for not only further research but action as the timing of multi-billion dollar projects now leave little room to get ready through five recommendations.

Chapter Two

Environmental Affordances and Socioeconomic Indicators

Northwest British Columbia stands poised for economic development that would set an unprecedented standard for job development and long term much needed regional infrastructure as identified through the BC Jobs Plan, (British Columbia Government, 2011). Yet when an individual focuses on a global economy within a region that is unprepared it must be asked how a community and region got to this place, what indicators or affordances are lacking, and what are the best recommendations to go from here to get ready?

Literature exists to help define the concept of affordance theory and the understanding of socioeconomic indicators, to establish a framework and current baseline structure so that a path to desired outcomes can be formulated. Research found in the psychology literature suggests that affordances are based as much on perception as reality. James Greeno has brought to light ideas on perception in his article,

Direct perception, which provides information for orientation and locomotion in space, occurs in dynamic interaction with the environment. Recognition, which provides information for identifying and classifying objects and events, is more effective when the observer can accumulate information about the features of an object or an arrangement. (Greeno, 1994)

The idea leaves the question to be asked, based on an individual's perceptions of the environment, what is perceived to be true or important? What holds value based on what that individual has been taught to appreciate or aspire to? Affordances in many cases shape an individual's ability to learn in the education setting and become predictors of their socioeconomic status.

Affordances as they relate to this paper are defined as environmental, family, financial, nutrition, and health. Socioeconomic indicators as evidenced by literature would suggest that those children who are of lower socioeconomic status backgrounds would be disadvantaged in reaching successful outcomes in the classroom as evidenced by, (Bond). We can evaluate each of these variables separately before taking a comprehensive look at the demographic breakdown of Coast Mountain School District #82.

The first affordance we will examine is the affordance of family. The concept of family today is very different from its traditional approach of two parents, one mother and one father. The impact of changes in the family structure is inevitably taking a toll on the perception of security and support of the children in the home.

Research has previously discussed, children who exhibit multiple family and social risk factors, (e.g., low maternal education, welfare receipt, single parent households) fare less well than children experiencing fewer risk factors in assessments of early reading and math skills and general knowledge. (Mistry, Benner and Biesanz, 2010)

This is not to assume that all children will do poorly, but typically many have a higher opportunity of experiencing difficulties academically and socially. The family structure of a single parent often requires additional hours at work to compensate for the lack of resources, thereby drawing time away from assisting with the child's academic outcomes. In many cases the opportunity cost of working in relation to child care may outweigh the benefit thus contributing to a home captured by welfare, restricting the affordances to the family.

In defining the outcomes of family affordance, finances are not the only indicator of an outcome. Often maternal education levels influence the value of education for the child as well as the maternal warmth and the quality of time spent with the child. Previous research has indicated that,

A mother's educational level is related to her children's educational attainment, especially with lower socioeconomic status children. By providing a better home learning environment, stimulating cognitive development, or passing on beneficial traits, educated mothers directly or indirectly promote their children's achievement in school. (Kim, 2012)

It is then a simple transition to understand how financial affordances contribute as a socioeconomic indicator. Financial affordances provide the very foundation to which all else is possible. The physical environment of the home, the selection of the neighborhood, the quality of nutrition, access to healthcare, as well as the opportunity to afford a parent greater time with their child. Children from homes of established finances also typically have greater access to recreational and social opportunities outside of the classroom, thereby contributing to greater cognitive and social development.

The affordance of health and nutrition can be identified as being interconnected as illustrated in Chart 2. Poor nutrition is often witnessed through diabetes, childhood obesity, as well as asthma and heart disease to name a few. Poor nutrition may be attributed to the lack of financial resources to purchase healthier options, but it may also be grounded in the absence of knowledge and understanding of long term health outcomes as they would relate to nutritional decisions in the home, (Currie, 2009).

A report indicated by the Human Early Learning Partnership reveals that,

Social determinants of health are of equal significance for one's health but are less understood. Social determinants, including access to proper nutrition, adequate housing, access to programs and services, adequate income, and other socioeconomic circumstances, can influence early environments and health in substantial ways. (Human Early Learning Partnership, 2012)



Chart 2 – Social Determinants of Health

It has been suggested that human capital development is essential to long term economic success as provided by, (Currie, 2009). Although British Columbia is a Province rich in resources, close attention must be given to the idea that one of the greatest resource is the human resource. Research has indicated that it is the young years of the child that set the stage for lifelong physical, social and emotional development for positive outcomes as an adult. The Human Early Learning Partnership has identified,

The more stimulating and nurturing the early environment, the more positive connections are formed in the brain and the better the child thrives in all aspects of his or her life, in terms of physical development, and the ability to express him or herself and acquire knowledge. (Hertzman and Irwin, 2007)

In order for children to develop they need to be in a safe, healthy and nurturing home. It is after all these children who will grow to be the human capital of tomorrow's workforce.

Now that I have examined some of the affordance-related indicators of socioeconomic status, it becomes important to understand how the Coast Mountain School District #82 is measuring up to the rest of the Province as determined by key indicators provided through Statistics derived in British Columbia.

Coast Mountain School District #82 is made up of the communities; Terrace, Kitimat, New Hazelton, Stewart, Village of Hazelton and surrounding reserve communities for a total population of 34,811 people according to the 2006 Census numbers.

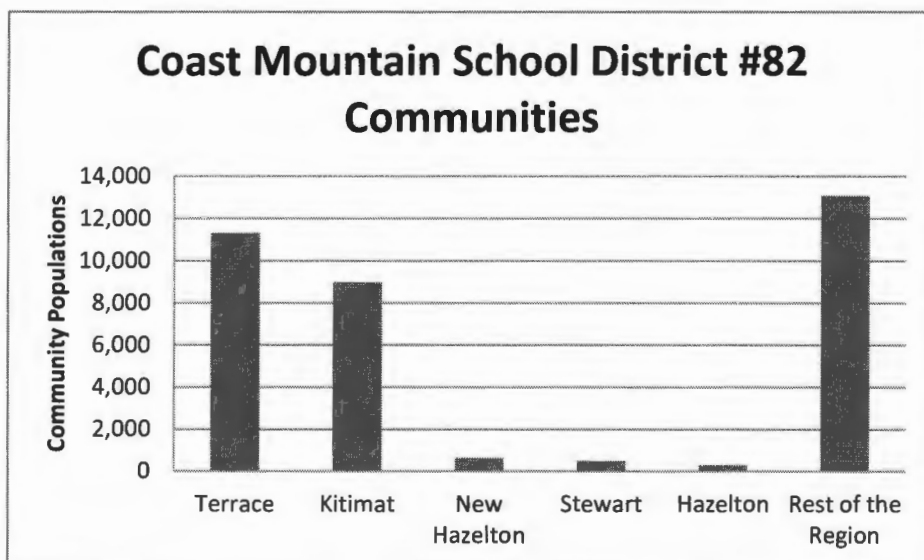
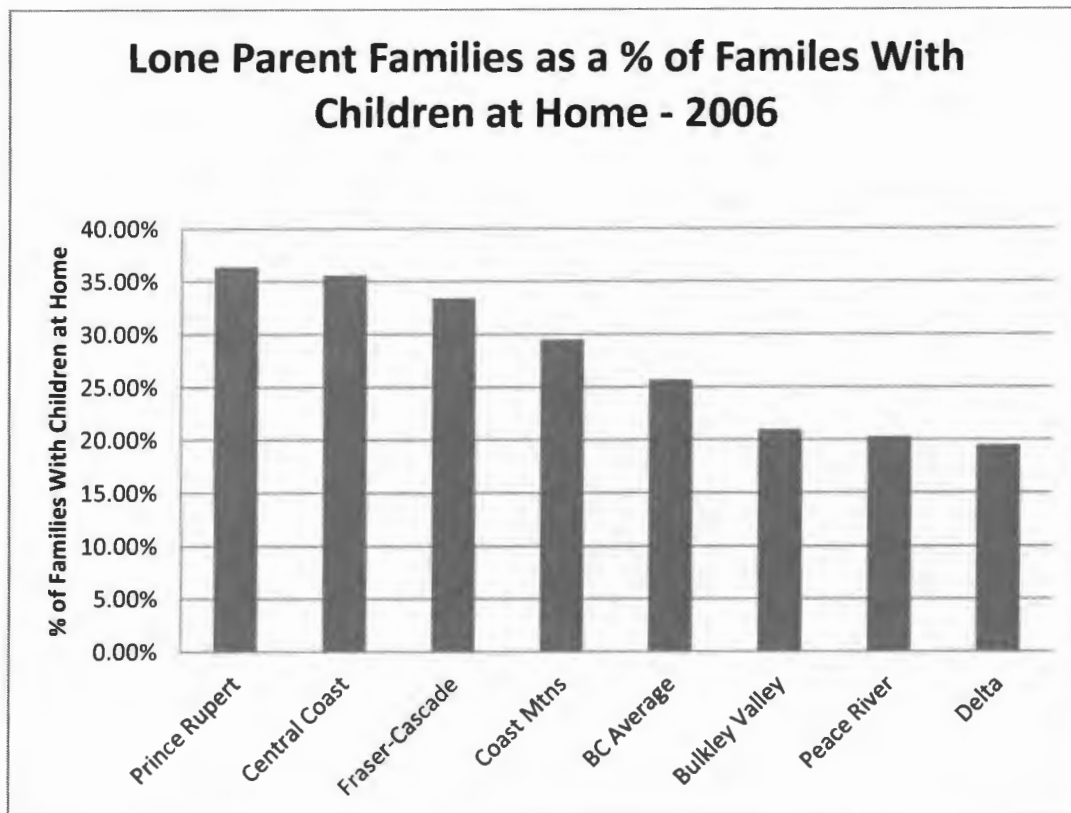


Chart 3 – CMSD #82 Community Populations

(Coast Mountain School District #82, 2012).

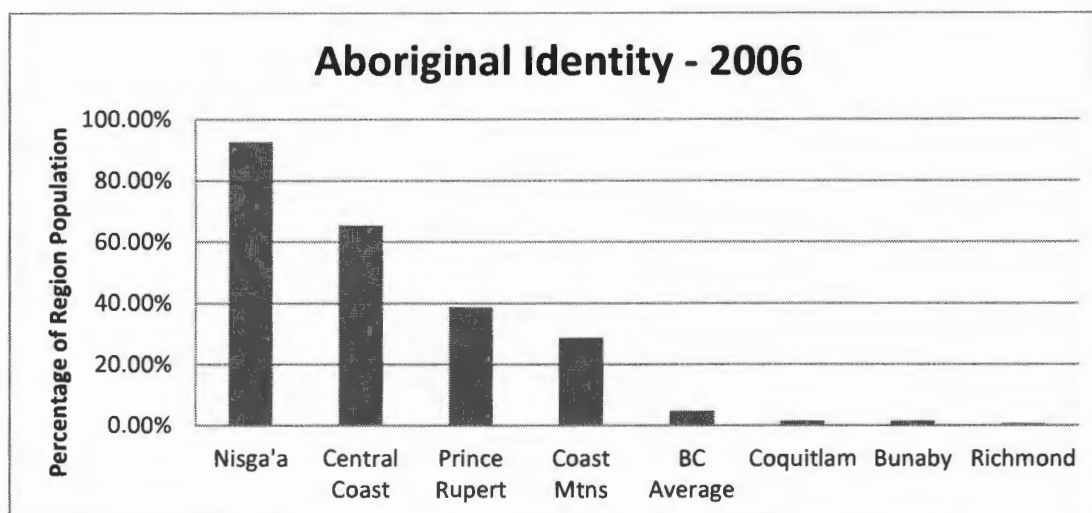
When researching the demographic profile of the Coast Mountain School District #82, several results were revealed that gave indication to challenges posed to attaining the successful outcomes and sustainable development for an in demand labor market as required by new multi-billion dollar projects coming into the region.



(BC Stats, 2012)

Chart 4 – BC Stats, Family Structure

Statistics derived from BC Stats revealed lone parent families with children within the Coast Mountain School District #82 at home equaled 29.5%, ranking close to 4% higher than the Provincial Average with the close neighbor of Prince Rupert taking the top spot at 36.4%. Prince Rupert, Central Coast, and Fraser Cascade represented the highest three averages in the Province, while Bulkley Valley, the Peace River and the Delta region represented the lowest three averages for lone parent families with children at home.



(BC Stats, 2012)

Chart 5 – BC Stats Aboriginal Identity

Aboriginal identity was also of interest at 28.7% compared to the Provincial average of 4.8% ranking the Coast Mountain School District #82 the sixth highest in the Province. This statistic is of particular interest when identifying the perceptions of affordances and the perceived value of education and employment as it relates to industrial development.

Income assistance for persons over the age of fifteen and employable was stated at 2.4% ranking the second highest in the Province within Coast Mountain School District #82.

Within this research it was also identified that 34.4% of single parent families receive income assistance as compared to the Provincial average of 24.9%.

Coast Mountain School District #82 also boasted the fourth highest rate of teen pregnancies in the Province at 60.1 per 1000 women ages 15-19, again compared to the Provincial average of 23.3 per 1000 women.

Now that a review of the statistics has taken place, the question begs to be asked how communities proceed from here? How should a community develop a coordinated regional workforce for the multi-billion dollar projects that are lining up?

Chapter three will take a closer examination of the expected and actual outcomes and success in education within the region. How do the students currently compare according to the rest of the Province, and what are the contributing factors that are developing these outcomes.

Chapter Three

Expected Outcomes and Success In Education

For many communities and regions, the health and vitality of the future hinges on not just one facet but on many different elements. A community plan, capacity building for the future, and as I will examine in this chapter, the health and expected outcomes of success in supporting education systems.

To understand how to achieve a desired outcome, it is important to define goals, values and a shared vision for how to accomplish these objectives. The shared vision of the Coast Mountain School District #82 can be found as,

Coast Mountain School District shall become a high performance rural school district. (Coast Mountain School District #82, 2012)

The mission statement of the school district states that,

Coast Mountain School District supports all learners in a variety of communities and from diverse cultures and backgrounds. Through teamwork and the building of positive relationships we create a fair, respectful and nurturing learning environment. We enable students to experience success, to maximize their potential as educated citizens and to contribute to a changing society. (Coast Mountain School District #82, 2012)

The goals of the Coast Mountain School District #82 can be defined as,

- To raise literacy levels in the district elementary schools
- To increase graduation rates for all learners
- To challenge and engage all students, while increasing their ability to be socially responsible
- To support staff and student growth through professional learning, networking and sharing of wise practices. (Coast Mountain School District #82, 2012)

In order to understand if these goals are being accomplished, it's good to look at what the current outcomes are and use this benchmark as an indicator of future outcomes. Of concern are statistics identifying that the Coast Mountain School District #82 is lagging behind the Provincial average in many categories. The percentage of eighteen year olds who did not graduate as an average between the years 2008/2009 and 2010/2011 was 40% compared to the Provincial average of 27.9%. This statistic is outdone by the Nisga'a School District at 72.1%. (BC Stats, 2012)

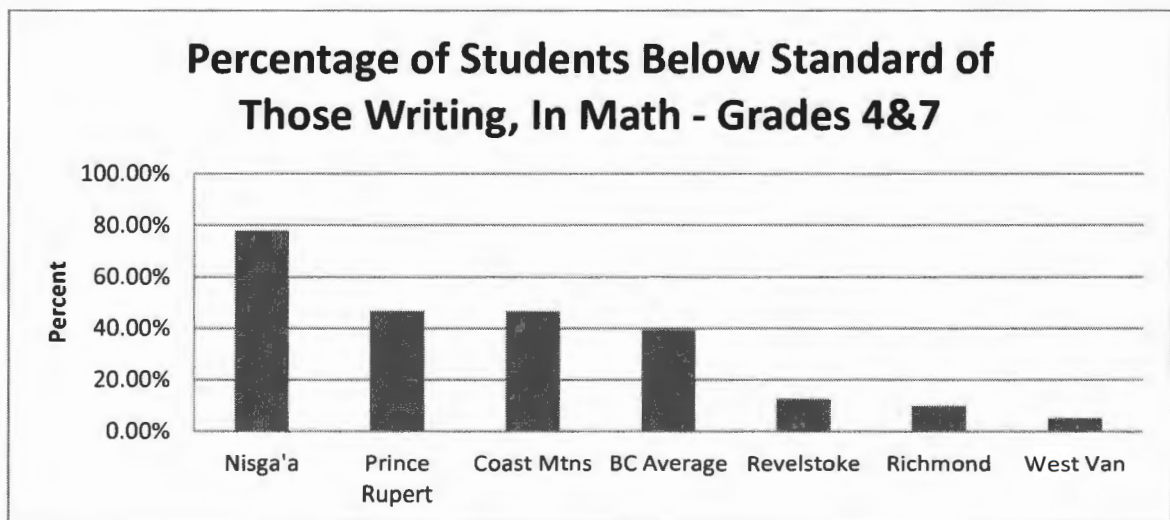
Research as it relates to high school graduation rates and the success of employment identified the relationship between not having a diploma and having less opportunities as an employee as well as access to training through post secondary institutions or access to trade specific training. This wasn't the only negative outcome but the reality that the individual would struggle further financially and be prone to needed assistance. (Lyngsnes and Rismark, 2011)

Within the article, Learning For Vocation Apprentice Participation in Work Practice it also stated,

Research has provided insights into several factors and their interrelations affecting the drop-out rate, and the main findings focus on the identification of characteristics of drop-outs. Social background, gender, ethnicity, previous school outcomes and truancy are found to affect drop-out rates. (Lyngsnes and Rismark, 2011)

In addition to the concerning data of high school students, students who were enrolled in grade ten and did not complete the English Provincial Exam were at 30% in the Coast Mountain School District as compared with the Nisga'a School District at 47.1%. This study ranked the Coast Mountain School District #82 with the 12th poorest ranking in the Province. (BC Stats, 2012)

It wasn't just the high school students that fared poorly, but when it came to the Provincial assessment of youth in grades four and grades seven, in reading, writing, and math, 39.4% of the students were below the standard of those writing and up against the Provincial average of 23.6%. (BC Stats, 2012)



(BC Stats, 2012)

Chart 6 – BC Stats, Test Scores for Grades 4 & 7

When assessing such poor statistical outcomes, it becomes relevant to understand the vulnerability of children and to ask, “Are children ready for the classroom?.”

Are they entering the education system ready to learn and what environments or affordances are allowing that child and ultimately future labor force to be successful?

Research conducted by Pedro R. Portes expresses the importance of preparing children before they ever enter the classroom. He goes on to explain,

By age four, the effects of certain environmental conditions (constraints or affordances) become manifest and predictive of subsequent development and school achievement. The social context or environment surrounding the mind of a young child who scores well below the norm is indicative of marked differences in both the quality and quantity of learning opportunities found across social class as well as differences in the rate at which educational experiences are delivered interactively through peer social class as well as differences in the rate at which educational experiences are delivered interactively through peer and adult mediated experiences. (Portes, 2008)

The study of success in education as it relates to human capital development has been of great interest to institutions who examine the relationships between environment and success. Most notably the Human Early Learning Partnership of the University of British Columbia has worked to connect people, ideas, and communities in understanding the successful outcomes of future generations.

The work of HELP reveals that experiences early on contribute to lifelong development. Experiences both positive and negative contribute to the future outcomes and become predictors of success.

The environments in which children spend their early years have a profound influence on their development and well being. Environments from the most proximal, such as family, to the most distal, such as the social and political, all matter a great deal. Early experiences shape our development as humans. Positive and negative experiences become 'embedded' in the biology of brains and bodies during the early years, persisting far into adult life and influencing our health and well-being. (Human Early Learning Partnership, 2012)

The health and wellbeing of children today, are essential for a sustainable future. One of the great tools that HELP has developed is the Early Development Instrument (EDI). The EDI helps to define childhood vulnerability among communities and provide a baseline for continuous improvement as defined by the successful outcomes in education. (The Human Early Learning Partnership, 2012)

The Early Development Instrument is comprised of a survey asking 104 questions focussing specifically on five areas of development. (Human Early Learning Partnership, 2012) This assessment is achieved with the help of kindergarten teachers mid year after some exposure to the students.

The primary object of the survey is to help determine if students are vulnerable or not based not on the outcomes of the individual but of the populations of communities in turn revealing trends for specific neighborhoods. Vulnerability as defined by the EDI is based on statistics and community population. It takes a closer look at those children who if left without support will endure challenges in school and life into the future.

The EDI tool takes a look at the successful outcomes as defined by,

- Physical Health and Well Being
 - Can the child hold a pencil?
 - Is the child on time for school each day?
- Social Competence
 - Does the child share with others?
 - Is the child self-confident?
- Emotional Maturity

- Is the child able to concentrate?
- Is the child aggressive or angry?
- Language and Cognitive Development
 - Is the child interested in reading and writing?
 - Can the child count and recognize numbers?
- Communication Skills and General Knowledge
 - Can the child tell a short story?
 - Can the child communicate with adults and children?

(Human Early Learning Partnership, 2012)

Understanding indicators of childhood vulnerability can help to build and define programs and policies that contribute to the successful outcomes in the classroom and future labor force as are evidenced within the Strong Start Programs. Once again, understanding current vulnerabilities within the Coast Mountain School District #82 allows for a better understanding of how to position communities and individuals for change.

Data used for the EDI is collected every two years, The Coast Mountain School District #82 has participated in each of the data collection cycles. Results for the data collected on the school year 2011/2012 indicated that students had a vulnerability rate of 34%. This result is an improvement from the previous data which indicated a vulnerability rate of 40%, however this figure is still above the Provincial average of 29%.

The interim EDI report also demonstrates results showing that the highest level of vulnerability is due to physical health and well being with the highest percentage of vulnerable children in

the Hazelton and Terrace neighborhoods while the lowest levels of vulnerable children could be found in the Kitimat neighborhoods.

The Human Early Learning Partnership takes the protection of child confidentiality seriously. The survey itself does not ask for the child's name or address but the birthdate, sex, and postal code and ensure duplicate copies of child data are not kept. Data that is collected for the purpose of research is then stored by Population Data BC, (Human Early Learning Partnership, 2012). The protection of this information is secured by Population Data BC's privacy risk management framework. This framework incorporates such measures as employee training, physical security of files, network security, and secure storage of confidentiality agreements (Population Data BC, 2010).

While taking a comprehensive look at the outcomes of children, community leadership also needs to assess the support structures in place that contribute to successful parenting and preparedness for education. These investigations would allow a better understanding of current situation and desired outcomes going forward.

How does British Columbia compare to other Provinces when it comes to family policies and for whom do these policies exist? When taking a closer look, the vulnerability of children isn't just a low income issue, it's a middle class issue. With both parents working to support the household income, often little time is left to invest in the outcomes of children through a commitment to quality time. I will examine this further in chapter four and take a look at how the Province is structuring support for families and a sustainable economic future.

Chapter Four

Support For Children and Families

As the region reviews its foundations for economic success, it is imperative to look at plans and policies currently in place to support the desired outcomes as defined by education success and job readiness. Is the Province of British Columbia doing everything it can to help raise the next generation and ultimately secure a successful and sustainable workforce?

In the past, many families relied on the father to provide the income for the family. Research shows that both parents are working due to increasing financial pressures in many households (British Columbia Government, 2011). In fact, according to the British Columbia's Changing Families, Family Roots Report more than 80% of women are in the workforce and women's earnings are essential to the economic security of most households, (British Columbia Government, 2011). These changing family structures and dynamics are increasing the need for adequate and affordable childcare.

By looking back in history, it is easily seen that many programs to care for children were developed as a result of World War Two when government support for families was needed due to the Working Woman's substantial contribution to the war effort. These programs for children were initially developed to look after children, and not as much a tool for education preparedness, (British Columbia Government, 2011)

Prior to the initial development of care centres for children, many working women relied on family relatives or neighbors to assist as the women worked outside of the home. Today there are many thousand daycare centres that provide childcare for working parents.

The government has recognized the need for financial supports for parents at work and in many cases subsidies exist for low-income single parents, although some restrictions apply to parents within specific income brackets. Yet little help or subsidy exist for households where both parents are working, thus penalizing the family financially as well as for quality time spent with the family.

Provincial supports for families and children have not just aimed at those parents who are working, but also those who are at home and could use a little extra support. Initiatives include programs such as Success By 6, Childrens First Initiative, as well as the Strong Start Program. By understanding the influence and the availability of these programs within the Coast Mountain School District #82, communities are better able to understand the affordances needed for properly preparing the regions' children for entering school.

The Strong Start early learning program is based on introducing structural supports based in educational affordances to families with children who will soon be entering the education system. Parents and children can have access to positive enriched environments that promote learning and facilitate a greater awareness of potential education affordances in the home, (Ministry of Education, 2012).

There are two types of Strong Start programs offered. The first is Strong Start Early Learning BC. This program is offered within a school and is available three hours a day, five days a week and at no cost to the family. The second program is the Strong Start BC Outreach program. This program is designed to offer similar opportunities for families in rural communities but may operate on a minimum schedule, (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Strong Start BC Outreach programs that exist within the Coast Mountain School District #82 were identified as,

- Suwilacks Community School – Terrace
- Kidala Elementary School – Kitimat
- Thornhill Primary School – Thornhill
- Cassie Hall Elementary School – Terrace

Although these locations can reach many families, limited access to Strong Start BC Outreach programs are provided to the most vulnerable children in the Coast Mountain School District limiting surrounding regions to gain access to Strong Start BC Outreach programs.

The Provincial initiative Success By 6, is a program designed to enhance the social and cognitive abilities of children as they develop between the years 0-6 years old. Success by 6 also contribute funding to initiatives that improve family outcomes such as children's play times, literacy, skills development, and nutrition, (<http://www.successby6bc.ca/>, 2013).

The Success By 6 vision states,

Our vision is of communities where all children in the northwest are healthy, safe and secure, socially engaged and responsible, and successful learners.
(<http://www.successby6bc.ca/>, 2013)

As with the Strong Start BC Outreach programs, the Success by 6 programs offered within Coast Mountain School District #82 did not reach many of the area's most vulnerable children.

The Success By 6 program in the Northwest region provides financial support to,

- Early Childhood Development Coordination, Houston
- Upper Stikine and Skeena Regions
- Atlin
- Stewart
- Kitimat
- Kitimaat Village
- Nass Valley
- Kitsumkalum
- Kitselas

The primary initiative appears to work with predominately aboriginal communities in the northwest region in enhancing learning outcomes of children within these communities.

Unfortunately other clients in the Coast Mountain School District #82 have limited access to this program.

One of the last Provincial initiatives I will take a look at is the Children First Initiative. The Make Children First Network as hosted by its website terracechildren.org aims to provide research and news regarding best practices for families. Unfortunately the website news had not been updated since May 2012 with the last event advertised for May 2011. Although the Children First Initiative aims to connect families with resources within Coast Mountain School District #82 the website link for this program in Kitimat was not activated.

Although many opportunities exist as initiated by the Provincial government of British Columbia, access appears to be marginal and constraints and barriers are limiting successful outcomes.

Two such constraints can be identified as the remote locataion of School District clients and the lack of transportation to school facilites. Many parents may not have access to suitable transportation and weather may be a limiting factor for walking to programs. Another constraint is time. The timing of the programs being offered may not be condusive to the busy schedule of working parents. Lastly, ethnic background may prove to be a barrier. Many programs may be targeted to specific populations, eliminating the opportunities for all families to participate.

Taking into account the vulnerability rates of children within the Coast Mountain School District #82, it becomes apparent that current policies are lagging behind in building and supporting the framework for long term economic success.

Problems with policy management are not limited to Northwest British Columbia, but are recognized internationally as a Canadian problem. UNICEF published a report card of developed countries derived of key indicators that were formulated by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report card is designed to establish benchmarks for issues surrounding childhood poverty, early childhood programs, and education. Research on this issue revealed that among 25 developed countries, Canada ranked in last place for staff training in childcare programs, achieving only one benchmark out of ten. This poor ranking is corroborated by a range of other international comparisons (Kershaw, Anderson and Warburton, 2009).

It is imperative in the immediate future that educations and municipal leaders in Northwest British Columbia provide leadership in (1) defining measurable outcomes for a child and family support initiatives, and (2) developing and communcating metrics on the state of child

and family development in this region. A comprehensive model needs to be developed that will protect our most vulnerable children who at the same time embody our greatest potential for a productive and sustainable economy in Northwest British Columbia.

Chapter Five

British Columbia and the Labour Market, What's the Plan?

British Columbia is situated strategically along the Pacific Ocean as the closest point of entry for growing markets of neighbors in the East with a predominant focus on China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Today more than ever it is crucial that we take a proactive approach to ensure that the labour market is prepared for the future economic challenges and opportunities in Northwest British Columbia.

The Provincial government and Premier Christy Clark have brought together a plan under the report, Canada Starts Here – The BC Jobs Plan that works to identify the competitive strengths of British Columbia, our province's resources and how we will approach economic opportunities going forward.

Within the BC Jobs Plan it states,

British Columbia has what it takes to create good jobs that families can count on. We have abundant natural resources, a highly skilled workforce, a diverse multicultural community and a strong foundation. (Canada Starts Here - The BC Jobs Plan, 2012)

The question remains, do we really have a highly skilled workforce? Do we have the opportunities and the funding for the training we need to be ready, and how are these strategies being communicated effectively on a community level?

The BC Jobs Plan goes on to identify at its core the methods needed for achieving success.

These are identified as,

- Working with employers and communities to enable job creation across BC
- Strengthening our infrastructure to get our goods to market
- Expanding markets for BC products and services, particularly in Asia (Canada Starts Here - The BC Jobs Plan, 2012)

At the very foundation of these developments is a knowledgeable and skilled workforce.

There is not a commitment in the Plan to develop human capital as this is realized in a fundamental investment in improving the financial, nutritional, education, physical, and family affordances of children in Northwest British Columbia. As the analysis in this project shows, this omission by the BC Jobs Plan misses the basic foundation on which a motivated and productive workforce is built: the legacy realized by a substantial investment in the affordances provided to the children of Northwest British Columbia.

The Province of British Columbia has identified several sectors that are vital to future economic growth. These can be highlighted as, Forestry, Mining, Natural Gas, and Agrifoods. The knowledge-based sector encompasses technology, clean tech and the green economy as well as tourism. Infrastructure sectors include transportation as defined by marine, ports and aerospace. International education was also featured within the BC Jobs Plan, even though there are many needs still unmet in the communities of Northwest British Columbia that can be remedied by providing the essential affordances that children must have for their educational and career success.

The BC Jobs Plan goes on to state,

BC's education system is among the world's best and, while we've always counted on it to prepare our children and youth for the future, we've barely begun to tap its potential to support our economic growth. With rapid economic expansion in Asia Pacific countries, more parents than ever before want their children to receive an English language education and we have growing opportunities to attract and retain a higher number of international students. (Canada Starts Here - The BC Jobs Plan, 2012)

It poses an interesting question, why are we focused on attracting students from international markets when our own students are falling through the cracks? Would the Province's goals of economic development be better achieved by providing the financial, nutritional, education, physical, and family affordances to the underprivileged children in Northwest British Columbia who will live and stay in the North and so provide the permanent, stable workforce that the province needs over the long term? The BC Jobs Plan recommends the creation of partnerships to ensure that education opportunities are matched to industrial trends within specific regions of the province. This recommendation depends on educational opportunities being available to Northern residents. As shown in this project, the affordances that would allow children and families to successfully capitalize on educational opportunities are lacking in Northwest British Columbia. Does the BC Jobs Plan hereby place the cart before the horse when asking for education-industrial partnerships?

When identifying the need to be proactive, British Columbia committed to create Regional Workforce Tables as consultative bodies to better understand the issues and concerns around sustainable long term employment as it affects industry, training institutions, aboriginal communities, and local development initiatives among municipalities.

As outlined, the BC Jobs Plan created the Northwest Regional Workforce Table in 2012 in Terrace to drive the readiness of a skilled workforce in partnership with several of the multi-billion dollar projects on the horizon. The primary purpose of the Northwest Regional Workforce Table is to help bring awareness to the pending employment needed and labour requirements as identified in the immediate, medium, and long term timeframes. Goals resulting in the successful outcomes as relating to education and employment were focused on the identification of key economic drivers, newly created labour demands and the training required, (Northwest Regional Workforce Table, 2012). The Northwest Regional Workforce Table continues to evolve, however much information to date has been examined to identify critical gaps that are currently presenting themselves.

It is important that individuals within Northwest British Columbia have access to readily available training in order to develop the skills required to be ready for projects proposed in Northwest British Columbia. As it is currently understood, many projects are poised to begin construction in 2014 as per regulatory approval, leaving an unrealistic timeframe for the development, funding, attainment, and ultimately experience to acquire the skills sets needed to be job ready.

Information gathered by the Northwest Regional Workforce Table helped to identify several challenges and issues going forward as they related to job readiness. These can be noted as,

- Lower skilled people need specific, targeted help.
 - This is noted by the need for upgrading programs and timely communication.
- Need for actions specifically addressed to First Nation's peoples.

- Thoughts were expressed to target training to address the values and culture of first nation's individuals.
- Collaboration is essential
 - Collaboration is stressed as only with communication is it possible to ultimately align desired outcomes with the purpose and direction of communities.
- Shared responsibility.
 - It is up to leadership, individuals and industry to be proactive in developing a new economy for Northwest British Columbia.

(Northwest Regional Workforce Table, 2012)

An additional challenge not yet captured in this report is the need for family support. Would the impact of multi-billion dollar projects contribute to the ongoing issues surrounding childhood vulnerability? As parents go to work long hours and in many cases shift work, who is ensuring adequate resources exist for healthy children? In the push for on time and on budget projects, can sensitivity exist for work-life balance and culture? Can respect for and sensitivity to the value system present in Northwest British Columbia lead to more sustainable and profitable outcomes for the provincial economy?

In order to understand how to prepare for the future, it is of great help to paint a picture of what is to come in terms of employment and economic development so that we can identify opportunities. According to a predicted labour market forecast as identified by the Northwest Regional Workforce Table, multi-billion dollar projects will provide a variety of employment opportunities within Northwest British Columbia. These opportunities can be identified as

employment through trades, labourers, semi-skilled workers, truck drivers and equipment operators, managers, technologists and technicians, (Northwest Regional Workforce Table, 2012).

As previously noted within this paper, the children and youth within the Coast Mountain School District #82 underachieve in Provincial education test results. These difficulties are not only grounded within the classroom but also in the home and family as shown by vulnerability measurements collected in the Early Development Instrument. The industrial partners together with the Province of British Columbia need to ensure that adequate affordances are provided to children and families going forward to ensure negative outcomes in education and ultimately job readiness do not persist within the Region.

Constraints to the successful outcome of becoming employment ready can be linked to the mismatch of opportunities in education as defined by course offerings as well as location when determining the affordance of education as it relates to employment. This is especially true of those from first nation's backgrounds and critical to those projects that have committed to a percentage of Aboriginal participation.

For the benefit of this paper the identification of educational providers in Northwest British Columbia can be noted as but not limited to,

- Northwest Community College
- Kitimat Valley Institute
- Northwest Skills and Training Center
- Wilp Wilxo'oskwahl Nisga'a Institute (WWNI)
- Kitimat Work BC Employment Services Centre
- Skeena Native Development Society

- University of Northern British Columbia.

Campuses for these institutions can be found throughout Terrace, Kitimat, Prince Rupert, The Nass Valley, Smithers, and Prince George. Course offerings among these institutions vary from carpentry, heavy duty mechanics, electricians, labourers, to welders and operators while the Northwest Community College also offers the first two years of a university degree in business, nursing, social work, and general university credits as well as others. Many of these institutions also provide upgrading for grade 12, essential skills training and employment ready services.

The University of Northern British Columbia focuses on an academic track providing course offerings broad in reach in business, science, social work, and environmental engineering to name a few. It isn't merely the offering of the course or program that is critical in connecting students with employment, but co-ops and internships providing much needed experience.

As evidenced throughout my personal experience at the University of Northern British Columbia, there are many opportunities existing to connect coursework to multi-billion dollar projects through the invitation of guest speakers and work internships.

One of the indicators of success to be mindful of, are these educational institutions providing the training that industry requires for employability within the region? This is critical as a starting point in developing a plan going forward.

In order to accommodate the labour demand going forward, several requirements are essential to the success of the institution and the individual. These can be identified as time, finances, flexibility and proximity to the labour market and the industry participant. In making adjustments to educational opportunities, it is imperative to take a holistic approach through

offering a balanced curriculum. Economic sustainability and the development of educational initiatives should not be focused strictly on jobs in the construction sector, but also of the desired outcomes as they relate to other jobs as well. The onus may ultimately fall on industry themselves to provide training for positions however even with training, industry demands experience. Mega projects will wait for no one, as they need to be completed on time. Graduates from colleges in Northwestern British Columbia will need to be job ready.

An underlying issue that is essential to the success of individual's and the industry in Northwest British Columbia is the graduation from high school. With the Coast Mountain School District #82 already lagging behind the rest of the Province with graduation rates, projects can be constrained by the labour market as it relates to training opportunities before a shovel can even hit the ground. On top of this concerning statistic, a limited scope of research exists as to how many of the students who are graduating are looking to stay in the north compared to leaving to go to school out of town and how many of those students will return with the credentials to work on multi-billion dollar projects, leaving room for further research into the subject.

A lack of a high school degree as examined in this paper is the by-product of a much more critical situation facing many young people in Northwest British Columbia. This can also be evidenced through outcomes as identified in literature, (McNeal, 2011). It is the lack of affordances and the perception of realities and outcomes that will guide the students' lives for many years to come. Is leadership doing everything it can to facilitate and understanding of the importance and reality of educational outcomes as they affect employment?

Going forward the Regional Workforce Table has identified three goals it believes to be achievable and attainable. These are stated as,

1. Provide students with a vision of a bright economic future in the region.
2. Help lower-skilled workers upgrade to gain access to construction and operations jobs that major projects will create.
3. Increase aboriginal people's participation in high demand occupations.

(Northwest Regional Workforce Table, 2012)

When addressing goal number one, is painting a picture of a bright economic future enough to attract interest in understanding how a student's life contributes to the successful outcomes of community? Strategic partnerships between the high school, industry and community are critical to making the linkage work. Often this requires a strong sense of willingness, communication and commitment of time and resources on behalf of industry. It is also critical to note, that exposure to advance education opportunities through the trades and traditional post-secondary needs to begin in middle school as this is where the foundation lies in choosing math and sciences for successful high school outcomes.

The second goal indicated, the desire to help lower skilled workers upgrade to gain better employment. This needs to be supported by engaged communication and awareness programs that reach the targeted audience. But why these individuals have not previously upgraded their skills? Does provincial funding exist to help these individuals? Many may not be able to afford to leave current employment positions and pay to upgrade in anticipation of what could be seen as perceived opportunities.

The third goal as identified by an increase to aboriginal people's participation requires sensitivity to the culture and values that define these unique communities within Northwest

British Columbia. Communication, sincerity, an understanding of the outcomes of trust need to be derived in setting industry outcomes that allow individuals to be engaged and take ownership of the opportunities present. This can also be seen as a responsibility of the Aboriginal people's leadership that helps to govern the direction and outcomes of the nations that exist within British Columbia.

Now that we have a better understanding of the goals and outcomes of the Northwest Regional Workforce Table it is also helpful to understand the membership that governs the organization. The Northwest Regional Workforce Table is comprised of twenty organizations with at times several individuals representing one organization.

(Northwest Regional Workforce Table, 2012)

The membership works to contribute ideas, concepts and strategies not only to the Provincial government but to one another. Thus potentially eliminating overlap in training initiatives, and developing a workforce inventory that can help deliver the outcomes that contribute to the sustainable economic success of the region.

The members can be identified as by the following chart.

Northwest Regional Workforce Membership

Organization	Representative(s)
Apache Corp.	Duncan Brown
BC Construction Association	Tom Harwood
BC Hydro	Gail Murray
Construction, Maintenance and Allied Workers Union	Ken Lippett
District of Kitimat	Rose Klukas
Hecate Strait Employment Development Society	Kathy Bedard
Industry Training Authority (ex-officio)	Susan Kirk
Kitimat-Terrace Industrial Development Society	Alexander Pietrella
Métis Nation of British Columbia	Colleen Hodgson
Ministry of Advanced Education, Innovation and Technology (ex-officio)	Adam Molineux
Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training (ex-officio)	Melanie Nielsen
Ministry of Social Development (ex-officio)	Rick Braam
Misty Isles Economic Development Society	Suzanne Ferguson
Northwest Community College	Zosia Hortsing
Northwest Labour Market Partnership	Jerenia Adolph
Regional District Kitimat-Stikine	Heather Adel
Rio Tinto Alcan	Seth Downs (Secretariat)
School District #82	Lorrie Gowen
Shell Canada	Don Ramsay
Terrace and District Chamber of Commerce	Andrew Webber
TriCorp	Kevin Dobbin
University of Northern British Columbia	Art Erasmus
	Murray Slezak
	Daria Hasselmann
	Carol Fielding
	Frank Parnell
	Jacquie Ridley
	Dennis Macknak

(Northwest Regional Workforce Table, 2012)

Chart 7 – Northwest Regional Workforce Membership

An observation of interest concerning the membership of the Northwest Regional Workforce Table is the lack of individuals who define and support strategic community outcomes as they relate to Northwest British Columbia. Individuals such as the MLA, representation from city councils, mayors, leadership of local aboriginal communities, representatives from any programs that support the successful outcomes of youth and children, or a representative from the local student body itself are all missing from the membership list.

It is without question that effective and engaged communication is essential to the successful delivery of plans or outcomes derived from the Northwest Regional Workforce Table, and ultimately the engagement and ownership of key stakeholders within the region.

Chapter Six

Recommendations and Conclusion

In this chapter I will highlight some of the constraints of this project, provide further ideas to pursue going forward and recommendations related to labour market outcomes in Northwest British Columbia.

This project was an initial undertaking of the relationship between affordances in the home as they relate to education outcomes and job readiness. Previous to this paper, the topics of affordance and education had been identified but little connectedness could be found as they related to indicators from the Early Development Instrument and labour market outcomes.

This project has not only presented findings of vulnerability within the regions' children as a predictor of success, but recognized the lack of efficiencies in outreach strategies.

One of the constraints of this project was that the Coast Mountain School District #82 did not provide timely communication in approving interviews with subject matter experts to discuss the importance of affordances as they relate to the outcome of children in the classroom.

Constraints also existed due to the scope of the project. Depth to any one issue was broad in reach and yet linkages were still established that lead to definite recommendations. In conclusion to this project, I was able to identify five recommendations going forward that would contribute to the desired outcomes of capacity building and the next workforce in Northwest British Columbia.

I will now revisit the three research questions presented in the introduction section of this project and summarize my findings by answering each one in turn.

1. What are the primary environmental affordances affecting the successful education outcomes as they relate to Coast Mountain School District #82? The research reported here, especially in studies using the EDI, shows that a disproportionately large number of children and families in Northwest British Columbia are lacking across the range of affordances given in Chart 1.

2. Would changes to government policy aid families in the successful outcomes of a child's education? The results of this research suggest a "yes" answer to this question, although this government policy would need to focus greater attention on providing more affordances to families and children at early stages of child development.

3. Is the BC Jobs Plan adding up and can Northwest British Columbia close the labour skills gap in time, resulting in sustainable communities for future generations? The results of this study suggest a "no" answer to this question unless the government and industry place a greater focus on resourcing child development through the provision of needed affordances throughout early childhood. The citizens of Northwestern British Columbia can help close the labor skills gap to a significant extent but many of them can only do so if they come through their formative years in home, family, and school with the necessary supports and resources.

Recommendation 1.

Revisiting Family Policy Development

This project has identified the need to revisit existing policies as they relate to families. It is important to make sure the opportunities for children to be involved in early childhood learning development are accessible and inclusive. This would require the government to take a look at what are some of the constraints as identified within this paper that could be eliminated, resulting in a reduced statistic in childhood vulnerability as revealed by the Early Development Instrument. Addressing the support system for parents to go to work allowing families to rise from poverty thus enhancing the child's life would also be vital to success.

This would require readily accessible information to be available and open to all demographics. It is also imperative that training is affordable to allow access for upgrading to be realistic. The result of higher educational attainment in the home sets the stage for priorities of the child's future. Policies can be revisited specifically by looking at solutions such as universal daycare addressing family support systems, as well as improved communication initiatives delivered by healthcare and education providers targeting young families before children's outcomes become determined.

Recommendation 2.

The Recognition of Children as the Driving Success of our Greatest Resource, our Human Resource

The Strategic Plan of the Province of British Columbia as well as the BC Job Action Plan speaks to the importance of the Province's resource development. The pillars of job creation,

getting goods to market, and opening/expanding markets are set on the foundation of a skilled workforce. Yet it takes the engagement and education of a child to develop the necessary skills to be job ready. As I've identified in this paper, many children in Northwest British Columbia are struggling before they even enter the classroom for the first time. It is critical that we recognize our greatest resource is our human resource and without the recognition, engagement, and investment, industry will continue to search for labour markets elsewhere, contributing to the boom and bust cycles into the future. In the case of human resource development and ultimately capacity development it is important to understand that this is the heartbeat of the Province and our investment today will reap rewards for tomorrow.

This can be addressed through the recognition of families first as interwoven into the Provincial plan and the BC Jobs Plan. The Province has the ability to develop programs that leverage investment from industry through subsidies to daycare and preschool programs solidifying community structures forthcoming.

Recommendation 3.

Engaged Communication from Leadership

It's difficult to know where you are going without precise direction such as that provided by a map, and much like a map a plan can be just as important when developing Provincial strategies that will lead to sustainable economic success. The plan isn't just something that lives in Victoria but is a living, breathing, and evolving document that is pushing forward agendas and initiatives that will seek to realize economic benefits throughout many of the regions including the Northwest.

Plans cannot just be developed, or written, in order to be effective they have to be communicated. Communication needs to be engaged, and in order to do that you need to have your audience be present, this means people need to take accountability and own the desired outcome of the plan. What do you want to see happen in your community, and more importantly what do you want to see happen in your own life? Just like an individual who sets goals for their own life, when the goals of a collective group of people align, positive change can happen. This recommendation can be realized through engaged, transparent communication between the MLA, City Council, and Regional District as well and the School District discussing future community direction and assessing current and potential outcomes sought. Such collaboration brings to light the opportunity for youth to be proactive in making decisions about academic outcomes in a timely manner resulting in long term employment.

Recommendation 4.

Commitment from Industry, Not Just on the Sustainability of Environments but the Sustainability of Communities

For many years industry has been focused on resource extractions such as logging and commodity development as witnessed through the production of aluminum by Alcan as an example. When you take all of the people out of the factory, what you are left with is paper, steel, and machinery. It is the human touch that allows it to come together to take it from the forest to the marketplace. Just like business, there are many facets to a person's life that comes together to contribute to a healthy and vibrant community. It isn't only work, but activities, and relationships that people long to be a part of that build the experience that defines quality of life. When industry recognizes not just the commitment to the environment physically, but

to the environment holistically that's where you gain support and the engagement of a workforce who want to be a part of your story.

Commitment can be realized through community investment initiatives and the development of skills and training programs as supported by legacy funds. As such, the embedding of employees who work, live, and play in these communities exhibit a level of authenticity that cannot be met through donations alone.

Recommendation 5.

Coordination and Cohesive Action from Industry, Education and the Government to Develop and Deliver Education in a Timely and Affordable Manner that Allows Individuals to Drive Their Lifestyle Forward.

A coordinated effort needs to and should exist among industry participants, educators and the government to ensure that information is communicated in a timely manner to respond to rapid changes to the economy through the development of multi-billion dollar projects. An effort to work together to complement one another's projects would facilitate the development of a local workforce. Such tactics would help to increase the economic stability of the region by allowing individuals to stay at home and to invest in the local community.

This type of coordinated effort may also help reduce costs to industry by eliminating the need for the development of camps and paying for employees travel in and out of the region by pursuing local hires.

It would also allow different projects to not have to independently develop training programs and find the financial resources but contribute collectively and in turn create opportunities beyond what were initially achievable as defined by economies of scale.

Lastly the government of British Columbia needs to be proactive in not relying on immigration and international education to fill the voids in a skilled workforce to meet the demand, but to make real time investments in the future of British Columbia's families and children to derive the true results of sustainability and the capacity development Northwest British Columbia needs and deserves.

Coordination and cohesive action can be achieved through the sharing of information as delivered at conferences or round table sessions. This can also be achieved through websites and portals developed to serve industry and educators in real time reducing the slack in the timing of information thus increasing flexibility and ultimately successful outcomes.

Conclusion

This project brought to light the relationship between affordances and the successful outcomes of education and a prepared labour market. Without the benefit of affordances as a child, it makes success in the classroom a challenge that will continue through to high school graduation. One of the most important affordances identified became the affordance of family. It is this structure that provides the link to all other affordances such as financial, nutritional, education, and physical and was often depicted through the parent's perceived or real value of education personally.

Of interest in this project was the similar statistics of early childhood vulnerability as measured by the Early Development Instrument, and FSA test scores in grades four and seven, as well as the high school graduation rate for Coast Mountain School District #82. This discovery leaves room for further research into the correlation of the data and the outcomes of communities in the future.

It is also recommended that further research be conducted on the students who pursue education outside of Northwest British Columbia. This data would provide information as to why students leave, and in turn how many come back home, providing useful in community retention plans, labour market strategies, as well as the adjustment of course offerings as local post-secondary institutions.

Finally it noted that in order for communities and the Province of British Columbia to be successful into the future, a focus needs to take place not out of reaction to changing markets and economies, but out of a proactive approach to the long term success of individuals who call British Columbia home.

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