

Improving Access to University Education in the Canadian Arctic

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Abstract

Increased participation in post-secondary education is of primary concern for Inuit. The goal of this project is to provide evidence-based research on Inuit participation in University education throughout Inuit Nunangat and to promote a national discussion amongst provider of university program in Inuit Nunangat, Northern institutions and Inuit organizations in order to develop a more coordinated effort in program delivery, curriculum development. More specifically this research has three objectives: 1) Make an inventory and evaluation of past and present university initiatives in Inuit Nunangat or for Inuit in term of curriculum, delivery methods and success, 2) Evaluate the Inuit Peoples needs and experiences with post-secondary programs or courses in order to better understand educational paths and university successes from the point of view of the Inuit 3) Develop different scenarios to improve access to university education for Inuit and Northerners in Inuit Nunangat. The data is being collected through surveys, in-depth interviews and workshops. This research provides evidence-based data on the Inuit students; university experience: Inuit participation in university programs; definition of university and educative success from a point of view of Inuit that will help university program providers deliver programs better adapted to the needs of Inuit students; monitoring of Inuit student success according to this definition; inventory and evaluation of the university program delivered in Inuit Nunangat and for Inuit students; and development of scenarios to improve access to University program for Inuit students.

Key Messages

The project has identified many key issues relating with Inuit post-secondary education:

- Post-secondary courses and programs have been offered across the North since the 1960s, most typically in reaction or response to economic pressures and opportunities that have arisen;

- Inuit post-secondary students are striving for more choices: choices in universities, programs and courses and choice in alternating work and school and thus studying at their own pace;
- Inuit students face a great deal of challenges when undertaking post-secondary education: In the North, there is a lack of housing and a lack of choice in post-secondary programs. In the South, students face loneliness, problems of adaptation, of funding, etc.;
- Funding opportunities are not similar in every Nunavut region for post-secondary students since some have access to funds from their Inuit organizations and others do not. This has been confirmed by the data from the survey conducted amongst Nunavut Inuit with a post-secondary study;
- Women are more likely to be successful in school but are still behind men in terms of income and job position;
- Inuit speaking Inuktitut at home are more likely to be less successful in term of education and jobs but a minority amongst this group is very successful in terms of jobs and income;
- Inuit with postsecondary education are likely to live, to work, or to want to go back in their community.

The Inuit students have identified the following solutions:

- In general: better funding programs and more equity between regions;
- In the North: better housing to allow them to have their own space for studying, more choices in the type of program offered (not only programs geared towards the needs of the industry);
- In the South: student support in the southern universities, better guidance for choosing the programs, many students had no idea of what the programs involved, coordination of students to avoid sending students alone in a program.

Inuit student cohorts could be organized through a website with a list of student willing to take a program in the South;

- The importance of role models and mentorship was stressed by participants;
- The cohort model increases the success of students because it creates a collaborative and mutually supportive community of learners who share experiences and who faced many of the same challenges;
- Support (family, academic, professional, etc.) needs to be increased;
- Program coordinators and instructors with direct experience living, working and researching in Nunavut that understand Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, the challenges and curriculum issues in education, and can adapt the instruction and content to reflect students' experiences.

Objectives

1. Make an inventory and evaluation of past and present university initiatives in Inuit Nunangat or for Inuit in term of curriculum, delivery methods and success;
2. Evaluate the Inuit Peoples needs and experiences with post-secondary programs or courses in order to better understand educational paths and university successes from the point of view of the Inuit;
3. Develop different scenarios to improve access to university education for Inuit and Northerners in Inuit Nunangat.

Introduction

Given the multiple and interconnected challenges within the Arctic, the absence of an accessible university level post-secondary institution in Inuit Nunangat is disquieting. The mandate during the first years of the project has been to provide evidence-based

research on Inuit participation in university education in Canada and to promote a national discussion amongst providers of university programs for the Inuit. While, since 1981, the Inuit population has made noticeable gains in enrolment and completion at the high school, College and trade level (ITK and Research and Analysis Directorate 2006), access to university is still very limited in spite of a series of initiatives lead by a variety of Southern universities. As a result, the numbers of Inuit who have completed a post-secondary degree remain quite low (from 1.6% in 1981 to 2.7% in 2006). Recently, the Government of Nunavut and Inuit Tapirriit Kanatami have adopted strategies to increase post-secondary success (Government of Nunavut 2011, National Committee on Inuit Education 2011).

This lack of progress can be explained by many interrelated factors:

- The absence of a university in the North. Canada is the only arctic country that does not have a university north of 60 (Poelzer 2009);
- The quality of high school education in Inuit regions (Hicks 2005);
- The relevance of curriculum (Poelzer 2009). Indeed, Inuit culture should be acknowledged in educational programs to dispel the colonial heritage left by the imposition of western education in the residential school (Berger 2001, Hicks 2005). For this reason, the adaptation of curriculum to Northern needs is a critical issue (Silta Associates 2007).

Other factors like the lack of confidence encountered amongst some Inuit as a result of years of colonization have also had an impact on university success as defined in the South (Rodon 2008).

A few southern universities have strived to provide access, through specialized programs and/or supports for Northern students, to degree studies at the post-secondary level. These initiatives have never been coordinated however, have proven expensive, and

have therefore been difficult to sustain. Furthermore, they offer only specific fields of study (Education and Health, one program in Public Policy and another one in Law), are only available in limited locations (mostly in the main regional center), and are often not permanent because of their expense (funding constraints or fiscal budget) or instability of partnerships. In general, at the post-secondary level, transition programs to universities do not exist. Moreover, there is very little monitoring or research from all Inuit jurisdictions regarding success of Inuit at the post-secondary level (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2008).

This research project is working to bridge this knowledge gap by gathering evidence-based data on Inuit participation in University education throughout Canada. During the first two years of the project, workshops, interviews and surveys have enabled us to listen carefully to the experiences of Inuit students. It is important to better understand the educational path of Inuit students and to understand their specificity from a sociological and cultural perspective. As a way of supplementing the information, and addressing the interaction between students living in, or from, the Canadian Arctic, and the programs they enrolled in, we have also focussed on enabling a national discussion amongst providers of university programs for Inuit. This discussion will allow a coordinated effort among the variety of post-secondary information, and meaningful discussion about student challenges and barriers to success.

Activities

1. Monitoring educational and professional success amongst Inuit of Nunavut who have registered in a post-secondary program

In early 2011-2012, Thierry Rodon and Francis Lévesque developed a project called Monitoring educational and professional success amongst Inuit of Nunavut who have registered in a post-secondary program. The aim of this project was to measure and

monitor the level of success enjoyed by Nunavut students who attend post-secondary education. The project is funded by ArcticNet through Thierry Rodon's project Improving Access to University Education in the Canadian Arctic. In March 2012, the project also got funds from the Nunavut General Monitoring Plan (NGMP).

As soon as funds from the NGMP were secured, a survey was created and put online. During the summer of 2012, Dr. Blair Stevenson was hired to become the survey and project coordinator. Five Inuit survey administrators were then hired: Pam Gross (Cambridge Bay), Lori Tagoona (Rankin Inlet), Jena Merkosak (Pond Inlet), Kevin Qamaniq-Mason (Ottawa) and Elisapee Ryan (Iqaluit), two of which were already Northern HQP for the ArcticNet project (Gross and Tagoona). They were sent iPads purchased with ArcticNet funds to administer the surveys. Throughout the summer and fall, Inuit survey administrators have synchronised the surveys they administered with our central database.

In March 2013, preliminary results were presented by the project's team to Nunavut stakeholders:

- Peesee Pitsiulak-Stephens, Dean - Nunatta Campus, Nunavut Arctic College
- Mary Ellen Thomas, Director of Nunavut Research Institute
- Jeannie Arreak-Kullualik, Policy Analyst, Education, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
- Peter Geikie, Program Manager – Education, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
- Amy McCall, Coordinator, Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy Implementation, Government of Nunavut
- Christianne Lafferty, Ecosystemic Monitoring Analyst, Nunavut General Monitoring Plan – NGMP, Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development Canada
- Jean Kigutikakjuk, Administrative and Liaison Service Officer, Nunavut General Monitoring

Plan – NGMP, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

- Seth Reinhart, Manager, Nunavut General Monitoring Plan – NGMP, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
- Mike Shouldice, President, Nunavut Arctic College
- Nikki Eegeesiak, Administrator, Coalition of Nunavut DEAs
- Natan Obed, Director – Social and Cultural Development, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

Stakeholders asked the team to pursue the project. Funds were again obtained from the NGMP. Maatalii Okalik and Pamela Gross were hired to tour Nunavut communities to administer surveys, meet local authorities and train local researchers. Maatalii Okalik travelled to Iqaluit, Kimmirut, Qikiqtarjuaq, Iglulik and Pond Inlet; Pamela Gross travelled to Cambridge Bay, Arviat, Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake, Kugluktuk and Yellowknife. Stephanie Kootoo-Chiarelo was also hired to administer surveys in Ottawa. All in all, 300 surveys were administered in 2013. Their work brought the total of past and present post-secondary students surveyed up to 372.

Preliminary results from the 2013 phase were presented by Maatalii Okalik and Francis Lévesque during the ArcticNet ASM in Halifax. Full results will be presented to the Nunavut stakeholders at the Nunavut Research institute in Iqaluit on February 4th, 2014 and a report will be produced and distributed after.

On February 4th, 2014, Thierry Rodon, Francis Lévesque, Maatalii Okalik and Pamela Gross will meet Nunavut stakeholders from the project monitoring educational and professional success amongst Inuit of Nunavut who have registered in a post-secondary program to share the final results.

2. Tukitaarvik – Inuit Student Centre

Tukitaarvik is an interactive website providing information and networking for Inuit students

interested in post-secondary education (www.tukitaarvik.ca). For the fiscal year 2013-2014, the project was co-managed by the Inuit Knowledge Centre and the Youth Department at Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and ArcticNet. Approximately four staff from ITK (Carrie Grable, James Kuptana, Hayley Moorhouse, Martin Lougheed) and two from ArcticNet (Teevi Mackay and Lucille Villaseñor-Caron) were directly involved in the project (excluding management, IT, and ITK communications staff), of which 5 were current students or recent graduates. There have been bi-weekly or monthly in-person meetings as well as correspondence via email on a regular basis. Currently, there are 85 Tukitaarvik members registered.

There have been several major accomplishments since the last reporting:

- Official launch of Tukitaarvik on November 14th, 2013 at Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS). The following guest speakers were present: Murray Angus (Nunavut Sivuniksavut Instructor); Terry Audla (ITK President); Thierry Rodon and Lucille Villaseñor-Caron (ArcticNet staff); Hayley Moorhouse (National Inuit Youth Council Coordinator); Mary Simon (Chair of ITK's National Committee on Inuit Education and former ITK President).
- Presentation on Tukitaarvik at the Inuit education research Forum in Iqaluit, February 2013; to the Inuit Qaujisarvingat National Committee on Tukitaarvik, March 2013; at the 9th National Inuit Youth Summit (NIYS) that was held in Kuujuaq, Nunavik (Northern Québec) from August 16th to 21st, 2013; during ArcticNet's 9th Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM2013) in Halifax, December 2013.
- Interviews recorded for the website of four Inuit students (one from each region) about Tukitaarvik website and post-secondary experience.
- ITK's Youth Department mail out with informative bookmarks about Tukitaarvik to each

high school across Inuit Nunangat in December 2013.

- Article submission on Tukitaarvik to (1) Above and Beyond; (2) Inuktitut magazine (ITK's national publication); and (3) recruitment of an Inuit University student to write a published article in Nipiit, Canada's National Inuit Youth magazine.
- Standardize a call out strategy to northern schools and southern universities, a valuable tool to assist in initiating discussions with northern high schools and southern universities. Initiated contact with Aurora College in Inuvik, Nunavut Arctic College in Iqaluit, and Trent University (Aboriginal Support Centre) to start engaging them in Tukitaarvik and to see how they can help us move this idea forward (i.e., getting word out to Inuit students, providing link on their sites to Tukitaarvik, etc.).

3. Transfer of Knowledge and Modern Education – IPSSAS

The Workshop on Inuit values, perspectives and postsecondary education, funded with ArcticNet funds, was held on May 22nd during the 2013 IPSSAS (International Ph.D. School for the Studies of Arctic Societies). IPSSAS is both an international Ph.D. school and an international network of researchers centered on the study of Arctic Societies whose objectives are:

- To promote the study of Arctic societies in the fields of history, culture and language;
- To explore new research trends in those fields and to develop coordinated and collaborative post-graduate teaching;
- To stimulate international networking and synergy between participating scientific institutions;
- To foster partnerships between Arctic societies and participating scientific institutions;
- To encourage participation of and knowledge sharing with Arctic communities in its activities,

so as to bring more students from Arctic societies to register at the Ph.D. level.

The main activity of IPSSAS is an annual seminar of approximately two weeks duration for Ph.D. students and senior M.A. students.

The Workshop on Inuit values, perspectives and post-secondary education was chaired by Thierry Rodon. During the workshop, ArcticNet Northern HQP Naullaq Arnaquq gave a communication titled: Inuktitut uqausiq sakkutauvalliasimaninga: ujjirijakkut, atuqtakkullu /Subtractive bilingualism and Inuktitut: observations and experience. The workshop also saw the participation of Susan Enuaraq, Aaju Piita, Gloria Putumiraqtuq, Myna Ishulutak, Julia Demcheson, Betsy Annahatak, and David Serkoak. During the seminar, Thierry Rodon and HQP Francis Lévesque also gave talks (described below). A special issue of the peer-reviewed journal *Études/Inuit/Studies* will publish the talks from the workshop.

4. Improving Access to University Education in the Canadian Arctic – Graduate Students

The UPEI research team has completed gathering and analyzing data related to the experiences of graduates of the Master of Education (MEd) Nunavut program offered between 2010-2013. The program finished in June 2013 and there are no plans to offer another iteration in the near future. In 2013, the focus of the research has been on data analysis, dissemination of results and the preparation of publications:

- Preparation and submission of an edited book of academic papers written by MEd graduates accepted for publication by Canadian Scholars' Press Incorporated/Women's Press, Sivumut - Towards the Future Together: Inuit Women Educational Leaders in Nunavut and Nunavik (Walton and O'Leary, 2014);
- Brief follow-up dialogue with the 13 graduates of the 2013 MEd program, to discuss and document their vision for change, as well as the impact of

the graduate program (Wheatley and Walton, 2014);

- Participation in a panel presentation at the CIERA Annual Workshop at Laval University (O’Leary and Walton, April 18-19, 2013) on the topic of Inuit Women and Leadership and discussion focused on the impact of the MEd program;
- Completion and submission of an article for publication in the journal *Cahiers du CIERA – Inuit Women Educational Leaders: Expanding Vision and Creating Futures* (Walton, Arnaquq, Qanatsiaq and O’Leary, 2014);
- Contribution to an article related to the ArcticNet High School project, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and the Transformation of High School Education in Nunavut, submitted to Northern Public Affairs (Walton et al., 2014);
- Contributed to an article related to the ArcticNet project Improving Access to University Education in the Canadian Arctic, submitted to the Northern Public Affairs publication (Rodon et al., 2014);
- Completion of the Nunavut section of the UPEI Nunavut website showcasing MEd 2013 graduates and their writing, as well as the research documentaries and youth-focused research on high schools (<http://projects.uepi.ca/nunavut/>).

5. Working Paper: Tracing the Idea of a Northern University

The history of proposals and initiatives to establish a university in the territorial North has received limited attention from academics, authors, and government, aside from the foundational research by Amanda Graham. This working paper (completed in 2012) traces the history of the various –often competing– visions for a northern university from 1960 to 1998, before Nunavut was founded. When the Carleton University team, under the supervision of Frances Abele, undertook this project, they saw it as an essential first step towards the larger project

of drawing out key historical moments and actors, discussions, and debates surrounding adult and post-secondary higher education in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Building on this working paper, in 2013 Kelly Black completed a paper to be submitted to the *Journal of Canadian Studies* that looks at the different ways the post-secondary education system was viewed as an extension of the wage economy, and the relationship therein with notions of Canadian nationalism. This article will be submitted in early 2014 for peer-review.

This work has led us to plan a second journal article to be written in 2014-15 concerning the potential role of a northern university in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories that builds upon international research on the impact of universities in the political economy of developing regions. We also plan to prepare a short briefing note based on the two journal articles and the working paper as well as an oral Inuktitut podcast based on this.

Kelly Black will be representing our team at ICASS. The presentation is entitled, “An Institutional and Social History of Post-Secondary and Adult Education in the North”.

6. Institutional and Social History of Adult and Post-Secondary Education

During 2011-2013, the Carleton University team conducted archival research in Ottawa, Yellowknife and Igloolik, and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including former and current government employees, former adult educators, former students, and Inuit leaders. Through this research, F. Abele and S. Kennedy Dalseg have developed a comprehensive knowledge of the institutional social history of adult and post-secondary education in Inuit Nunangat, and its links to democratic community development. Between October and December 2013, S. Kennedy Dalseg met with ten advisors to help us interpret our archival and historical findings.

A number of publications are planned or currently underway based on this research:

- S. Kennedy Dalseg is currently revising a conference paper on the NWT Legislative Special Committee on Education (1982) for submission to the journal *Canadian Public Administration* in March 2014. The Special Committee is often cited as an important moment in the history of education policy in the NWT and Nunavut but very little is written about it.
- S. Kennedy Dalseg is also in the process of completing interviews for a paper that traces the evolution of adult education programming in the Eastern Arctic, using Igloolik NU as a case study. In particular, this paper explores the role that Frontier College played in the development of adult education programming in Igloolik and its contribution to democratic and community development in the context of the GNWT's larger political and economic objectives.
- As part of our commitment to make research results more accessible, Carleton research team also plans to record members of the research team discussing Northern education policy, in historical perspective, to be published online in the form of podcasts in English and Inuktitut, available through IsumaTV. Other members of the "Improving Access" team have shared their results in this way.

7. Creating Citizens, Building Societies: Schooling and Social Change in the Eastern Arctic

The rapid introduction of formal education in the 1960s brought massive changes to Inuit family relations and society. The complex Inuit experiences of these changes are not generally represented in writing about the period. S. Kennedy Dalseg's doctoral research seeks to document and understand the extent to which formal education, including adult and post-secondary education, influenced peoples' ideas about, and the ways in which they practiced, citizenship

in Igloolik, NU. She will trace the evolution of the concept and practice of citizenship alongside the evolution of the education system between 1960, when formal schooling was introduced by the federal government, and 1999 when Nunavut was founded. In March 2013, S. Kennedy Dalseg traveled to Igloolik to conduct preliminary archival research at the Igloolik Oral History Project, and community consultation for her dissertation work. In September 2013, S. Kennedy Dalseg defended her dissertation proposal and began her dissertation research. Between October and December 2013, S. Kennedy Dalseg conducted focused archival research in Ottawa and Yellowknife, and conducted ten interviews with key advisors.

8. History of post-secondary programs in Nunavik

This project consists of writing a history of non-traditional education in Nunavik from 1939 until now. During the fall of 2013, research was aimed at finding information on the curriculum that was taught in federal day-schools from 1949, in provincial schools from 1963 and in schools managed by the Kativik School Board since 1978. A literature review gave little results, so the offices of Éducation, Loisirs et Sport Québec, and its different regional departments were contacted, as well as archivists at the Departmental Library of the Corporate Information Management Directorate of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. The next step of the project will be to collect information on education policies and their application, once again through a literature review, but also by conducting interviews.

9. Canadian Polar Commission – Reporting on the State of Northern Knowledge in Canada

In November 2013, the report was sent to the Canadian Polar Commission's reporting on the state of Northern Knowledge in Canada. The report presents the main findings of our research and identifies research gaps.

10. Conferences and seminars

10.1 – ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting: Factors Contributing to Success at the High School and Post-secondary Levels in Nunavut and Nunavik

- Arnaquq, Naullaq - Millie's Dream: Language Revitalization in the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut;
- Kennedy-Dalseg, Sheena - The Contribution of Community Engagement in Schooling: A Long History;
- Walton, Fiona - Engaging Parents to Improve High School Education in Nunavut;
- Wheatley, Kerri - Diverse Voices: High School Success Factors Identified by Nunavut Youth;
- Rodon, Thierry, Francis Lévesque and Maatalii Okalik - Postsecondary Education and Professional Success for Inuit in Nunavut.

10.2 – IPSSAS: Workshop on Inuit values, perspectives and postsecondary education

a) Roundtable:

- Guest speakers: Susan Enuaraq, Aaju Piita, Gloria Putumiraqtuq, Myna Ishulutak and Julia Demcheson.

b) Communications:

- Arnaquq, Naullaq - Inuktitut uqausiq sakkutauvallasimaninga: ujjirijakkut, atuqtakkullu / Subtractive bilingualism and Inuktitut: observations and experience;
- Annahatak, Betsy - Silatuniq, Respectful mode of Being - Inuit Maturity;
- Serkoak, David - The Inuit Drum: From Arviat to Nunavut Sivuniksavut;
- Rodon, Thierry - The Paradoxes of Development in Inuit Nunangat;
- Lévesque, Francis - Revisiting Inuit qaujimajatuqangit: How are Inuit knowledge,

culture, language and values reflected in Nunavut institutions?

10.3 – Other conferences

- Kennedy Dalseg, Sheena. 2013. Creating Citizens, Building Societies: Schooling and Social Change in the Eastern Arctic. Presentation to the School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton University, September 6th, 2013;
- Kennedy Dalseg, Sheena. 2013. Beyond Education: Examining the Northwest Territories Legislative Special Committee on Education in Historical Perspective. Paper presented at the Canadian Political Science Association Annual Conference, Victoria, British Columbia June 6th, 2013.

Results

1. Monitoring educational and professional success amongst Inuit of Nunavut who have registered in a post-secondary program

1.1 Descriptive analysis

Demography of respondents

Between 2012 and 2013, 372 surveys were conducted with current and past Inuit post-secondary students from Nunavut. Among the respondents, 67% are women and 33% men. They are aged between 18 and 64 years old, the median age being 35 years old. 45% of respondents use Inuit languages (Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun) at home and 43% English. 12% use both an Inuit language and English. 88% of respondents are fluent in English and 79% fluent in an Inuit language. 48% of our respondents are from the Qikiqtaaluk, 39% from the Kivalliq and 9% from the Kitikmeot. Finally, 65% of survey respondents live in their home community.

Education and job history

Among survey respondents, 100% had post-secondary experience. However, 75% had graduated from high school: 68% completed grade 12 and 7% had completed a Nunavut High School Equivalency diploma. This means that 25% had not completed high school. Among respondents, 40.7% had undertaken one post-secondary program, 35.7% two, 16.4% three and 7.2% more than three. 55.3% of respondent have completed one post-secondary program, 25.7% two, 11.2% three and 5.9% more than three. Only 1.8% of respondents had not completed any post-secondary program.

66% of survey respondents are employed full time, 7.8% are employed part time, 8.9% are looking for work, 7.2% are still in school and 6.3% are at home. Data from the survey indicates that completion of post-secondary programs lead to better jobs (see Figure 1 - Job status before and after post-secondary education) and to better income (see Figure 2 – Income comparison). Finally, of all survey respondents, 78.4% say they are either satisfied or strongly satisfied of their current job situation. There is, in fact, a strong correlation between academic satisfaction and job satisfaction.

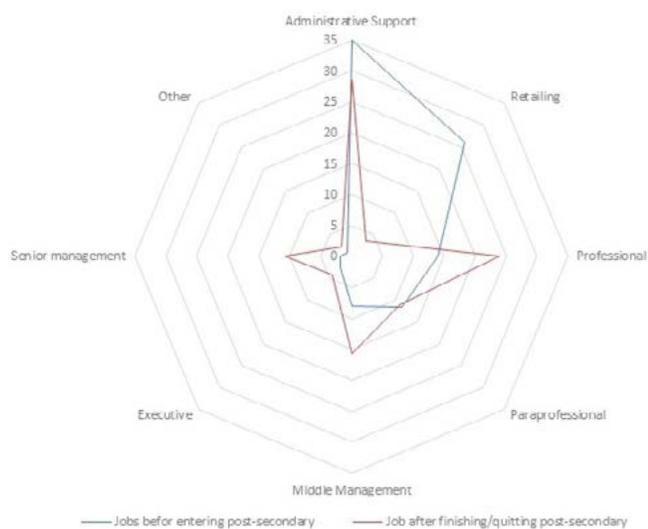


Figure 1. Job status before and after post-secondary education.

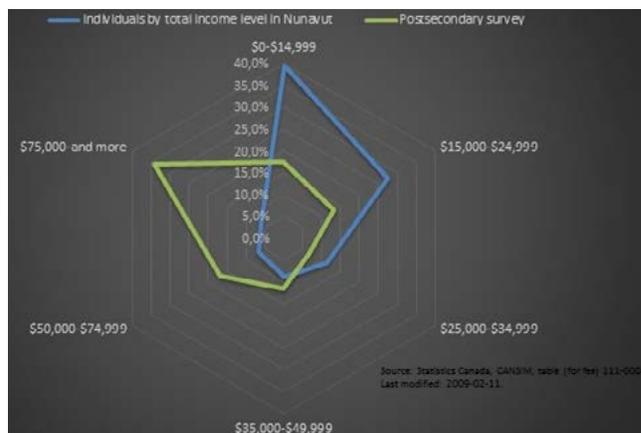


Figure 2. Income Comparison.

Relation to home community

Inuit with postsecondary education are likely to live (65%), to work (53%), or to want to go work in their community (67%). This is clearly a very different pattern than what is occurring with non-Inuit students. The data also shows that respondents living in their home community are more likely to be employed and to earn a higher income.

1.2 Correlations

One of the main objectives of this project was to study the relationship between educational success and job satisfaction. Three variables influence this relationship: gender, language, and region. The following section discusses these correlations, but this is only a very preliminary analysis since the first statistical analysis has just been conducted. In the coming month, we will develop a cross-analysis of this quantitative data with the qualitative data that was collected in the first 3 years of the project.

Gender

Inuit women have a higher school attainment than men. As shown in Figure 3 (Highest grade of high school by gender) 72% of women have completed grade 12 and graduated from high school as opposed to 61% of men. Women also tend to be more

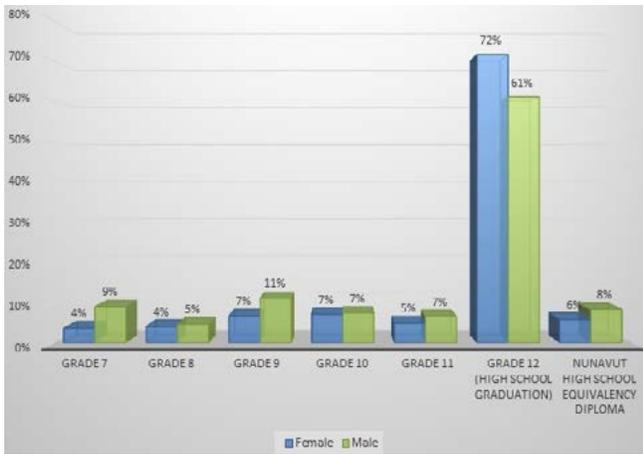


Figure 3. Highest grade of high school by gender.

academically satisfied than men: 83% of women are either satisfied or strongly satisfied by their education, while 68.5% of men are. As could be expected, Inuit women are more likely to take care of children during their education (51% vs 28% for men).

There is also a strong correlation between gender and job status. For example, when they were asked what their current work situation was, 68% of women mentioned working full time, as opposed to 62% of men. 14% of men were looking for work, which was the case for only 6.5% of the women (see Figure 4 – Current work situation). However, Post-secondary education did improve the job situation of most people

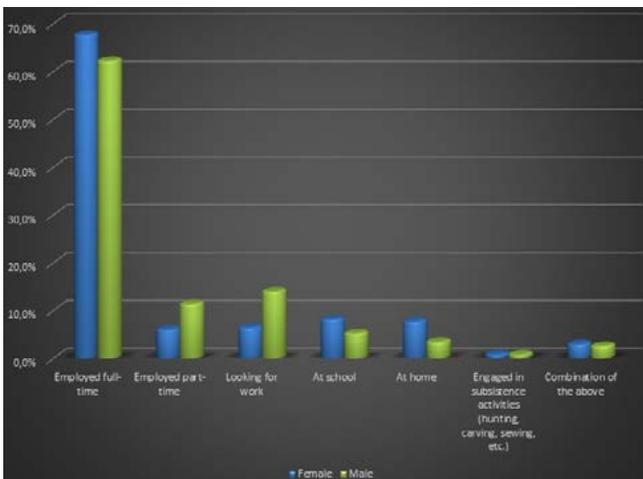


Figure 4. Current work situation.

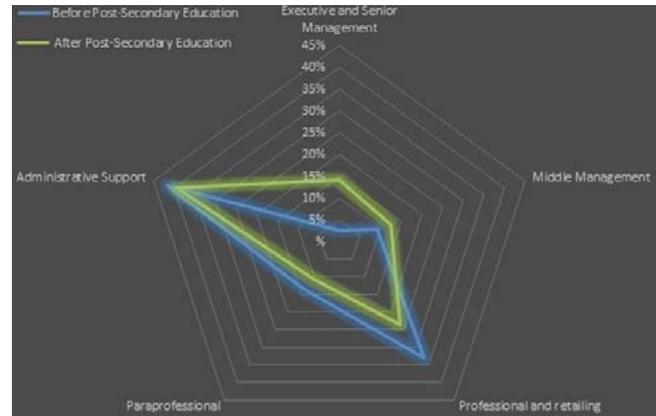


Figure 5. Job status before and after post-secondary education - women.

who, in majority, found better jobs after their post-secondary education than before. However, there are notable differences between men and women in Figure 5 (Job status before and after postsecondary – women) and Figure 6 (Job status before and after postsecondary – men). Men, who did not hold a lot of administrative support jobs before pursuing post-secondary education, tend to not have these jobs after. They also move on from retailing and professional jobs in favour of middle management and senior management jobs. Post-secondary education also gives women a better access to senior management and middle management jobs. However, many women with post-secondary education remain in administrative support jobs. In short, although post-secondary education gives access

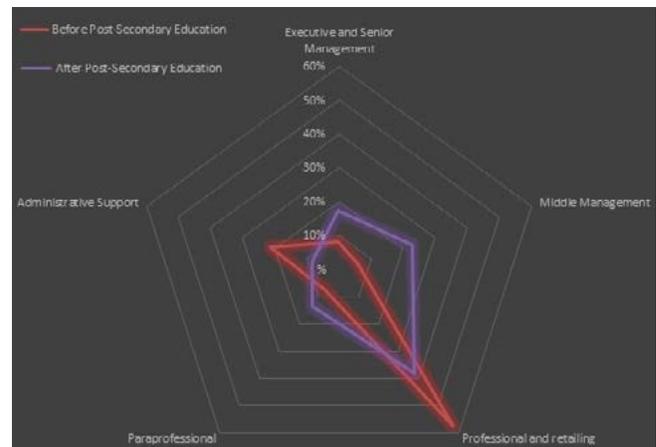


Figure 6. Job Status before and after post-secondary education - men.

to better jobs to both men and women, men are more likely to benefit more from education.

So, while women have completed high school at a higher rate and are more satisfied with their education, men tend to obtain better jobs after their post-secondary education.

Language

Inuit who speak English at home are more likely to graduate from high school. 54% of high school graduate speak English at home, 46% an Inuit language (either Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun). However, 37% of Inuit who stopped school in grade 10 or 11 speak English at home, 63% Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun. Finally, 16% of Inuit who stopped school in grade 7 or 9 speak English at home, compared to 84% who speak an Inuit language. This indicates that speaking English at home increases the likelihood of graduating from high school.

Language also affects job situation and job satisfaction. For example, 71% of those who speak English at home are employed full time against 61% of those who speak an Inuit language. 10% of those who speak Inuktitut at home are looking for work while 6.7% who speaks English at home are looking for work. Thus, people who speak English at home are more likely to have full-time jobs than people who speak an Inuit language at home.

Funding

In order to pay for their education, most Inuit students resort to various solutions: grants, bursaries and scholarship (31%), funding from Inuit regional organizations (21%) or parents (10%). Many also work or use their own savings (13%). All in all, 62% of students received a loan and/or a grant.

What is interesting, however, is that access to funds is different from one region to another. While every Nunavut student has access to the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS), some have

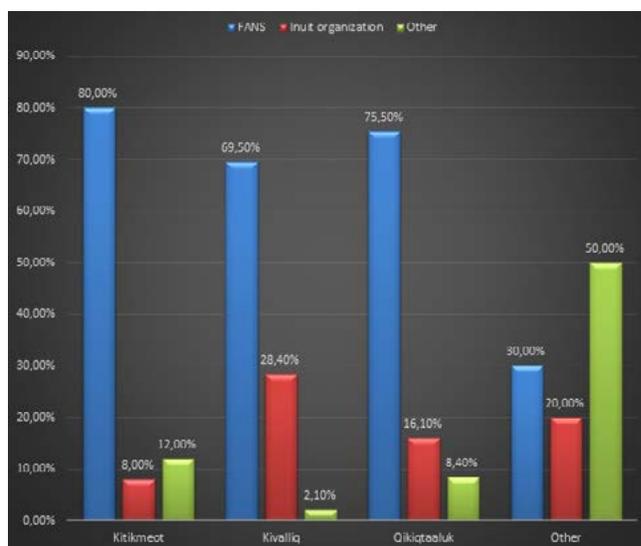


Figure 7. Source of loans-grants by region.

access to grants from regional Inuit organizations offering, and not others. Figure 7 (Source of loans-grants by region) shows that one third of Kivalliq students have received assistance from their regional organization, while only 8% of Kitikmeot got anything from their own regional association and 16% of Qikiqtaaluk Inuit. This has allowed Kivalliq Inuit not only to depend less on “other” sources of funding like loans from parents, work or savings (2% instead of 12% in the Kitikmeot or 8.4% in the Qikiqtaaluk), but to depend less on loans from FANS as well. To understand why this is the case, however, an analysis of funding programs available to Nunavut Inuit must be undertaken.

2. Improving Access to University Education in the Canadian Arctic – Graduate Students

The Nunavut MEd demonstrated that a graduate program in education could be successfully delivered in one of the regions of Inuit Nunangat. The MEd program was based on a vision and plan cooperatively developed between the Faculty of Education at the University of Prince Edward Island and the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut that guided two iterations of the program from 2009 - 2013. The success experienced in the Nunavut MEd

was based on the partnership with the Department of Education, Government of Nunavut that provided adequate funding to provide both Inuit and university-based instructors, access to counseling support and organizational and logistical supports that enabled students to travel from their communities to central locations to complete courses.

Students participating in the MEd program were able to focus on their studies in intensive face-to-face courses, offered in a central location in Nunavut and for one summer on campus at UPEI, a distance education component was usually offered before a course started so that some of the readings and on-line discussion were completed before students travelled. All students participating in the MEd program had completed the Bachelor of Education (BEd) program offered by the Nunavut Teacher Education Program (NTEP) and certified by McGill University, providing them with some of the skills required to succeed in graduate courses; however, additional support, particularly with academic writing, was provided to most students.

The cohort model brought together a group of qualified Inuit to complete ten graduate courses together which built a mutually supportive learning community that offered encouragement and raised motivation promoting successful completion of the program.

Graduates were motivated to complete the MEd because they believed it was important to act as role models in their communities and believed this would impact the future of education in Nunavut. Inuit and most university-based instructors in the MEd had previous and long-term experience teaching, leading, and working in education in Nunavut and were able to ensure that the courses were delivered in both Inuktitut and English with a focus on issues and priorities related to Nunavut.

The involvement of Elders in almost all the face-to-face courses was deeply valued by the students providing grounding in Inuit history and culture that they believed to very important. Thirty-seven Inuit

educators now hold MEd degrees in Nunavut which raises educational levels significantly, impacting the quality of education offered in schools and providing Inuit with qualifications and confidence to apply for and be successful in a variety of leadership programs; however, in order for Inuit to succeed on a long-term basis, ongoing professional learning experiences and mentorship would be helpful.

Maintaining the community of emerging researchers and Inuit scholars who completed the MEd would be very valuable and providing ongoing mentoring to develop skilled research leaders would be important.

Contribution of MEd final paper abstracts to the forthcoming publication of Northern Public Affairs (February 2014) as well as archiving of the graduates' final research reports in the University of Prince Edward Island archive, IslandScholar ensures that writing by MEd graduates is available to the public (Arnatsiaq, 2013; Cunningham, 2013; Etuangat, 2013; Flaherty, 2013; Iblauk, 2013; Iglookyouak, 2013; Kauki, 2013; Kusugak, 2013; Netser, 2013; Noah, 2013; Putilik, 2013; Tigullaraq, 2013; and Tootoo, 2013). Jeela Palluq-Cloutier (2014) is now submitting her Master of Education thesis, Standardization of Inuktitut in the Educational System in Nunavut. Completion of the Nunavut section of the UPEI website showcasing MEd 2013 graduates and their writing, as well as the research documentaries and youth-focused research on high schools. (<http://projects.upei.ca/nunavut/>)

3. Tracing the Idea of a Northern University and Institutional and Social History of Adult and Post-Secondary Education

The project Tracing the Idea of a Northern University demonstrated that competing visions for a Northern university are directly linked with competing visions of the future of the Canadian North. Discussion and debate surrounding post-secondary education has evolved alongside the process of Indigenous self-determination, particularly in the Eastern Arctic. These efforts culminated in the 1982 Learning: Tradition and

Change report and 2011's National Strategy on Inuit Education. Local and regional cultural differences, as well as the need for economic benefits, have been points of contention in determining curriculum, campus locations, and governance. The most prominent conceptualizations of a northern university were set on implementing a southern model that would facilitate research projects originating in southern universities.

The project Institutional and Social History of Adult and Post-Secondary Education found that hundreds of adult education and post-secondary courses and programs have been offered across the North since the 1960s, most typically in reaction or response to economic pressures and opportunities that have arisen. These programs can be divided into three main categories: academic, vocational/technical, and cultural-linguistic programs. The vast majority of programs and courses were designed and provided by government either through the network of Arctic College community learning centres or directly by government departments for labour force training purposes. Other providers include non-profit organizations, like Frontier College, Nunavut Sivuniksavut or the Piquissilirivvik Cultural School, and industry associations, such as those providing training for oil and gas industry employment.

In the absence of a university in the North, there exists a strong tradition in the Arctic College to establish institutional partnerships with southern universities to offer degree programs. The longest-standing program of this nature is the Northern Teacher Education Program (NTEP). In the early days of the 1960s and 70s, education programs offered to adults could be linked more closely with community development. Indeed, community engagement in education coincides with Inuit self-determination. Over time, adult and post-secondary education has become focused on skills development and improving the employability of Inuit in the wage economy labour force (in both the private and public sectors). This dynamic has played out differently in the four territories of Inuit Nunangat, a matter we intend to explore in a future publication.

4. History of post-secondary programs in Nunavik

Very little information on the curriculum taught in residential school, be they provincial or federal, was found. Available documents focus mainly on the issues of language. However, information is more readily available for the content of courses taught in Arctic Quebec, since the Inuit have started to assume responsibility for elementary, secondary and adult education in 1975. If Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2 only are taught in Inuktitut, the other grades are taught in English or French. The curriculum follows the MEQ guidelines while incorporating Northern content, such as Inuktitut classes. In the upcoming month, research will continue and results will deepen.

Discussion

Ever since it started, the project Improving Access to University in the Canadian Arctic and the various subprojects led by project leader T. Rodon and network investigators Fiona Walton, Frances Abele and Frédéric Laugrand have highlighted a certain number of preoccupations and knowledge gaps concerning post-secondary education in the Canadian Arctic. For example, the recording of undergraduate and graduate Inuit students' post-secondary experiences during project surveys, workshops (Ottawa-2010, Inuvik-2010, Kuujuaq-2011) and focus groups highlighted many students' preoccupations but also allowed them to highlight some solutions they envision to improve post-secondary education for their peers. The comprehensive history of post-secondary education and the northern university concept within the Northwest Territories and Nunavut has showed how post-secondary and vocational programs are directly linked with competing visions of the future of the Canadian North and how they are not well adapted to Northern realities. The project also highlighted the lack of existing knowledge about the role of post-secondary institutions in the transmission of traditional knowledge from elders to children. Finally, the project has shown how support is crucial to increase the success of Inuit post-secondary students, even those

with prior post-secondary experience. In 2013-2014, the research team set to disseminate the research results and translate them into concrete actions while also starting to fill some research gaps by continuing already existing sub-projects and beginning new ones.

1. Monitoring educational and professional success amongst Inuit of Nunavut who have registered in a post-secondary program

Although the analysis of the 375 surveys of Inuit with post-secondary education has not yet been entirely completed, the findings we have so far has allow us to uncover some important patterns that should be further studied and addressed by public policy.

1. Women are more successful at the academic level and are more likely to further their education, however men tend to have better job (position and income). This pattern is also observed in the South but we need to explore further this in Nunavut since different cultural and social patterns might be at work.

2. Language is also a discriminating factor both in academic achievement and in the workplace. People who speak Inuktitut at home are more likely to have lower academic achievement, to feel not qualified for their job, to be unemployed and to have a lower income. However, looking closely at the data indicates that a minority of Inuktitut speakers are as successful as unilingual English speakers. It remains that as a group, Inuit speaking English at home are more likely to be successful than Inuit speaking Inuktitut at home.

3. Funding issues have been often discussed during the workshops and focus groups conducted in the first two years of the project. In the survey, most respondent consider that the funding was not adequate, but the data indicates also a strong regional differentiation. People in the Kivalliq region are more likely to receive funding from Inuit organisation and less likely to receive it from FANS. The relation is reversed in Kitikmeot where you are more likely to receive funds from FANS and less from Inuit organisations. This issue was mentioned during focus groups and

we need to explore the different funding programs to understand this difference.

4. Inuit with postsecondary education are likely to live, to work, or to want to go back in their community. This is clearly a very different pattern than what is occurring with non-Inuit students.

2. Tukitaarvik – Inuit Student Centre

One of the results of Improving Access to University in the Canadian Arctic was the realization that Inuit students needed more knowledge about programs, funding opportunities, other Inuit experiences of post-secondary education, etc. To facilitate the sharing of knowledge and networking among Inuit post-secondary students, it was decided to create a website that would offer 1) practical information to Inuit students, 2) advices and inspiration about post-secondary experience, and 3) networking function, providing students with an opportunity to learn directly from their peers as they explore viable career options. The website offers prospective students important information about programs and funding occasions, allows them to network together, and offers advices from former and current students. More importantly, the content of the website has been developed by Inuit post-secondary students for Inuit post-secondary students. The website is now hosted by ITK and is part of the National Strategy on Inuit Education piloted by the Amaujaq Centre. Although it is still early to measure the impact this website will have, it is hoped that it will become one of the tools that will help increase access (and success) of Inuit post-secondary students.

3. Improving Access to University Education in the Canadian Arctic – Graduate Students

Offering a graduate program in Nunavut would not have been possible without the supports provided by the Department of Education. The logistical challenges related to bringing up to 28 students together from across Nunavut and providing them with accommodation, per-diem costs and access to suitable

classroom space would have been difficult to organize without a partnership committed to a shared vision for the program.

The success of the program is directly related to the ability to provide bilingual/bicultural courses with both Inuit and university-based instructors who have direct experience working in Nunavut. Courses in the UPEI MEd program at UPEI were maintained, but the content focused on Inuit education and the readings, as much as is possible, focused on topics related to educational leadership in Inuit communities.

Providing learning experiences that were decolonizing also proved to be enlightening and inspiring for the students. The first course, Leadership in Postcolonial Education, introduced a seminal text written by Māori scholar, Linda Tuhawai Smith, and started a dialogue related to the impact of colonization on education and efforts to decolonize the educational system in Nunavut. Students found the focus on decolonization to be very helpful and many of them used it as a theoretical and methodological lens in their final research papers (Wheatley and Walton, 2014).

The Nunavut MEd was designed specifically to be accessible to Inuit students in Nunavut. It was based on extensive survey research conducted in Nunavut in 1994 (Nunavut Boards of Education, 1995) and is informed by the Hunger for Professional Learning in Nunavut Schools, a doctoral dissertation completed by Fiona Walton (1998). Accessibility was facilitated by delivering most of the courses in Nunavut and bringing students together in a central location for intensive courses. Continuing to offer opportunities for Inuit students to dedicate significant time and effort to complete their graduate degrees will continue to positively impact Inuit society address the need to have highly educated leaders who can make decisions that will benefit Nunavut.

Maintaining the capacity building of Inuit educational researchers is a high priority for Nunavut. Education in Nunavut continues to face a crisis with issues related to bilingual education, student achievement

issues at the high school levels that continue affect the graduation rates and many challenges related to addressing the special needs of Inuit students. The completion of a course-based MEd program provides the basic skills required to become a researcher, but it does not enable the graduates to lead and manage research projects. Building on and further developing research skills, particularly related to proposal and report writing, the development of ethical submissions, and the management and completion of research projects would be a valuable.

4. Tracing the Idea of a Northern University and Institutional and Social History of Adult and Post-Secondary Education

If the project Improving Access to University in the Canadian Arctic established that there was a need for a University in the Canadian North (Rodon et al. 2011; Rodon et al. 2012), the subproject Tracing the idea of a Northern University found that there was a need for research on the potential economic as well as social impact of the establishment of a northern university, along with a discussion of different models. A strong and distinctive theme in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories is the search for a university system that would embody Indigenous cultures' approaches to education. Non-governmental groups in each territory have advocated for this, and in the NWT, a distinctive model has been implemented (Dechinta Knowledge and Learning Centre).

The project Institutional and Social History of Adult and Post-Secondary Education found that the history of adult and post-secondary education in Inuit Nunangat is intertwined with federal and provincial development dreams and actions, shaped and reshaped by Inuit parents' and students' choices, and initiatives of a few non-governmental organizations devoted to democratic development. The complex and dynamic relationship among these forces has created the education and training situation that exists today, defining opportunities and limiting them as well.

This project showed the necessity of studying the history of post-secondary education programs in other

Inuit Nunangat as well. For this reason, a study of post-secondary education programs in Nunavik has been undertaken in 2013 and should be finished in 2014.

5. Transfer of Knowledge and Modern Education – IPSSAS

It was realized that the role post-secondary education should play in the transmission of knowledge from elders to youth was not well-known, despite being a crucial issue in a rapidly changing world. For this reason, the Workshop on Inuit values, perspectives and postsecondary education that took place in May 2013 was valuable since it permitted a reflection on these matters. It was realized that Inuit students and educators value the knowledge of their elders and that bringing them to class was a great way to improve the transmission of knowledge between elders and students. When resources are available, bringing Inuit to the land with elders is also valued. All in all, what matters is to create opportunities where both students and elders can meet.

Conclusion

Education is a priority of many Inuit leaders. The National Strategy on Inuit Education was made public in 2011 with the idea to graduate children confident in Inuit language and culture and capable of contributing to the emerging opportunities in Canada. In 2013, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatamii launched the Amaujaq National centre for Inuit Education to implement the recommendations from the National Strategy. In that context, research on education in Inuit Nunangat is extremely important.

The knowledge generated by Improving Access to University in the Canadian Arctic' research teams has identified several key issues regarding Inuit post-secondary education. More importantly, it has been used to develop projects that seek to answers to some of the problems identified by students. Tukitaarvik, which is now an integral part of Amaujaq's strategy on

Inuit education, was established following concerns of Inuit students mentioned during the project's firsts research activities. Furthermore, the results permitted the establishment of new research initiatives that have been integrated to the project and that are helping us moving forward even more. All of these results have been published and shared with Inuit decision-makers. Many Inuit also took part in our activities as participants and researchers.

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