© *Academy of Management Journal*
2022, Vol. 65, No. 3, 930–957.
https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2020.1664

INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES: FORGING NEW GROUND IN CORPORATE COMMUNITY CODEVELOPMENT THROUGH RELATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PATHWAYS

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Within management scholarship and practice, corporate community investments are heralded as an important form of corporate social responsibility. Yet, community development scholars have engaged in discourse and debate regarding corporate community investment, surmising that in some instances it does more harm than good. Where management research has not focused—and can substantially contribute to both theory and practice—is on how to implement corporate community investment for mutual gain. Integrating the fields of management and community development, I provide an evidence-based theory for understanding corporate community codevelopment, addressing relational and psychological pathways for behavioral change. This model emerged from a longitudinal qualitative ethnographic study of corporate-community investment programs, involving 1,176 hours of observations, 63 interviews, as well as narratives and reflections from participants representing 11 large corporations, at-risk remote Indigenous Australian communities, and a nonprofit organization. The 35 programs in focus involved initiatives such as family income management, educational trusts, literacy programs, and nutritional and substance abuse campaigns. The results in competency-building and community development have exceeded the expectations of all parties. Implications for theory, research, policy, and practice in management and community development are included.

Corporations potentially play an important role in developing communities through various forms of investment, but often fail to create lasting social change (Wang, Gibson, & Zander, 2020). Community development scholars have even documented adverse consequences of such investments (McCrea & Finnegan, 2019). A tension exists in the scholarly discourse: Management scholars have emphasized that corporations intend their community investments to "do good," but community development scholars have suggested that implementation of such investments may "do harm" (Mayes, 2019). Critics have questioned whether corporations can deliver development in ways that address broader goals of poverty reduction and sustainability (Frynas, 2005).

From the management perspective, the goal of corporate community investment (CCI) is to promote quality-of-life improvements that also generate business value for the company in terms of community support, reputational benefits, risk reduction, productivity gains, or competitive advantage (Esteves & Vanclay, 2009; International Finance Corporation [IFC], 2010; Mayes, 2019). The resources industry alone annually contributes in excess of $34 billion to community development (Hooke, 2013). Companies

This research would not have occurred without support from the Australia Research Council Future Fellowship program, and acknowledgment from the American Psychological Association Award for Humanitarian Impact. I also truly appreciate the constructive guidance and dedication of Deputy Editor Jennifer Howard-Grenville and the three anonymous reviewers at AMJ. Many people assisted during various periods of data collection, coding, and dissemination. Most went on to careers in clinical or social work, Indigenous affairs, or activism, and I thank them for inspiring me to consider this as "more than just research." Special thanks to Pat Dunlop, Robin Goodwin, Zenobia Talati, Terence Chia, and Yana Grushina. I also thank Robyn Owens, Tracy Horton, and Craig Pasch for taking a risk and supporting such a crazy concept. To all my colleagues in the Pepperdine Graziadio Business School Research Incubator—your encouragement and feedback has meant to the world to me. Finally, my deepest gratitude to the Indigenous partners and corporate secondees, as well as Steve, for showing me the beauty of Australia.

publicize these investments as demonstrations of their contributions to society. And although the broader literature on corporate social responsibility (CSR) has documented a link to firms' financial performance, measurements are often coarse (e.g., an aggregate of "present, not present, or missing" for community relations, diversity, employee relations, environment, and product dimensions [Choi & Wang, 2009]). In a review of scholarly work on CSR, Wang et al. (2020) called for research that assesses social impacts, echoing the call for better understanding of the welfare consequences of nonmarket strategies (Barnett, Henriques, & Husted, 2020).

Community development scholars have been highly critical of CCI. In fact, the role of the corporation in community development has been intensely discussed and debated among a multidisciplinary combination of sociologists, anthropologists, social workers, and community activists who constitute the field of community development and whose goal is to build stronger and more resilient communities (McCrea & Finnegan, 2019). At-risk communities, those in which income and opportunity disparities manifest in a variety of social problems, including substance abuse, crime, inadequate education, health problems, and social dislocation, are among the most vulnerable and where the effects can be especially severe (Denhardt & Glaser, 1999; McIvor, Napoleon, & Dickie, 2009). Community workers resent communities being recast as "stakeholders" (Banerjee, 2008), and claim that this risks communities being seen as in service of advancing business goals rather than their own aims (Mayes, Pini, & McDonald, 2012). Distribution of superficial and fleeting funding does not allow for either sustained development or community involvement. In fact, CCI can function to extend corporate power and create a sense of having been "bought" (Mayes, 2019: 96). This runs counter to the primary aim of scholars and practitioners who view community development as a process whereby community members unite to identify and confront sources of oppression and, through collective agency, articulate and develop a more expansive notion of freedom (McCrea & Finnegan, 2019).

In addressing this debate, I argue that better delivery on the good intentions of CCI requires a new theory that addresses the shortcomings identified by community development scholars. Such a theory emerged from inductive qualitative study of 35 CCI programs over three years, which involved 1,176 hours of observation; 63 interviews; narratives and reflections; and archival documents representing 11 large corporations, at-risk remote Indigenous Australian communities, and a nonprofit organization. The programs obtained extraordinary mutual benefits. For example, aged care and youth facilities were built; family income management, educational trusts, and literacy programs were developed; and nutritional and substance abuse campaigns were launched. Findings attribute these successes primarily to the implementation process. The model that emerged from this research provides for an implementation approach that helps resolve the tension between CCI and community development scholars.

The analysis revealed that the relational pathways of mutual perspective-taking, reciprocal respect, and communal advocacy served as underlying mechanisms that motivated intermediate behavioral changes that cascaded into longer-term impact among the individuals, communities, and corporations involved. Achieving such outcomes requires that corporations be deeply embedded within the community and committed to direct and ongoing involvement to build lasting relationships. Previous management approaches to CCI have neglected these components, thus widening the gap between discourses in management and community development and creating a schism between research and practice. The approach I identified helped to better direct the CCI toward meaningful and sustained changes in the communities and to avoid criticism within community development that corporations invested primarily for self-interest with limited social impact. Findings should be of great interest to scholars, policy-makers involved in creating guidelines for companies' contributions to sustainable local development, those designing and implementing company community investment programs, and, finally, communities and NGOs involved in community development. This theoretical framework shows how creating relational and psychological pathways can forge new ground in corporate community development, but constitutes an approach that is broadly applicable to research that seeks social change.

I begin with an overview of the literature on CCI, community development, and cross-sector partnerships. Next, I present the context, methods, analysis, and findings for the CCI programs examined and the theoretical model that emerged, focusing on the implementation process rather than on input or outcome alone. I conclude with implications for theory, research, policy-making, and practice, highlighting solutions generated or informed by the theory.

RESEARCH ON CORPORATE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community has long been a core construct in scholarly discourse (e.g., Durkheim, 1883/1933; Kant, 1782/1980). Initially, a community was thought of as a place with geographical boundaries, but researchers have come to acknowledge that "local" communities may not necessarily be located in the immediate vicinity of the firm (Padgett & Galan, 2010). To assist in defining the boundaries of a community, Vanclay (2003) referred to "upstream" as anywhere that contributes inputs to projects or production (including where workers reside), and "downstream" as the pathway of outputs (products and discharges). Other scholars have defined the boundaries of community as potentially more psychological than physical (Gibson, Gibson, & Webster, 2021). The key markers are an intrinsic connection members feel toward one another, a collective sense of difference from nonmembers (Gusfield, 1978), and the existence of shared ritual, behavioral norms, and values (Marshall, 1994) that create social solidarity (Durkheim, 1915/1965). With this broader conceptualization in mind, I drew from research on CCI, community development, and cross-sector partnerships.

Corporate Community Investment

CCI is a subset of CSR, which refers to the obligation firms have to try, often outside of their primary economic role, to improve society and offset any negative impacts of their operations (Glavas, 2016). Studies have suggested that CSR enhances firm financial performance (for a review, see Aguinis & Glavas, 2012); however, questions remain, including what other benefits accrue and how to maximize these outcomes. Results are usually less robust than businesses might hope, leading to an examination of boundary conditions and intermediate factors. For example, Benn, Dunphy, and Griffiths (2006) used case studies of large organizations such as Fuji, Panasonic, and Xerox to argue that CSR fosters greater competitiveness, but only when paired with leaders' and employees' involvement.

As one component of CSR, companies engage in CCI to promote local development. CCI refers to voluntary contributions or actions by companies to help communities address their development priorities in ways that are sustainable and support business objectives (IFC, 2010; McCrea & Finnegan, 2019). The use of the term "investment" implies an expectation of return and signals that community development is typically viewed like any other investment. Corporations contribute billions to communities every year. For example, in an industry such as the resources sector, for which community support of local operations is critical, it is not unusual for a single firm to contribute $200 million annually to the communities in which it does business. Such programs can help companies gain a "social license to operate" (Gehman, Lefsrud, & Fast, 2017), access land, reduce project and reputational risks, boost productivity, meet government requirements, and compete for the next venture.

Corporate volunteerism is an important form of CCI. These programs consist of activities designed to serve those in need, and companies may sponsor release time and regular compensation for their employees to volunteer (Allen, Galiano, & Hayes, 2011; for a review, see Rodell, Breitsohl, Schroder, & Keating, 2016). Employees do not necessarily spend a significant amount of time in a community, but instead volunteer for a specific event or for a nonprofit that in turn serves the community. Research has suggested that corporate volunteerism yields a host of benefits to employees (Caligiuri, Mencin, Jayne, & Traylor, 2019; Caligiuri, Mencin, & Jiang, 2013). For example, in addition to an appreciation of differences, employee volunteers participating in IBM's community investments reported that they learned new work skills (Marquis & Kanter, 2010). Caligiuri et al. (2013: 142) found that when employees perceived volunteer projects as meaningful, and when they felt they had social support and had the necessary resources for the project, supervisors rated the participating employees as having "brought new ideas and fresh ways of thinking or working" that "has helped inform or shape the company's work, thinking, or policy."

Research conducted by Rodell and colleagues (Rodell, 2013; Rodell et al., 2017) has also indicated that corporate volunteering is related to positive employee outcomes, including meaningfulness, job absorption, and job performance. Such programs represent firm-level investments in time, money, and human talent; however, little evidence is available that change occurs inside the communities expected to benefit from the volunteerism. Companies seldom have continuing involvement in the communities, and little effort is made to assess what their activities accomplish beyond the initial influx of funds, such as whether the employees' volunteerism resulted in the transfer of knowledge or skills (Wang et al., 2020).

Unfortunately, the management literature has not provided much guidance as to how to engage in

community development to increase social impact—that is, significant and lasting changes in people's lives through given actions (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2010). Such impact has been only rarely captured in current management research or CSR reporting. Instead, the emphasis is on quantifiable outcomes. This may bias investment decisions toward programs that are easy to quantify and away from programs with social outcomes that are harder to measure (Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014).

Often missing is an understanding of the chain of logic linking inputs and activities to longer-term impacts, and practitioners are left without assessments that might enable them to adjust their investment strategies to improve their programs. For example, Esteves (2008a, 2008b) conducted case studies of CCI programs among eight of the largest global resource-extraction companies across 22 sites. She found that in focusing only on long-term and aggregate effects, most development efforts miss any intermediate means of creating both business and community value, leading to cessation of useful programs or promotion of projects that have little real value, and loss of company credibility in the community (Esteves, 2008b). Recognizing the profound potential influence of these programs on individuals and on relationships among those who are involved, management scholars have called for more research into underlying mechanisms, at multiple levels of analysis (e.g., Wang et al., 2020). Yet, the management literature continues to lack a framework for understanding the multifaceted and complex nature of CCI as an important type of CSR.

Community Development

Community development is an academic discipline in its own right "that promotes participative democracy, sustainable development, rights, economic opportunity, equality and social justice, through the organization, education and empowerment of people within their communities, whether these be of locality, identity or interest, in urban and rural settings" (Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011: 2). The United Nations has defined community development as "a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems" (UNTERM, 2014), embracing the practices of civic leaders, activists, involved citizens, and professionals to improve various aspects of communities, typically with the goal of making them stronger and more resilient (Matarrita-Cascante & Brennan, 2012). This practice is carried out in different roles and contexts by professional community workers, and in social work, adult education, youth work, health disciplines, environmental education, local economic development, and urban planning.

Scholarly research in community development addresses policy, planning, and action, with a view to informing educators, community development professionals, and grassroots workers by developing knowledge and exchanging ideas about theory and practice. Much of this research has drawn on ethnographic or first-person accounts, taking an idiographic focus and using intensive, comparatively small-scale research as a route to wider analysis. The role of the corporation is often addressed; hence, the conversation regarding management and organizations is very much alive in community development.

These scholars have made the case that current global trends make scrutiny of CCI especially timely. Communities in diverse contexts are grappling with reconfigured states and state resources. They are negotiating new and complex ensembles of power, as well as a multiplication of funding modalities (McCrea & Finnegan, 2019). Community development scholars have referred to this as a crisis of democracy (Brown, 2015) and cited staggering economic inequality (Sayer, 2015), suggesting that it is crucial to consider how funding relationships, structures, and processes contribute to or undermine the possibility of meaningful community development. They have noted that although the involvement of corporations in community development has become increasingly overt and widespread, this action has primarily been in response to transnational criticism of poor environmental and social track records (Banks, Scheyvens, McLennan, & Bebbington, 2016; Mayes, 2019). They have also pointed to a problematic privileging of the "business case" and to entrenched understandings of development as deeply intertwined with the logics of global capital (Blowfield, 2005; Richey & Ponte, 2014).

Within this literature, the resources industry has been widely acknowledged as leading the adoption and refinement of CCI, likely because these corporations' operations often occur on land owned by the community and corporations must procure their goodwill. For example, in Australia, mining companies have historically been central to the development of local communities, "supplementing and in some cases substituting the state in providing essential health, education, and community facilities" (Cheshire, 2010: 19), provision of infrastructure (roads, water, and sanitation), and training and skills

development (Brueckner, Durey, Pforr, & Mayes, 2014; Kemp, 2009).

Yet, case study analysis indicates that a large part of the local reaction to community development efforts consists of frustration at which projects get funded and on what timeline. As just one example, although a company contributed $120,000 annually to one community development fund, the local council was forced into a $2.6 million treasury loan to maintain local roads subjected to increased usage and subsequent rapid deterioration due to mining, which led to increased taxes on local (nonmining) residents (Mayes, 2019). Instead of being strategically targeted at inequalities or pressing social issues, funding appears to be distributed at the discretion of the companies and in ways not well-suited to longer-term impact. At-risk communities are often hit the hardest by such approaches (Wallace, 2007). Residents' experiences highlight the limits of corporate funding for community development in terms of accountability, effective goal-setting, and planning. As a result, Eversole (2012) challenged professionals to reevaluate deeply held assumptions about expert knowledge, recognize the role of those who "translate" between the community and the corporation, and integrate community knowledge and institutions into participatory development processes.

Collaboration Across Sectors

The empirical literature on CCI and community development reflects a limited understanding of the relationships that emerge as employees of corporations interact with members of communities in which investment is occurring. Yet, neighboring literature contains promising concepts and frameworks that speak to the possibilities. The literature on cross-sector partnerships has examined collaboration between businesses and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in which dual logics of profit and service to society must be managed relationally (Ashraf, Ahmadsimab, & Pinkse, 2017). For example, Pless and her colleagues (Pless & Maak, 2009; Pless, Maak, & Stahl, 2011) followed competency development among participants in PWC's Global Talent Management program who completed service projects in cross-sector partnerships. They noted the importance of community-building (stakeholder engagement, interpersonal skills, and relationship management), but they did not elaborate how these processes unfolded, nor their role in ensuring lasting change in the communities.

Scholars of cross-sector partnerships have proposed the concept of "collaborative value," defined as "the transitory and enduring benefits relative to the costs that are generated due to the interaction of the collaborators and that accrue to organizations, individuals, and society" (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a: 729). They argued that with time, use of resources may turn into a capability as "the partners are able to speak the 'same language' and embark in cocreation that may produce innovative products, services, and skills" (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b: 940).

Researchers have proposed that when these relational processes exist, transformative change is more likely to occur beyond the individuals and organizations, at the societal level (Selsky & Parker, 2005). This transcends a philanthropic approach, in which a corporate donor and NPO recipient engage in a unilateral transfer of resources; as well as a transactional approach, in which partners exchange resources through activities or sponsorships (Austin, 2000). However, reviewing 200 academic and practitioner sources on cross-sector collaboration, Bowen, Newenham-Kahindi, and Herremans (2010) concluded that the differences between simpler partnerships and transformative collaboration are hard to distinguish. Moreover, the mechanisms underlying such transformations remain undocumented.

As this review indicates, the time is ripe for management scholars to enter society's conversation concerning how best to support communities to ensure that CCI achieves its developmental objectives and social impact. The research question in this study is therefore, *"How does the implementation of CCI contribute to mutual development in corporations and communities?"* Answering this question will help address the tension between the managerial focus on returns that characterizes the CCI literature, and the approach emphasizing capacity-building advocated by those in community development.

METHODS

Research Setting

The research context consisted of community development initiatives that occurred within partnerships among remote Indigenous communities and Australia's largest corporations. Given an emphasis on community-driven initiatives and the deep involvement of corporations, these partnerships contrasted with other forms of CCI. This allowed participants to better articulate their experiences because they could readily contrast this

context with other situations, as advocated in previous qualitative work (e.g., Rogers, Corley, & Ashforth, 2017).

The partnerships were launched in 2001 to address the long history of mistreatment of Indigenous people, made all the more salient in the Australian government's report *Bringing Them Home* (Australian Human Rights Commission, 1997). This report resulted from a national inquiry into the "Stolen Generation"—children of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who were forcibly removed from their families and communities by government agencies and church missions under acts of parliaments from 1905–1967. Estimates are that as many as one in three Indigenous children were subjected to removal during this period (Read, 2006). Although the stated aim of this "resocialization" was to improve the integration of Aboriginal people into society, studies have found much higher incidences of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide, and alcohol abuse among members of the Stolen Generation (Trudgen, 2000). They are also three times likelier to have a police record (Bereson, 1989) than are Aboriginal people who grew up in their ethnic communities. The effects continue to this day. A study by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2019) found that children living in households with members of the Stolen Generation are more likely to experience adverse outcomes, including poor health, especially mental health, and live in poverty. In a landmark 2008 address, nearly a decade after publication of the *Bringing Them Home Report*, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd formally apologized to Indigenous Australians, noting,

> We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering, and loss on these our fellow Australians … We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians … A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement, and economic opportunity … A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve, and mutual responsibility. (Lo, 2008)

Against this backdrop, the National Aboriginal Health Strategy advocated that: health does not just mean the physical well-being of the individual but refers to the social, emotional, spiritual, and cultural well-being of the whole community (Jackson & Ward, 1999). Community delegates of the Cape York Land and Health Summit in Australia determined the focus should be income management, education, health, and housing as universal foundation blocks for functional families, and reasoned that these foundations could be created in part by addressing the expertise deficit in Indigenous communities (Cape York Partnership, 2011). Advocates recognized that corporations could play an important role in achieving these objectives, but this would require an innovative approach to CCI. In the typical approach, firms are hands-off during the implementation process of CCI, choosing to make financial contributions or have third-party providers engage with the communities. However, to make progress toward the goals outlined by the Indigenous leaders (ILs) required more than just an arms-length influx of funding. Instead, expertise supplementation was needed, in such a way that fostered community independence.

To address these needs, programs were developed in which Indigenous communities outlined their priorities and identified initiatives for support. They were assisted by the nonprofit organization Bridge (a pseudonym) in identifying the expertise that might be helpful and in writing an initial program description to guide the activities. Bridge representatives (BRs) were permanent residents in the region, typically living in, or near, the Indigenous communities. As a result, ILs and Indigenous partners were comfortable approaching Bridge with ideas for programs and initiatives they believed could benefit from corporate involvement. Next, Bridge located volunteers in corporate Australia and connected them to the Indigenous communities. The companies that provided volunteers engaged much more deeply with the communities than is typical. This deeper engagement consisted of direct, ongoing involvement in program activities or project initiatives. This involvement took the form of volunteer corporate "secondments" ranging from six weeks to three years, living and working alongside Indigenous partners (IPs) in the community. Companies continued to pay their secondees' salaries and financed travel and accommodations.

Bridge provided a brief orientation to the corporate secondees (CSs) when they arrived in the community, but then exited and was intentionally uninvolved during the secondments. The intent was to build self-sufficiency and promote corporate and community capacity to instigate and implement development programs on their own. At the close of the secondments, outcomes for communities and corporations were discussed in extensive debriefing

sessions attended by Indigenous and corporate participants. The debriefings allowed codification of learnings and progress and facilitated the final step in the process—longer-term impact in both the communities and corporations. Over the last decade, the programs have involved over 2,500 CSs volunteering from 30 large corporations in support of 115 community programs.

Researching CCI in this context required sensitivity to Indigenous culture, and a grounded theory approach that enabled inductive building of theory from the day-to-day experiences of individuals living the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Immersion into the cultural group allows for understanding social, familial, cultural, religious, historical, and political backgrounds, and connections with community members are critical because they validate the researcher's credibility and trustworthiness and reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings and conflicts (Liamputtong, 2008). Others have noted the importance of a long-term commitment and continuous reflection upon assumptions and operating styles, suggesting participatory methodologies as the means to share experiences, foster collaboration, and build appreciation of the context of people's lives (Ball & Janyst, 2008; Greenhill & Dix, 2008). For these reasons, this research was a long-term endeavor. Over three years, a series of research assistants and I worked in remote Indigenous communities in four regions of Australia. Our involvement included extensive participant observation, data collection and analysis, strategic planning, and documentation. We served as both researchers and collaborators, coaching and advising in the programs, and interpreting and feeding back results. It is noteworthy that, following their periods of involvement in the project, the research assistants moved onto careers in clinical or social work, Indigenous affairs, or activism.

Sampling

I focused the primary data collection on the 35 corporate-community programs underway during the study period that were funded by 11 of the largest corporations in Australia in industries such as mining, oil and gas, banking, retail, professional services, and transportation. Programs included launching a small-business development center, formation of a land council, creating a land trust succession plan, launching family income management programs, establishing educational trusts, improving a medical facility, developing literacy and nutritional programs, implementing campaigns against smoking and alcoholism, developing a cultural center and an Indigenous college, establishing a football club, building a care facility for the aged, and setting up a youth hostel.

The 35 programs were completed in five cohorts. Each cohort consisted of three to nine CSs who started their secondments at the same time and in the same region, although each one participated in different communities and programs. I focused mainly on a primary CS and IPs for each program (for a total of 70 primary participants), because the experience of community development was likely to be most salient to those who experienced it daily (Banks et al., 2016). These focal participants were diverse. Nearly half (49%) were women. The age range was 25–55 (mean age = 42). The 35 IPs were all born and raised in Australia.[1] Among the corporate participants, 19 were born in Australia, and 16 elsewhere. Countries of origin for these 16 were New Zealand (4), South Africa (4), Canada (2), Scotland (2), Greece (1), Macedonia (1), India (1), and Brazil (1). Positions held included corporate management; human resources; finance, accounting, or risk management; sales and marketing; research, product development, or design; and internal consulting. In addition, I included corporate leaders (CLs) (8), ILs (6), and representatives of Bridge (8) who supported the corporate-community programs, using theoretical sampling, to include individuals whose experience seemed most relevant to emergent themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Data Sources

I collected data from five sources—observations, interviews, narratives, reflection journals, and archival documents—to obtain an understanding of the processes by which the corporate-community programs unfolded. Information from these sources overlapped, which helped establish the sequence of events and revealed recurring themes. Table 1 documents the data sources and how I used them.

Observation. I logged 1,176 hours of participant observation, including secondment orientations and program activities, coordination meetings, debriefings, and retreats among the BRs. Orientations and secondments were conducted *on country* (in remote

[1] Two of the participants revealed they were children of the Stolen Generation. However, because this is a highly sensitive subject among Indigenous peoples, I did not directly probe into this topic in our interviews.

TABLE 1
Data Sources

Type	Amount	Use in Analysis
Observations	1176 hrs. 762 hrs. in secondments 294 hrs. in coordination meetings 60 hrs. in secondment debriefings 60 hrs. in Bridge retreats	Relational processes, psychological pathways, behavioral changes
Interviews	63 total (20–60 mins.) 31 Corporate participants 24 Indigenous participants 8 Bridge representatives	Relational processes, psychological pathways, behavioral changes, impact
Informal narratives and conversations	51 total (20–60 mins.) 21 Corporate participants 30 Indigenous participants	Relational processes, psychological pathways, behavioral changes, impact
Reflections	35 total (about 10–15 pages each) 30 Corporate secondees 5 Indigenous partners	Relational processes, psychological pathways, behavioral changes
Archival documents across three years	Annual reports produced by corporations, Indigenous partner organizations, and Bridge	Impact in communities and companies

Note: The primary participant for each program was the corporate secondee assigned to the program and the primary indigenous partner for the program; where interviews were not possible, conversations and narratives informed our understanding of the program.

rural locations on Indigenous lands). The week-long orientations were a particularly special period of induction, held by the permission of elders at restricted sacred sites accessible only by four-wheel drive vehicles, requiring navigation of rugged terrain and living on the land (i.e., camping, backpacking, cooking over open fires). I took detailed notes during observations and recorded theoretical interpretations of these. I routinely shared and discussed these with IPs, CSs, and BRs after each cohort's programs concluded.

Interviews. I conducted 63 formal and informal interviews with ILs and partners, CLs and CSs, and BRs. Most interviews were spontaneous and open-ended, following a semistructured format based on an evolving protocol developed in conjunction with the program administrators (see Online Appendix A). Interviews ranged from 20 to 60 minutes, averaging 45 minutes. Most interviews were not recorded because of the physical environment, but I took notes during and immediately after the unrecorded interviews and documented reflections during breaks and after each day of interviews.

Narratives. Models of Indigenous research honor the importance of direct experience, interconnectedness, relationships, and values (Chino & DeBruyn, 2006), requiring an informal *in situ*, narrative approach that involves asking community members to "tell the story" or "share their history." This also involves: (a) listening and talking, given that everyday conversations provide insights into what is most meaningful; (b) observing, which involves watching community members and their everyday interactions that inform the meaning of their conversations; and (c) thinking, including deep reflection on what is heard and observed, requiring immersion in what is being told and the reasons why (Moreton-Robinson & Walter, 2010). Specifically, Chambers (1992: 1) recommended: "relaxing not rushing, showing respect, 'handing over the stick' [allowing others to talk] and being self-critically aware. Modes of investigation, sharing and analysis are open-ended, and often visual, by groups and through comparisons." Using a dialogue approach, the researcher can probe for stories in specific domains, but community members share those aspects of their history they deem appropriate. Such histories, when aggregated and analyzed for themes over time, have in prior research provided fairly robust evidence of community capacity-building (Ball & Janyst, 2008). Thus, in addition to the interviews, I assembled 51 narratives, and they frequently took place *on country* around a campfire or in an Indigenous community center.

Reflections. All participants were encouraged to keep a journal in which they daily recorded activities, observations, learnings, thoughts, and feelings throughout the programs. I obtained access to reflections from 30 CSs and five Indigenous participants. The most common reasons others did not share

theirs were an inability to regularly access technology or a lack of time. For these participants, I gathered reflections using the narrative approach instead. Those who shared reflections said they enjoyed the process immensely. Access to reflections enabled a chronological understanding of the processes that unfolded.

Archival documents. Archival materials served as useful support for triangulation (Sha & Corley, 2006) and included three years of annual reports produced by: (a) the 11 corporations, (b) Bridge, and (c) IP organizations. This was an unobtrusive form of data (Webb & Weick, 1979), providing information on acknowledged impacts of the programs.

Data Analysis

Taking an inductive, theory-building approach, I iterated between the data and an emerging theoretical understanding of the processes that unfolded as corporations and communities engaged with one another (Locke, 2001; Miles & Huberman, 1994). A process focus requires a temporal view, with attention to unfolding events, decisions, and actions and an understanding of the mechanisms that explain these (Davis & Marquis, 2005). The analysis progressed in several stages.

Case histories for each program. I treated each of the 35 programs as a separate case and began by developing a comprehensive understanding of each by coding all associated materials. This allowed me to trace the actions of Bridge, the community, and corporate participants, and drew my attention to explanations of their actions and interactions in the data. I read the observation notes and interview transcripts in full and consulted the archival material. Given the large number of data sources, a parsimonious initial list of general codes ("skills," "resources," "actions," "changes") was developed to perform initial coding (Whyte, 1984) and construct the case histories.

Open coding. Next, concepts representing core themes were assigned to blocks of raw data during an open-coding process. This involved naming experiences, activities, and observations (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), adhering closely to the data at the first-order level, and staying true to the language or meaning indicated by informants (Charmaz, 2006; Van Mannen, 1979). Sample concepts include *perspective*, *respect*, and *advocacy.* Online Appendix B contains examples of each concept. Each piece of supporting data is labeled as IL, IP, CL, CS, or BR, and with an identifying number assigned during coding.

I initially conducted open coding with several interviews, narratives, and journals, generating a preliminary list of these concepts. Two research assistants, including one who had worked directly with CSs and IPs in the remote communities, then independently coded several additional sets of data to establish a baseline understanding (Locke, 2001). We compared our coding and found a high level of correspondence; we discussed discrepancies until we reached agreement. We then continued with the remainder of the data, open coding, and adding new concepts as necessary. Once this stage of coding was completed, I conducted the remainder of the analysis and model development.

Development of the process model. Next, I elaborated and refined relationships among the codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Mapping these linkages in each program helped direct attention to specific moments and events of potential significance for a process model. Online Appendix C presents an example of how this unfolded for one program. Understanding of the linkages was augmented with additional information from other data sources, including program and company reports. As analysis proceeded, conceptual significance of each step of the process model was further developed.

Using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I compared themes between occurrences and across participants and programs, with a focus on how development emerged and on what participants considered the central strategies and accomplishments. I explored applicability of several theoretical frames at this stage, including stakeholder theory, CSR, and radical views within community development regarding maintaining freedom. Interaction with readers and attendees at presentations led to the realization that early frames were inadequate in illuminating some of the most interesting phenomena in the data; this led to further theorizing (Locke et al., 2008). For example, the deeply relational and psychological experiences of community development the data revealed had not been addressed in prior literature.

I performed additional rounds of coding and comparison; this was supplemented by rereading the literature on relational processes, moving between the data and theory. New codes and themes emerged (e.g., the criticality of intercultural competencies). I also came to recognize that participants offered insightful observations about the changes occurring in their partners. For example, CSs frequently

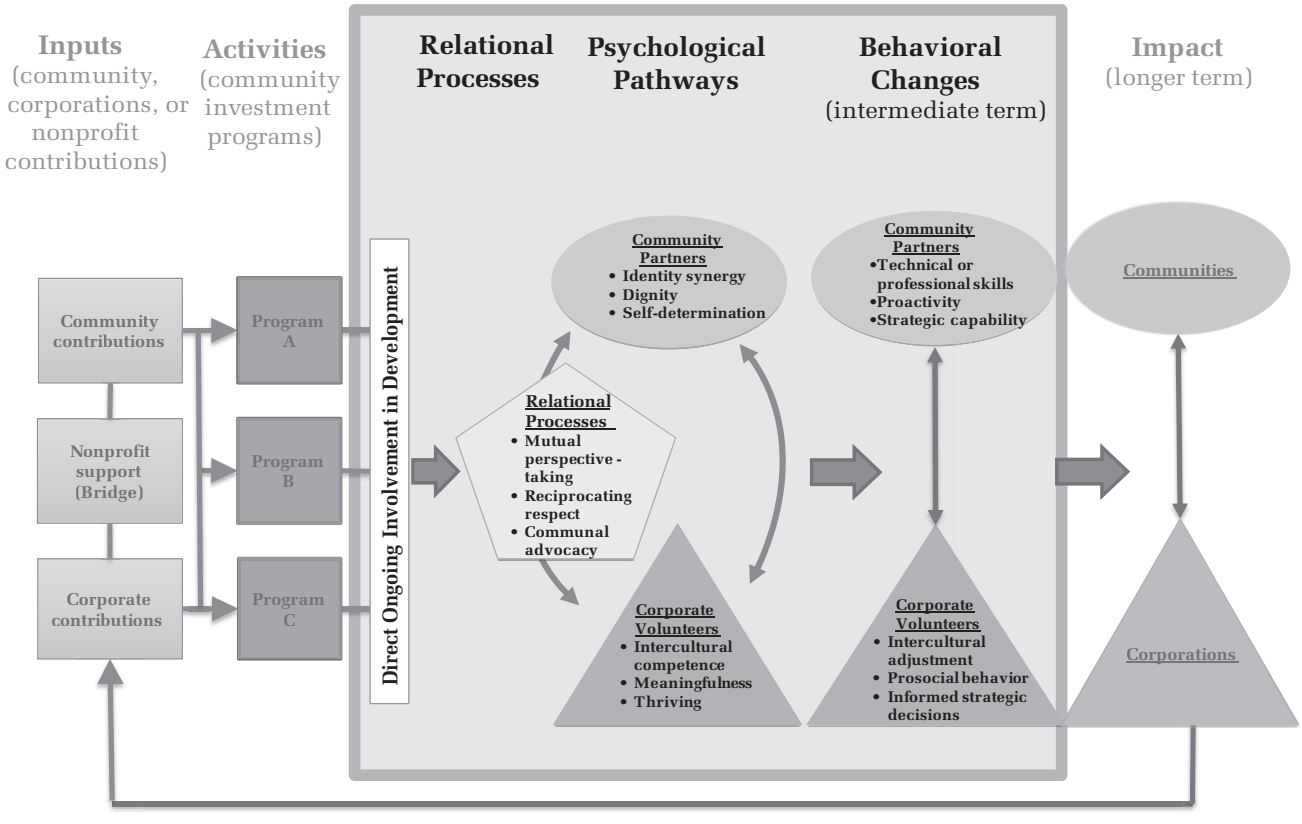
described development and learning they noticed among their IPs; however, likewise, the IPs commented on changes they saw in CSs. This commentary was especially valuable, given that the true test of relational competency is the reaction of the interaction partner, especially when crossing cultures (see Boyacigiller, Goodman, & Phillips, 2003). This prompted a return to the data to elaborate on the mechanisms associated with these processes, in order to name the categories at a level of abstraction supporting a generalizable theoretical framework (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

FINDINGS

In answer to the research question, *"How does the implementation of CCI contribute to mutual development in corporations and communities?"* analyses revealed that as the corporations and communities collaborated over an extended period, they progressed to a heightened level of *corporate community codevelopment* (see Figure 1) in which relational processes produced psychological gains and subsequent behavioral changes. Extending beyond the typical approach to CCI, the relational processes served as the connective tissue between the corporations and communities to foster independent capacity-building, and this was made possible by local embeddedness of the CS, direct ongoing involvement with the community, and the quick exit of Bridge once programs were underway. This distinguishes codevelopment from other types of commercial or government support, and is more inclined to enable self-sustaining development.

In presenting the findings, I devote special attention to the most novel components that emerged in the analysis—the relational and psychological pathways depicted within the frame at the center of Figure 1. Relevant literature is referenced that enhanced the plausibility of the relationships among the various concepts, but this has not yet been applied in the literature on CCI, community development, or cross-sector partnerships. Illuminating these processes contributes to discourse in each of these domains. By way of overview, to the extent that the relational processes of *mutual perspective-taking*,

FIGURE 1
Emergent Theoretical Framework for Corporate Community Codevelopment



Note: Focus of research is on proccesses within the frame at the center of the model.

reciprocating respect, and *communal advocacy* occurred, frequently psychological changes, including *identity synergy*, *dignity*, and *self-determination,* developed among community IPs while *intercultural competencies*, *meaningfulness,* and *thriving* improved among the CSs. These founding conditions were critical to understanding how the later intermediate-term outcomes unfolded. As codevelopment continued to emerge, behavioral changes were commonly observed, including *professional or technical skills*, *proactivity*, and *strategic capability* in the communities, and *intercultural adjustment*, *prosocial behavior*, and *informed strategic decision-making* in the corporations. Coinciding with these changes, the community and corporations experienced longer-term social impacts.

The relational processes of mutual perspective-taking, reciprocating respect, and communal advocacy frequently happened simultaneously. They were not mutually exclusive. Similarly, changes occurred in most (sometimes all) of the psychological and behavioral elements in the programs. However, three common paths (one for each relational process) were revealed, whereby a given relational process frequently cooccurred with certain psychological and behavioral changes. Elaborating on the central portion of Figure 1, these paths are depicted in greater detail in Figure 2, and presentation of the findings is organized around them. Within each pathway, the relational processes are first defined and illustrated, then the psychological and behavioral changes that frequently occurred with these processes are identified, first for IPs, then those for CSs.

Mutual Perspective-Taking

In this first pathway, illustrated in the top panel of Figure 2, the relational process of mutual perspective-taking frequently facilitated identity synergy for IPs and intercultural competency for CSs. In turn, this enabled technical and professional skill development among IPs and intercultural adjustment among the CSs. Mutual perspective-taking was emphasized by both community participants and CSs and pertained to being able to *walk in another's shoes.* This process began during the induction of the CSs. A profound demonstration was documented in my notes during an orientation conducted *on country* and facilitated by an IL from the region:

> We arrived hot and dusty, were treated to a swim in the stream, and an amazing meal served up by [the leader's] family. Over the campfire, she shared her story, explaining that her parents were of the Stolen Generation, and she grew up "on country" but went to high school in Sydney. Her life was full of challenges, including the suicides of a son and a brother. Yet, she has accomplished so much in reconnecting her community to country. She returned to manage the ranger station but also developed an ecotourism business, with secondees assisting in business planning. The next day, we were honored as a member of the community explained the history of the land and gave us a blessing. Before we left, we stood in a circle around [the leader], and she said, "Thank you from the bottom of my heart for being willing to help me make a go of a new start." She spoke of "the bonds that hold all of us together and regardless of skin color, we are all members of the same community."

Experiences such as these engendered what I came to understand as *perspective-taking,* defined as a cognitive process whereby an individual adopts another person's point of view for the purpose of understanding that person's preferences, values, and needs (Parker & Axtell, 2001). However, my analysis indicated that for codevelopment to occur, the process must be *mutual*. Most research to date has focused on within-person perspective-taking (i.e., the extent to which a target takes on the view of others and experiences personal benefits). However, in my study, *mutual* perspective-taking occurred when all partners took on each other's perspectives, cognitively "trying on" the others' interpretations, observations, and experiences, and seeking to understand what it is like to see the world through their eyes. An IP stated,

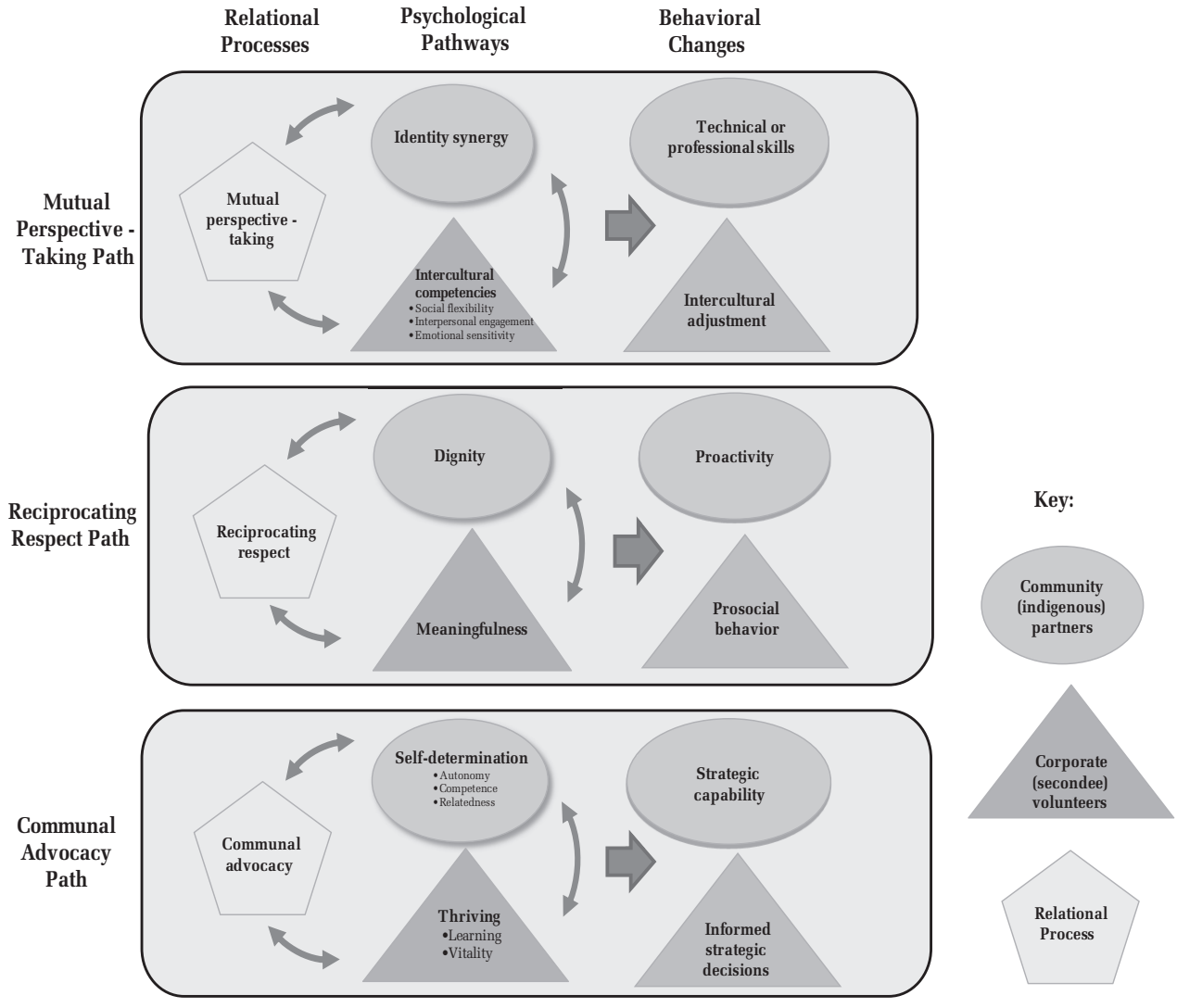
> The most important thing I've seen develop is in terms of knowledge—being able to think outside the square—the secondee being able to put yourself in the place of an Aboriginal person and looking at the world from an Aboriginal point of view. But also the reverse. [IP03]

At the same time, participants acknowledged that it was also important for the IPs to be able to see the *corporate perspective*. Said one IL,

> We leaders are collaborating and creating ties across multiple allies. If this is happening then we are tapping into deep cultural wisdom. As Aboriginal nations, we have always understood the strength of collaboration and the power of taking everyone on the journey. This goes both ways. [IL02]

Our analysis revealed that mutual perspective-taking is a particularly critical relational process among cross-race or -ethnic dyads. In these interactions, members of the majority group may assume their knowledge is superior. Mutual perspective-taking facilitated the valuing of knowledge of others

FIGURE 2
Common Pathways for Corporate Community Codevelopment



in the collaboration, alongside one's own, and helped to alter collaborators' frameworks to incorporate this new knowledge. One IP described it like this:

> It was no longer a painful process, but instead we walked together. In the past you had two organizations separate. [The company] on the one hand, and then the community on the other hand. From our Indigenous side of things, our leaders needed to understand that education was key. How do we get that? Working with Bridge to create schools, colleges, universities. [IP05]

Perspective-induced Indigenous partner development. Mutual perspective-taking enabled important psychological and behavioral changes. For the IPs, the psychological changes commonly began with gaining insight into their identities, and specifically learning to navigate across their different identities. In discovering others' perspectives their own identity became clearer. Specifically, IPs were frequently members of several different identity groups, such as an ethnic language group (i.e., as an Indigenous person) and a dominant majority group (i.e., as a participant in business and the economy). This is not an easy situation for ethnic minorities, who must deal with two central issues: The extent to which they retain identification and involvement with their culture of origin and the extent to which they identify with and participate in the mainstream,

dominant culture (Benet-Martinez, Lee, & Leu, 2006). For example, a primary cultural imperative among Indigenous peoples is known as *connection to country*. According to Indigenous scholars, "no matter where we go or are forced to go, our country never leaves us. … Country is far more than what can be seen with physical eyes … . [It] is the home of our ancestral spirits, the place of our belonging, the core of our humanity (Morgan, Mia, & Kwaymullina, 2010: 265). Indigenous participants see this central value at risk when they engage with mainstream corporations, "people losing contact with their culture. The Stolen Generation. The urban Indigenous people have lost connection to country. We are trying to piece back together what was lost. Most of us don't even know our language" [IP04].

IPs described deep feelings of abandonment and disloyalty to their culture when working with representatives of a mining company who may violate Indigenous cultural norms. At the same time, attempts to uphold their spiritual connection to their cultural heritage (e.g., by expressing reservations about corporate operations) generated feelings of disloyalty toward the corporations that were contributing to the economic progress of the community. One IP stated,

> The Indigenous world view is about relationship to country. Non-Aboriginal people don't necessarily understand how closely we feel to country. We do damage to country. It doesn't make me feel good. Leaders need to understand that. [IP07]

My analyses revealed that the relational process of mutual perspective-taking in the context of ongoing collaborations and deep relationships was instrumental in increasing the understanding of identity, and this enabled a reconciliation of tensions and the emergence of what I came to refer to as *identity synergy* between sets of values, knowledge, or expertise associated with the identities. This concept has been proposed for organizational identities (Pratt & Foreman, 2000), but not yet at the intrapersonal level. Other research has examined an individual's attempt to integrate multiple identities (e.g., Ashforth, 2007), but a reconciliation where identities remain separate but are compatible and operate synergistically has not yet been documented. An IP described it like this:

> We have to work. But we still try to maintain family and country connection. It is a pulling, like an urge, it is a really strong connection. With non-Indigenous people, there are less obligations. It can be stressful at times. … It is good for a manager to understand that. We have learned how to explain it so they will come to understand and react differently. [IP03]

Others said, "We are in that space to keep connections to country while also still working and living with the rest of society. We are operating in a third space" [IP07], and that "people need to be aware that [Indigenous] culture is very strong here and that we are working in two worlds. The rules we are given at work have to line up with our culture and customs" [IP05].

Our analysis revealed that the process of mutual perspective-taking and development of identity synergy catalyzed new behaviors among the IPs, including improved *technical and professional skills.* Skill transfer from corporate volunteers to community members is an implicit but seldom-measured objective in community investment. Such a transfer was enabled by the insights gained through perspective-taking, the reduction of strain on one's identity, and the creation of a safe space for learning something new. Across annual reports, 86% of Indigenous organizations reported improvement in expertise, skills, and professionalism. One IP estimated, "we are four years ahead of where we would have been without this increase in our skills" [IP 07]. An IL commented that the skills transfer "makes our support resources go even further. It also supports good governance and controls in relation to the contracts that support the community development agenda" [IL04]. CSs also realized the longer-term value of developing community expertise:

> Moving the family income management program from an idea to a reality … gave Indigenous people in those communities a simple and practical opportunity to leverage the value of income for productive outcomes. The benefits of this in reducing cash flowing to alcohol and gambling, with consequent social impacts, were considerable. [CS03]

Perspective-induced corporate secondee development. Mutual perspective-taking also enabled important psychological and behavioral changes among the CSs. Consider a specific secondment (documented in my observational notes):

> As a manager in the oil and gas industry, this secondee's project entailed developing an asset management plan, including an asset survey and maintenance schedule, for an Indigenous land trust in a very remote rural area of Australia. During the six-week secondment, his reflections indicated a growing awareness of the complexity of Indigenous life, land rights, and welfare reform. He became much more skilled in observing and identifying

> successful and unsuccessful means of developing and maintaining relationships with Indigenous members of the community. He also mentioned numerous instances in which he was able to build interpersonal connections with others and to do so in a way that reflected deeper understanding of Indigenous culture.

This psychological development was widespread. Across annual reports, 92% of returned CSs reported personal growth, 67% reported an improvement in their adaptability and flexibility, and 72% reported substantial increases in their knowledge, understanding, and awareness of Indigenous culture and communities. In particular, through the ongoing interaction and mutual perspective-taking, I saw evidence of what I came to view as new and increased *intercultural competencies* among the CSs. Formally defined in prior literature as a set of cognitive, relational, and self-management aptitudes, intercultural competencies support effective and appropriate interaction with those who are culturally different than oneself (Bird, Mendenhall, Stevens, & Oddou, 2010). Understanding the views and experiences of the IPs was the first step in realizing better means of relating with them, and to managing one's self during these interactions. For example, one CS stated that the program "gave me an insight into cultural requirements and attitudes that I needed to address and helped me individually to cope with situations which arose after the secondment" [CS15].

External validation that these competencies were growing can be found in the awareness of Indigenous individuals of these changes among the CSs. As one CS reported, "he was a pleasure to host, demonstrating good work and flexibility, able to accommodate changes in the office, and a genuine interest in the school and its people" [IP08]. Returning to the literature, I saw that these competencies were best captured by the concepts of *social flexibility*, which is the ability to modify ideas, compromise, and be receptive to new ways of doing things (Renner, 2006); *interpersonal engagement*, which is the degree to which people have a desire and willingness to initiate and maintain new relationships (Goldberg et al., 2006); and *emotional sensitivity*, which is the awareness and understanding of emotions (Martin, Berry, Dobranski, Horne, & Dodgson, 1996). The process of mutual perspective-taking engendered these competencies. One CS said:

> You will have assumptions going in, and you will draw on your core skills, but in this very different environment, you have to be flexible and ask a lot of questions because those assumptions may be completely wrong … you need to be sensitive to the emotions of others and to your own responses to the extreme surroundings. [CS 02]

When these psychological pathways were formed, corporate participants demonstrated an increased ability to adjust their behavior to better fit other cultures, a concept known as intercultural *adjustment* (Pornpitakpan, 1999). My findings revealed that it was the process of first taking another's perspective, followed by the development of flexibility and sensitivity, that prompted these adjustments. As examples, CSs became better at *listening and incorporating silence as a means of empowering, asking open-ended questions, acknowledging their views and responses, allowing the partner to nominate where and when they would like to speak* and *to first understand and then be understood*. One CS stated that they became:

> more aware of personal tendencies, preferences and attitudes with regard to cross-cultural engagement. Awareness of these things can help make your future interactions more consciously positive … this made me think about how I need to react differently in future situations. [CS20]

Some of the behavioral changes were in the form of very specific cultural adjustments. One IP noticed the following about the CS he worked with:

> He started to be aware of nonverbal cues. Mirroring things like lack of eye contact [this is culturally normative]. Being aware of language … connotations that might be more subtle. He learned that when you deal with Pilbara or Kimberly mob [people of these geographic regions in Australia], they will just say something and then will stop [he stopped talking for 30 seconds], and so that is a cultural nuance. Flexibility is a very big thing. It is being able and willing to read those nonverbals. [IP02]

CSs described that by having collaborated in a deep way, so as to prompt mutual perspective-taking, they learned that simply "being aware of differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is not enough … that needs to be translated into action" [CS01].

Reciprocating Respect

In a second pathway, illustrated in the middle panel of Figure 2, the relational process of reciprocating respect created psychological pathways that frequently took the form of dignity for IPs and meaningfulness for CSs, which in turn enabled proactivity among IPs and prosocial behavior among the CSs. *Reciprocating respect* was a critical process for

codevelopment. In this sense, respect is the value accorded by one or more others, simply as a function of their being persons (Rogers & Ashforth, 2017). Not just building, but *reciprocating,* respect through ongoing interactions appeared to be essential to psychological and behavioral developments among both the community and corporate participants. During orientation, a BR called it critical for the CS to "really be with the partner, spending time with them, listening, finding commonalities, sharing of yourself and being very present in the moment, demonstrating deep integrity and respect" [BR01]. This was understood as an unfolding process, with respect growing as relationships developed. An IP commented, "People don't expect you to know right away. But they want you to be respectful and try to fit in eventually" [IP02]. As CSs and IPs worked together, the giving and receiving of respect was recognized and valued. An IP described it like this,

> I am a mentor for my community. Having that respect from the company and the knowledge that I have helps me to interact with the community. There are some community members that still have anguish around [the company's] role. The key around all of this is to respect. Respect is an opportunity to interact freely without holding back. If I see a member or an organization showing me that respect, I feel free in return to give my views. If a company shows respect in that manner, then that respect comes back. This is the reason we have come so far. [IP10]

CSs expressed a new-found respect for IPs and Indigenous people broadly:

> I have learned that there are many positive, inspiring, committed people (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) who are working extremely hard to bridge the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. They deserve respect. This gives me hope for the future. [CS17]

Respect-induced Indigenous partner development. Reciprocating respect was commonly intertwined with the psychological experience of *dignity,* especially among the IPs. Dignity is a personal sense of worth, value, or esteem derived from one's humanity and individual social position (Hodson, 2001). Reciprocating respect in collaborations with CSs promoted dignity within community participants. One IL said, "The benefits to the community and individual self-worth were a delight to see" [IL03]. An IP stated that "the program gave us a chance to stop and look at ourselves, which was good and was uplifting. It made us feel valued" [IP02]. Said one IL,

> I've seen young guys, who are really the next generation of leaders, work with secondees, and seen how their dignity grows and how they've expanded their own networks. In 10 years' time, they'll be the next leaders, and at the moment they're growing because of their work with secondees. They're learning more, and they're thinking about opportunities that might come their way to expand their horizons. [IL03]

Importantly, our analysis revealed that dignity can be experienced, even regained, in the context of a work relationship. Indeed, the relational process of reciprocal respect was a form of recognition, a conduit by which Indigenous participants acknowledged their own self-worth, and gained a sense of dignity. The opening observation of the IL's transformation as she worked with CSs to establish an ecotourism business illustrated this phenomenon. Said another IL:

> Our ultimate goal is to ensure that [Indigenous region] people have the capabilities to choose a life they have reason to value. Employment opportunities and longer-term benefits to [the] community are starting to be realized. Partnerships through [Bridge] have enabled [the] community to engage with business. Capacity is growing as we go forward with our heads held high. [IL05]

When these psychological experiences of increased dignity occurred, they resulted in behavioral changes among the IPs. Viewing the self as having greater worth, community members were motivated to bring about a better future for themselves and others. For example, IPs became more *proactive* as a result of their interactions with CSs. Being proactive is about making things happen instead of watching things happen (Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). Partners self-initiated efforts to change their work environments or themselves, and in so doing created new prospects. An IL stated:

> Elders and community members resolved, with a sense of great urgency, to stop and reverse the social and economic decline in their communities. We called for help from and partnerships with … governments, corporate and philanthropic organizations like [Bridge], and all Australians of good will. The response has been overwhelmingly positive …. there is a palpable qualitative change taking place. [IL01]

In addition, working side by side with a CS provided a vivid example of how to be proactive, which encouraged such behavior within the IP. Examples included anticipating and preventing problems, using initiative, and seeking out and seizing opportunities. An IP described her change to being proactive like this:

> I realized that someone might say something that is unacceptable, but if I don't tell that person, that person will continue to say it. It is up to us to educate them. I could choose not to educate them. But if you do, then you can create that change. If you do want to see change, and have a good working environment, it is about working together to understand each other. [IP08]

Another said, "The key is learning to take initiative; it has to become a norm. Otherwise, it is really hard to swim against the current; in many communities it is not cool to succeed" [IL04].

Respect-induced corporate secondee development. Reciprocating respect also encouraged psychological and behavioral changes for the CSs, but of a slightly different nature. Respect is intertwined with recognition, and in addition to emotional or social recognition it can convey political or civic recognition (Maak & Pless, 2008). Indeed, a key psychological benefit for CSs was *meaningfulness,* the experience of their daily work responsibilities as having broader significance to society (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). One CS stated,

> The secondment was very powerful. It was a "this is it" moment. This put me in a space of being able to contemplate where I was and importantly identify shortfalls. The combination proved to be the most powerful personal development experience I have ever had in my life. [CS30]

As a result of the mutual respect established while on secondment, CSs reported a *new purpose* in life and *a different sense of how they can contribute to society*. They explained that the secondment allowed them to *remove themselves from familiar surroundings* and *do something more meaningful.* Doing this required what they termed as *moving outside of my comfort zone.* As a testament to a new sense of meaningfulness, many contemplated career changes after their secondment, and, in at least two instances, left the company to pursue activism or nonprofit roles. When asked whether this was a negative, a CL commented:

> Not at all. It is true that some of the secondees "go native." But if our employees are able to find a calling through this, even if it is not here at [the company], we still support that. We know it will have positive societal consequences in the long run. [CL03]

Meaningfulness contributed to CSs' behavioral changes, including *prosocial behavior*—actions performed to help or benefit others (Krebs, 1982). Recognition of the potential broader meaning of one's work also prompted actions to bring about social change, among CSs and their IPs. For example, an IP explained that even after completing the secondment, the CS returned to help the community develop a media strategy to promote the program. Community members were then able to organize a "good news story" in the local media. This had symbolic and reputational effects. The partner said:

> This secondment has been such a success and benefit to [the community]. The skills [the secondee] shared were not held by members of the team, so to have access to her expertise has showed us how we can work with the rest of the community and the media in a positive way and will continue to be of benefit in the future. [The secondee] has been generous in her willingness to share and gone above and beyond in providing opportunities for us to learn. [IP10]

One supervisor of a CS mentioned that he "returned with an increased generosity and a willingness to help, even people he does not work with regularly" [CL06]. A CL explained that CS experiences helped to develop a new initiative:

> We have a new program called A Walk in Both Worlds. It gives the younger Indigenous employees an opportunity to go back to their elders and tell them that "this is what I need to do if I am going to work at [the company]." We wanted to help them understand the different perspectives. Our retention rates have improved. [CS04]

The secondments appeared to encourage what has been referred to as "moments of mutual care" (Hafenbrack, Cameron, Spreitzer, Zhang, Noval, & Shaffakat, 2020). The relational processes of reciprocating respect, together with the establishment of meaningfulness, were important precursors to this prosocial behavior.

Communal Advocacy

In the third pathway, illustrated in the bottom panel of Figure 2, the relational process of communal advocacy most commonly cooccurred with psychological pathways in the form of self-determination for IPs and thriving for CSs. In turn, these frequently enabled strategic capabilities among IPs and informed strategic decisions of the CSs.

By *communal advocacy*, I mean that as result of their interactions, the CSs were more apt to advocate for the rights and opportunities of Indigenous people. In addition, the IPs were more willing to advocate for the legitimacy of the corporate partner's expertise and the presence of the corporation within the community. A CS described advocacy this way:

> Through my interactions I am learning about the gaps in Indigenous services and how government policy is not flexible or structured culturally for dealing with Indigenous communities. For example, there is no specific education strategy for teaching of disadvantaged Indigenous children who face many challenges and difficulties. I am staggered by this, as education is being talked about as one of the key platforms for bridging the gap. Fundamental change needs to happen in large government organizations for real improvement. [CS22]

An IP described advocacy in these terms:

> [The mining company] didn't understand a lot of Indigenous culture at first. They weren't there to be an Indigenous supporter. It wasn't their core business. But it was a license to operate, so it really should be part of their business. I saw a better way forward. Rather than us take a back seat on this, I thought we needed to sit at the same decision-making table as them. So, they had Indigenous representatives at the table. We need to advocate for each other. Our program has gotten 16 kids into higher education. [IP05]

Advocacy-induced Indigenous development. The advocacy reinforced psychological and behavioral changes. By definition, advocacy is an informational strategy that informs social change (Fayoyin, 2013). In our context, advocacy took the form of correcting misunderstandings and assumptions to more accurately represent the conditions and experiences of each party. For IPs, this was experienced as liberating and supportive, and in turn resulted in an increased reported sense of *self-determination,* defined as the ability to make choices and decisions regarding one's quality of life free from undue external influence (Wehmeyer, 1996). Prior work has suggested that self-determination occurs when people feel a sense of relatedness to others, have autonomy over their own behavior, and can see the results of that behavior making a difference in the world (Ryan & Deci, 2000). All three of these experiences were prompted by the advocacy. IPs' relatedness was fostered because the advocacy demonstrated a commitment to the ongoing relationships formed between community members and CSs. The relatedness was seen as key to the future of the communities:

> This school is a place of joy not only for those who attend but for outsiders like me who get to see the amazing results that love and care can produce. The center is full of laughter and learning. These kids ARE the future of the region and they will not be allowed to fall through the cracks if we nurture the relationships we have built and continue to support the amazing women up here. [CS31]

Communal advocacy also helped to develop an experience of self-determination because it encouraged community members to direct, implement, and "own" the success of the programs. As one IP described it:

> We learned that having Indigenous people at the planning stage is critical. Now we have a say and help determine the way. And I was able to explain to management that we didn't want a handout. We had hoped to build capabilities inside the organizations we had. [IP05]

The need for autonomy was fulfilled by the process through which IPs identified their own priorities and projects. Bridge did not mandate these, nor did the corporate partners attempt to fundamentally change them. CSs frequently mentioned they had to resist the temptation to redefine the projects based on their own sense of what might be important, "Being in the community for a significant period resets your thinking. The lived experience is so critical. It is so important to let the Indigenous partner be the guide." [CS02]

As these experiences accumulated, IPs felt a sense of competence. Said one, "We pick up the work they have done and have our own staff use those skills, so the skill flows from secondee to Indigenous person, and the fact that we can do it, this becomes a source of pride." [IP03] Another described a feeling of competence as follows:

> Training and education programs are great to get us up to where we should be, up to that level with non-Indigenous. Being recognized and acknowledged for your achievements as a person, not just an Indigenous person. Having the same expectations of me as you would of a non-Indigenous. [IP 08]

Bringing together advocacy and self-determination, the collaboration within the programs also resulted in behavioral change in the form of *strategic capability* on the part of IPs to influence their community. In the community development literature, strategic capability refers to a community's ability to define, evaluate, analyze, and act on the concerns of its members (Labonte & Laverack, 2002). The relatedness, autonomy, and competency experiences that were elemental to self-determination among the IPs contributed to their development of the skills necessary to identify community needs and plan for action to address them. An IL said,

> Together with the corporate partners, [Bridge's] access to expertise and capacity helped local Aboriginal leaders build an agenda for real change. We think

> [Bridge] secondees helped put the wind in the sails for a much stronger future. [IL05]

The strategic planning that CSs engaged in as they worked alongside their IPs also demonstrated how to create and implement a strategy that the IPs then felt competent to engage in themselves because of their increased sense of self-determination. Across program reports, 76% reported improvements in strategic planning among the IPs. One IL explained it this way:

> The benefit of [Bridge] secondees also lies in their ability to show how to have strategic input into long-term objectives in the areas of governance and capacity-building. The identification of deficits in community infrastructure of both skills and money. [IL06]

Advocacy-induced corporate secondee development. On the CS side, communal advocacy promoted psychological benefits in the form of thriving, defined as the joint experience of learning and vitality at work (Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, & Garrett, 2012). Learning is about growing through new knowledge and skills; in this context, the advocacy prompted increased understanding of the living and working conditions in Indigenous communities. Vitality denotes the sense that one is physically energized and feels alive. Previous research has identified that effective advocacy can inspire and energize (Princen, 2007). I found that by each engaging in advocacy on the part of the other, both parties were affected, and among the CSs this manifested in a greater sense of thriving. CSs discussed the interaction of learning during the secondment with a renewed sense of energy. They mentioned gaining an "understanding of innovative approaches to reform and social programs," "new knowledge of Indigenous needs and priorities," "learning patience and the ability to take people at face value," and "a better understanding of myself." At the same time, CSs also expressed how "energizing it was to enjoy the Indigenous lifestyle, living on the land, and laughing with them" [CS07]. One CS said:

> I have been thrown in the deep end with a lot of legal-type language to decipher into everyday clear English, and so I am a bit out of my comfort zone. I just keep telling myself that if this is what they need me to do, then I need to give it a red hot go. Learning something new gives me energy. [CS04]

An IP described his CS as having "an easygoing nature that meant he was unfazed about being placed in a remote community. I think he came alive and thoroughly enjoyed his time here." [IP04] This CS's supervisor, a senior CL, described him as having returned with "a great quality and presence about him. He now has a better outlook on life and increased energy and effort" [CL05].

Finally, communal advocacy, together with thriving in the form of both learning and vitality, also resulted in behavioral changes for the CSs. Their greater understanding of the needs and concerns of the community and more accurate information about the conditions and challenges they face enabled the CSs to make better *informed strategic decisions,* especially regarding social responsibility such as where, when, and how operations could have the least detrimental effect on the community. A senior leader made the powerful statement that through the secondment programs, participants had moved "beyond just an awareness of community interests, to now incorporate the needs and priorities of Indigenous communities into key decisions in the firm" [CL02]. One of the CS's said,

> I learned to use my analytical skills and a new ability to put myself in their environment, to understand the nature and culture of their concerns, so that I can now draw out the right information to inform our corporate social responsibility initiatives. [CS05]

Hence, the relationships between corporate and community participants extended beyond just a "one-shot event." CSs spoke about how deep connections had been established, with *ongoing contact* after a particular program initiative. One former CS observed that, years later,

> I'm still committed with the community, continuing to work with participants. I'm mentoring some Indigenous law students from Sydney. You could just start and stop with the secondment experience, but if you show the commitment and the desire, there are lots of other opportunities to continue to advocate for Indigenous rights and work with the community. [CS14]

Additional Patterns in Developmental Processes

I have focused on the three most common pathways; however, codevelopment did demonstrate equifinality—that is, the same final state was reached from a variety of paths (Gresov & Drazin, 1997). Findings suggested three permutations to the most common paths. First, alternative paths from a given relational process to other psychological or behavior outcomes (beyond in Figure 2) sometimes materialized. For example, mutual perspective-taking sometimes fostered a greater sense of dignity (not just identity synergy); this increased dignity

could result in a shift in strategic capability (rather than simply proactivity). Second, a given change sometimes occurred in both participants. IPs sometimes mentioned an increase in meaningfulness, and several CSs alluded to an increase in dignity. Thus, the psychological outcomes commonly observed in IPs were not exclusive to them; those commonly observed in CSs were also possible within the IPs. Finally, I did see intrapersonal patterns of relationships among the psychological and behavioral elements. For example, within an IP, identity synergy, dignity, and self-determination sometimes cooccurred. Similarly, I saw within the same CS instances of increased intercultural competencies, meaningfulness, and thriving. These patterns were less common than the three focal pathways, but are promising areas for future research, as presented below.

Summary

The analysis revealed that as the communities and corporations collaborated over an extended period, they engaged in codevelopment in which relational processes produced documentable psychological gains and subsequent behavioral changes in community and corporate participants. These relational processes functioned to connect the communities and corporations. Across communities, preliminary evidence was obtained that the aggregation of these psychological and behavioral changes coincided with communitywide uplift and longer-term impact.

During the debriefings, IPs were asked about the overall social impact on their communities, and all participants replied that it was "extremely high." During our three years of involvement, I saw demonstrations of impact that map onto indicators maintained by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD, 2001). These include increases in economic participation (e.g., labor force participation, less unemployment), educational attainment (e.g., reaching year 12), and safe and supportive communities (e.g., reductions in homicides, assaults, robberies). Specifically, economic and educational outcomes were documented in all regions, and improvements in community safety were realized in three regions. These impacts coincide with community health indicators that have been the focus in the social sector (IFC, 2010).

Likewise, on the corporate side, coinciding with psychological and behavioral growth, CSs reported longer-term change in their attitudes toward their corporations and in their work performance. The annual reports indicate that 72% of the corporations increased employee loyalty, 72% increased employee performance, and 59% reported increased customer engagement. All 11 companies described reputational gains during feedback and debriefing sessions. Formal financial analysis was not undertaken because of an insufficient sample size, but CLs also reported gains in productivity.

Further, numerous instances occurred in which corporations decided after an initial series of programs to initiate their own programs without the involvement of Bridge. Likewise, several communities became proactive, reaching out to either the same corporations previously involved, or, in some instances, to entirely new corporations, to engage in subsequent codevelopment programs. Hence, based on a variety of indicators, short-term, intermediate, and longer-term success was achieved in both the Indigenous communities and corporations, thus lending at least initial credence to the model of corporate community codevelopment that emerged in this study.

DISCUSSION

Corporations have invested billions in at-risk, remote, and rural communities, and yet the traditional approach of simply providing an influx of funding has resulted in little documentable social impact as a return on investment; meanwhile, these communities continue to struggle to improve living conditions, health, and well-being. Management scholars have asserted that CCIs are intended to do good, but, according to community development scholars, the result has frequently been harmful. I found that these tensions are resolved through participation in *corporate community codevelopment* that creates relational and psychological pathways. These findings extend theory in the fields of CCI, community development, and cross-sector partnerships, and provide suggestions for future research, policy, and practice.

Theoretical Implications

Corporate community investment. This study is among the first to provide evidence as to why funding alone is destined to be an extremely disappointing strategy for CCI. Meaningful impact is unlikely unless deep and ongoing relationships are developed between corporations and communities. This approach helps to ensure local control and autonomy, which results in community capacity-building, as opposed to creating resentment or dependence.

The theoretical framework I developed emphasizes three relational processes—mutual perspective-taking, reciprocating respect, and communal advocacy—and that specific psychological and behavioral outcomes commonly accompanied each relational process, thus allowing for a focusing of attention on specific processes when a given behavioral outcome is of interest. Further, the deep engagement of CSs informed the firms' longer-term strategies for social impact and future contributions—a feedback loop that has not been previously identified.

This study also shows how especially important these relational processes are across racial and ethnic lines—a focus missing in prior work. Although CCI frequently occurs in culturally diverse or at-risk contexts, the dynamics of such engagement are rarely acknowledged. Racial and ethnic groups subjectively generate and consume knowledge in terms of their own "thought worlds" (Dougherty, 1992); adopting another's thought world is difficult because systems of meaning are tacit and taken for granted, and people frequently assume the perspectives of the rest of the world resemble their own more than they do (Mohrman, Gibson, & Mohrman, 2001). Minority perspectives are commonly discounted, but through relational processes can be acknowledged and respected (Debebe, 2008).

Finally, by extending theory development in CCI in an entirely new direction, I also show that the relational channels are especially powerful for building the experience of dignity. Little outright attention has been given to dignity in the workplace (Lucas, 2015), but awareness is growing of a close coupling between "the way others make employees feel about the value of their work and how they feel valued as individuals" (Wrzesniewski, Dutton, & Debebe, 2003: 127). In the communities, the relationships formed between CSs and IPs became the conduits through which dignity was regained by those who had struggled with self-worth. This renewed dignity then prompted proactivity and action to make a better life. Although there was less evidence of threats to dignity and a rebuilding of it among the corporate participants, it is feasible that such benefits for dignity will occur through the reciprocity of respect. In the communities and corporations, this fueled collective strategic capability and informed strategic decisions, providing for even greater long-term social impact.

Community development. In a surprising twist, the findings illuminate the promise of corporate–community codevelopment for building self-determination among members of at-risk communities. This addresses community development scholars' most fundamental concern about CCI—that corporations remove the ability of communities to address their own priorities (Matarrita-Cascante & Brennan, 2012). By tracing the paths across the model—for example, from the relational process of communal advocacy through to an increase in self-determination, and showing how it then enabled strategic capability—I help pinpoint a specific process that can inform theory within community development. When self-determination exists, it results in positive attitudes, well-being, and more effective performance (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Among Indigenous peoples, eight waves of longitudinal data have demonstrated that self-determination reduced heart disease, diabetes, and other medical conditions (Biddle, 2011). This illustrates the powerful conduit that relational processes can provide for other long-term positive social impacts. The findings also extend prior theory by elaborating on the interrelationships among the three needs—relatedness, autonomy, and competence—scholars have proposed as necessary for self-determination. The analysis revealed that IPs' needs for autonomy and competence were met through the relational process of communal advocacy. Hence, the relational processes created a core foundation for realization of self-determination.

The findings also contribute to community development theory by illuminating the importance of identity dynamics. Among the IPs, a key psychological benefit from corporate community codevelopment pertained to identity synergy. IPs that described a synergy among their identities were more willing and able to contribute to the programs and build longer-term impacts in their communities. Identity synergy is a different aim than the focus in prior research on identity holism, whereby identities "overlap to such an extent that the boundaries fade and the identities blend into a richer whole" Ashforth (2007: 88). Whether identity holism can, or should be, an aim for racial or ethnic identities is controversial (see Ramarajan, 2014). Identity synergy is also distinct from identity enhancement, whereby one identity makes another stronger (Ramarajan, 2014), because identity synergy refers only to maintaining elements of each identity, not to enhancing them. Prior research has identified unique strengths—such as communication skills and enhanced creativity—among multicultural individuals who maintain (rather than integrate, blend, or achieve overlap among) separate identities (Leung & Wang, 2015).

The key appeared to be an understanding of the specific elements of each identity that were

compatible, and then focusing on reconciling those elements that were not. For example, *connection to country* caused tension because it was viewed as a value unique to IPs. Nevertheless, commitment to strong communities and self-determination were shared values central to both the Indigenous and corporate identities. Drawing upon these shared elements facilitated reconciliation regarding *connection to country*. As the collaborators came to know each other better, the Indigenous participants discovered that although CSs did not speak of the environment in the same way they did, many of them had a similar consciousness. Addressing the elements of identities, rather than considering them as monolithic entities, represents a more nuanced understanding than previous conceptualizations (e.g., it is more precise than bicultural identity integration [Huynh, Nguyen, & Benet-Martínez, 2011]) because it recognizes that some elements may be in conflict or compartmentalized but others may be compatible. Incorporating the role of identity is new to community development: especially far-reaching is an understanding of the importance of identity synergy as a way to strengthen rapport as a conduit to change.

Among the IPs, I also noted how behavioral change extended beyond technical and professional skills to include future-oriented behavior, such as proactivity and strategic capability. Positive outcomes of such proactivity are well-established (e.g., Crant, 1995), but what promotes it is less well-understood, especially in the context of at-risk, remote, or rural communities. Nevertheless, proactivity is especially relevant in these contexts because it involves thinking ahead and using initiative to create a better future. Communities that let themselves be driven by others' agendas face serious threats to their survival (Denhardt & Glaser, 1999). Our findings demonstrate that the relational processes that occurred as the programs unfolded provided a comfortable space for proactive and strategic behavior of the IPs, and these behaviors became more legitimate and normative. This again highlights important ways to establish sustained development capacity within communities.

Cross-sector partnerships. The cascading effect of development beyond just the program participants is a novel extension of theory which has proposed that cross-sector partnerships can promote transformative change at the societal level (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a), but has not yet documented mechanisms for this (Bowen et al., 2010). A fascinating finding revealed here is that IPs who had worked closely with CSs began to encourage others in their community to engage in perspective-taking, respectful interaction, and advocacy; even community members who did not have direct exposure to the corporate participants began to demonstrate these behaviors. CSs performed the same role with employees in their companies who had not participated in a secondment. Thus, there was a broadening of impact beyond those directly involved in the corporate–community partnership. To the best of my knowledge, I am the first to illuminate such a cascade of mutual transformation.

Finally, scholars have provided evidence that participating in CSR initiatives increases the meaning employees derive from work (Rodell, 2013; Slack, Corlett, & Morris, 2015). Extending this, I found that an increase in meaningfulness prompted specific forms of prosocial behavior after the secondment, including autonomy-oriented helping, which encouraged IPs to acquire skills and implement their own solutions. Autonomy-oriented help provides recipients with the skills, knowledge, and tools to independently identify and implement their own solutions rather than encouraging dependency (Nadler, 2002; Wakefield, Hopkins, & Greenwood, 2013). Helpers are more inclined to provide such help when they engage in perspective-taking and when they believe the reason for help-seeking is because of factors beyond the recipient's control (Nadler & Chernyak-Hai, 2014). Among the CSs, both inclinations were encouraged by a few simple steps the companies took before selection of secondees. When companies provided historical and cultural foundations for understanding Indigenous people's experiences and concerns, their secondees were knowledgeable as to how the community's current state of development had evolved. This encouraged a view that systemic and policy-related factors were at the heart of social challenges in the communities, and encouraged respect for their partners' circumstances.

As relational processes unfolded in a secondment, CSs also frequently demonstrated growth in intercultural competencies. Despite recognition of the importance of competencies in a variety of categories (cognitive, relationship, self [Bird et al., 2010]), extant research on intercultural competencies has yet to examine how competencies in one category contribute to others. I found that competencies such as social flexibility and interpersonal engagement within the relationship category were critical but required combination with a sensitivity to others' emotions and self-management of one's own emotions. Only after these competencies across categories had been built

did behavioral change occur in the form of intercultural adjustment. The importance of such adjustment has been implied, yet seldom investigated, in the literature on cross-sector partnerships (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012b). The CSs indicated how far-reaching cultural adjustment can be, and that it is useful in any interaction with people unlike oneself. This likely has implications to ground initiatives in diversity and inclusion and to combat systemic racism, even within traditional domestic workplaces.

Transferability to Other Contexts

The theoretical framework that emerged likely has applicability to many efforts at social change, including those of private foundations or by those in educational and political reform. It is likely to be especially germane wherever ethnic minorities or the original (Indigenous) people of a context have been displaced, disadvantaged, or discriminated against. For example, studies of Native American reservations in the United States have indicated the importance of autonomy in decision-making to bring about environmental reform, natural resource management, economic development, and provision of health care and social services (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, 2017). Nevertheless, such projects do not include evidence that captures the full logic for the sequences of change, and hence the approach I advocate here is more comprehensive and multifaceted.

It is also worth repeating that although Bridge identified opportunities for corporations and communities to work together, its personnel did not remain involved during the secondment, and so the relational processes and subsequent proactivity, prosocial behavior, and strategic capability were not dependent on their presence. Further, many corporations and communities continued to engage in codevelopment after an initial program concluded. Hence, ongoing involvement of an organization such as Bridge is not necessary to sustain and replicate the model of codevelopment, but an interesting question for future research is how the initial brokerage by Bridge can be applied in other settings.

Suggestions for Future Research

To provide further evidence of the efficacy of this theory, it will be important for future research to capture each element of the model, including psychological and relational pathways, using different and more extensive efforts than those of the past to investigate social impacts. Comparing multiple initiatives of varying durations using a longitudinal approach is advised. With multifaceted measures and a quasi-experimental design, research might compare corporate community codevelopment experiences to other (more traditional) modes.

Work also remains to be done in capturing the intermediate impacts within the communities, such as strategic capabilities, and may also extend to include other areas of importance, such as maintenance of cultural heritages. Community development scholars have proposed a means of capturing the social impacts of efforts to develop sustainable communities, and to arrive at a diagnostic picture of the key areas of opportunity to enable comparison over time and across communities (Laverack, 2001, 2005; O'Faircheallaigh, 2006). At regular intervals, comprehensive numeric ratings are assigned based on observations of communities in domains such as workplace capabilities; financial returns; business development; environmental management; historical rights and interests in land; cultural heritage protection; residents' consent, support, and involvement; and implementation processes. This approach will be critical in providing more substantive evidence of the links between intermediate and longer-term outcomes such as health, well-being, and safety in the communities; or retention, satisfaction, and reputational benefits in corporations.

A final area ripe for research is mutuality in both the inputs and longer-term impacts involved in corporate–community codevelopment. I have focused here on mutuality in relational processes. However, observations suggest that alignment is also critical between the corporation and community as to what resources and activities serve as key inputs to enable relational processes. It is with this deep foundation that the transformative level of collaboration mentioned in the literature on cross-sector partnerships is most likely to occur (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012a). Mutuality in inputs and activities may be necessary to move beyond philanthropic unilateral resource transfer or transactional collaborations (Selsky & Parker, 2005), and this may result in achievement of returns on investment for the corporation and the community.

Suggestions for Policy-Makers

Findings regarding community investment implementation processes are essential to addressing social injustices, including poverty and racism (McIvor et al., 2009). The approach documented here has

received national attention across Australia. In his *Closing the Gap Report* statement to Parliament in 2017, the Australian prime minister referenced this work as generating strong Indigenous governance and empowering Indigenous people to partner with government and companies, and he pledged to "continue to build the capacity and capability of communities and government to truly engage with each other and to jointly make informed decisions" (Turnbull, 2017: 5). It is likely that this recognition was bestowed because the evidence was so comprehensive across short-term, medium-term, and longer-term time horizons, with mutual benefits. A deep understanding of key mechanisms for social impact (e.g., self-determination, proactivity, strategic capability) allows more effective policies and interventions for implementation of community development. Amalgamated across communities, the totality of effects is a means of increasing social justice across socioeconomic divides.

The methodological approach I used yields insights into issues that cannot be explored through standard quantitative (e.g., economics-based social return on investment) methodologies. The field of CSR is quite sophisticated in measuring macro indicators such as regional employment rates, but not the individual competencies and community capacities needed to make these macro social impacts happen. Most organizations make limited use of the variety of evidence that might substantiate the link (e.g., longitudinal studies, stakeholder feedback forums, qualitative interviews). Much of the evidence is sparse, informal, and simple yes–no reporting (Esteves & Barclay, 2011). Tension also exists between measuring longer-term impact (i.e., of past projects), while also providing timely feedback for ongoing improvements (Kramer, Graves, Hirschhorn, & Fiske, 2007). The model here illuminates a mid-range focus beneficial in documenting development, refining community investment, and framing policies.

Nevertheless, this approach is unlikely to apply to all types of community development. Ebrahim and Rangan (2010, 2014) developed a contingency framework for public sector organizations that suggests the change theory of the service provider should determine the focus in measuring impact. If this theory is clear and straightforward (e.g., in the case of providing emergency relief) then the focus can be on activities and not longer-term impact. However, if the change theory is more complex, where impact is expected to be multifaceted and require cumulative effects, then the strategy must encompass more of the logic chain. This is likely to require more diligence and precision in capturing the relational and psychological mechanisms.

Suggestions for Practice

Approaches to community investment have frequently fallen short of corporate expectations because of limited understanding of the local context, too little emphasis on competency and skill-building, and insufficient participation and ownership by local communities (IFC, 2010). The recommended solution is an ongoing, iterative, and collaborative process that "implies an investment of company and time and resources in establishing and maintaining relationships" (IFC, 2010: 5). The approach described here illustrates how this can occur, shifting the focus of demonstrating accountability to the relational and psychological pathways that are the mechanisms for achieving the desired outcomes. Beneficiaries of the approach are at both the individual (i.e., participants) and collective (communities and corporations) levels.

Organizations can use a variety of processes to commence the journey down the relational and psychological pathways. Corporate representatives can assist in community visioning, brainstorming, and agreeing upon a desirable future state (see Gibson et al., 2021). Even simple participatory processes can be highly effective, including group discussions, informal interviews, storytelling, and drawing characterizations. This can be followed with ranking of interventions that achieve the community's vision, as well as action planning that identifies concrete programs and activities. Once the behavioral outcomes of greatest interest are identified, practitioners can work back through the pathways to understand potential points of leverage. For example, if technical and professional skills are of greatest interest, then mutual perspective-taking to help resolve identity tensions is likely to be an especially powerful course of action. If increased proactivity is the priority, then reciprocation of respect to develop a greater sense of dignity likely holds promise. Finally, if strategic capability is the behavioral outcome of greatest interest, communal advocacy to build self-determination represents a powerful pathway. Communities' residents will be engaged when they are listened to, when the company takes their concerns seriously, and they feel involved in the decisions that affect their lives.

CONCLUSION

Discourse in the field of community development has surmised that CCI often falls short of its

developmental aims and may do more harm than good. It is time that management scholars and practitioners join this conversation to more fully understand whether CCIs truly bring lasting benefits to the communities in which firms are embedded. Further, those involved in large-scale community investment acknowledge that understanding social impact is one of the biggest challenges faced, yet transforming local capacity determines whether community development will be sustainable. The approach advocated here integrates the management literature on CCI with that in community development, drawing attention to the relational and psychological pathways that create behavioral change. It is hoped that by doing so, this impact will be increased and sustained.

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