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Globalization Impacts Regional Colleges: Janusian Institutions

by

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Abstract

This study considers the impact of globalization and the global forces of economics, politics, technology and culture on the role, mission and environment of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. Regional Colleges are unique higher education institutions in Canada. They were created in the early 1970's as autonomous "brokering institutions" within a geographic region to deliver a decentralized approach of credit training and be an instrument for community and social development. They delivered other provincial credit-granting institutions training programs to the adults of rural and northern Saskatchewan as well as a large number of community interest programs.

This study focuses on the extent to which senior college administrators perceive the impact of globalization on the mission of the colleges explores the strategies and actions these leaders are utilizing in responding to the challenges and obstacles due to these global forces and investigates how the colleges have and will continue to change and adapt for their long-term survival. This research utilizes a qualitative approach testing the hypothesis that globalization has had an impact on the role and mission of regional colleges. A review of federal, provincial and institutional documents formed the macro context of public policy on which regional colleges operate. The micro context involved data gathered from interviews with 29 senior college administrators of seven Saskatchewan Regional Colleges and Ministry personnel from the Department of Advanced Education and Employment. The concluding chapters interpret the participant interviews in light of the public policy framework in order to develop recommendations for the sustainability and relevance of regional colleges in the complex, turbulent, global environment of the 21st Century.

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Dedication

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Chapter 1

The history of adult education in Canada is rooted in the concern for overcoming difficult social circumstances experienced by adults. In the beginning, adult education was seen as a means of empowering individuals to gain a measure of control over their circumstances leading to a more satisfying existence. Collectively, adult education was seen to bring about basic change in a society. It emerged as an impetus for social movement (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Selman et al. 1998). Community Colleges, as part of the adult education sector, were created in Canada to act as democratizing agents to expand access to post-secondary education, to provide technological training and vocational training to meet the needs of a changing economy, to generate political and social change and to offer important community resources, particularly in rural areas (Dennison, 1982).

The Saskatchewan Community College system established through the *Community Colleges Act, 1973*, was intended to serve the particular needs of Saskatchewan, to uphold the rural values and be an instrument for improving the quality of rural life. They were portrayed as, “the college is the community, the community is the college” (Selman et al., 1998, p. 167). The system was designed to be an instrument for community and social development. Colleges would provide programs of community education and services within a defined geographic region of the province.

The 1970's saw the development of colleges with a mandate to serve the training needs of rural and northern communities. This mandate was expanded in the late 1970's to include remedial and developmental education. In the late 1980's, economic factors began to take center stage. Financial issues began to put pressure upon the institutions.

The colleges who were largely funded by governments were required to provide more accountability - at the same time financial government grants were not keeping up with capital and operational costs. However, the colleges still maintained their traditional mandates and local orientation. In the 1990's, the colleges underwent significant change in mission, identity and structure. As a result of status quo government funding, colleges were forced to look for expanded markets and become more entrepreneurial by adopting a more corporate management style (Knowles, 1995; Levin, 2001). This need to expand their markets and become entrepreneurial presented a contradiction for Saskatchewan Regional Colleges as their mandate continued to be to serve the adult population of a geographic region. The acquisition of new markets necessitated an expanded mission resulting in organizational changes in culture, structure and functions. The impetus behind these changes is termed "globalization" and is described as the economic, political, technological and cultural change occurring around the world. Rothenberg (2002) defined globalization as "the acceleration and intensification of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations.... globalization has an effect on human beings, the environment, culture, economic development and prosperities of societies across the world" (p. 2). Higher education policy at the national, provincial and community level is being revised or developed to react and re-position higher education institutions in response to global forces. Community colleges are particularly vulnerable to these forces as they are closely connected and influenced by the state or government.

The competitive global economy affects government revenues and in turn affects higher education institutions through alterations in funding and policy initiatives.

Institutions are affected as they become increasingly oriented to the market place, more responsive to public demands and more directed by provincial governments to serve both political and economic priorities. Government policies are directing higher education toward economic goals, emphasizing workforce training, efficiency and accountability improvements, increased productivity and responsiveness to business and industry. These demands by government with little support, resources or leadership, have put colleges in a constant state of change, turbulence and reaction. Saskatchewan Regional Colleges are at a crossroads in establishing their future role. Is this a time of crisis or opportunity for their place and purpose in Saskatchewan, the nation, the world? This dissertation attempted to address this urgent question by investigating regional college administrators' perceptions of globalization and its impact on the colleges and the strategies they have adopted to overcome challenges as a result of these global forces. More importantly, this study investigated the organizational adaptation of regional colleges to these external forces for their long-term survival in the 21st century.

Researcher's Perspective

My knowledge of Saskatchewan Community Colleges began in the early 1980's when, as a young wife and mother, I registered in college evening non-credit classes delivered at the local high school. There were a large number of arts and craft classes offered and were mostly advertised by members of the local contact committee. Local instructors who had the expertise and skill were hired to teach groups of 12 to 15 in many areas including beginners carpentry, ballroom dancing, knitting and stained glass, to name a few. There were many in the community and surrounding area that would gather once or twice a week to visit and learn a new skill for a very small cost. The tuition fee at

that time was partly subsidized by the government. As I recall, the Community College movement was very well received in rural Saskatchewan. The college hired staff as coordinators, counsellors and support staff. The management personnel of the college consisted of a Principal or Chief Executive Officer and a Secretary Treasurer. Many of the local instructors developed their own curriculum for the classes they instructed and others were starting small cottage industries based on the skills acquired through college classes.

My career in adult education began in the mid-1980s as a part-time coordinator of general interest programs in a Saskatchewan rural community college. The college was managed through a flat organizational structure with all staff reporting to a two-member management team. Adult Basic Education courses, part-time technical courses and career counselling were being offered through a skeleton staff of coordinators and instructors. I worked with existing local contact committees to identify required classes and assisted them in filling the classes with a minimum enrolment of 12 to 15. There were many, many volunteers working with the college at that time to deliver general interest classes in their communities. It was an exciting and vibrant time to be working in the community college system as this was filling a need in small communities. However, by 1986 enrolments in general interest classes began to drop. Coordinators were cancelling more than 50% of the classes they had organized with the volunteers, due in part, to the government no longer subsidizing tuition fees. More women were entering the workforce in full-time positions, the agriculture economy was taking a downturn due to high land prices and low grain prices and the population of Saskatchewan was beginning to age. Many of the local contact committee members had been working with the college for

many years and were asking to be removed from the volunteer work of the college. There were very few technical or university classes offered until 1988 following the mandate and name change to regional colleges.

In 1987, I was hired as a full-time coordinator in a rural college to organize and deliver adult basic education and technical programs and in 1988 the mandate of the college was revised towards one of job preparation and retraining through legislation, *The Regional Colleges Act*. Organizational change affects five aspects of an institution: its culture, structure, technology, physical setting and people (Robbins & Langton, 2003). This was evidenced, at that time, as community colleges changed significantly with the change in name, boundaries and mission to Regional Colleges. General interest programming was very low in smaller communities and most colleges began centralizing their operations. Partnerships were formed with the provincial universities, technical institutes and local school boards to broker credit training and education and deliver them in joint facilities within the high school shop areas. Career counselling took on more of a focus as linkages with business and industry were made. A formal needs assessment process, initiated by the provincial and federal government, required staff to document trends and training needs within their regions. Qualified and higher skilled staff and instructors were contracted to meet the demand placed on delivery of more complex, full-time courses. Most instructors held a degree and experience in their particular area of instruction. Work intensified and as a result the culture of the college took on a more business focus. Unrest and uncertainty occurred in the college due to these heightened expectations. Many who had worked in the college since its inception found it difficult to make the transition. They wanted to hold onto what they knew - their close community

contacts and general interest programming. Technology and computers were added to the desks of most staff members requiring upgrading and training as a key component of staff in-service. New skills were required in the college workplace in areas of marketing, human resources, public relations and management. Federal funding was more readily available for training in preparation for employment through Canada Job Strategy funding and a federal/provincial literacy strategy was implemented.

In 1995, I joined the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training in time to assist in the creation of the new Training Strategy for the province. In the fall of 1997, I was recruited from the Department to the position of Chief Executive Officer at Parkland Regional College in Melville, Saskatchewan. In the following ten years up to 2007, the college programming, staffing, student population and facilities have grown and expanded to meet the needs of the local, regional and provincial labour force. This change in mission and growth has affected all areas of the college, its organization, management, structure and culture, resulting in: a flatter management structure with key Team Leaders overseeing programs and services; increased accountability towards more of a business culture; ownership of college campuses and more joint-use facilities with the education system; increased joint programming with Aboriginal and disadvantaged groups; higher level of customized training required to meet employer and client needs; and, diversity of delivery methods including on-line courses to meet individual client needs. The training needs and opportunities have changed and expanded over the years but the ability to respond quickly, to provide access to training close to home, to be flexible and adaptable to meet the community needs and to remain learner centered is still the purview of the Saskatchewan regional college system.

As a current CEO at a Saskatchewan Regional College, I am aware of and challenged by institutional and organizational issues resulting from external forces. In my post-graduate university program, I was introduced to the concept of higher education and globalization which created a spark of recognition and validation that could be attributed to the pressures, turbulence and constant change within the college. My perception of this led me to ponder questions in relation to other Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. Were other college administrators aware of the concept of globalization in their leadership of a regional college mandated to serve only a geographic region? If so, what were their perceptions of the impact of globalization on the changing role, mission and functional processes of their institutions? What strategies were they adopting for the long-term survival of their institutions in response to these forces of globalization? This research study was essential to my continuing successful role as a leader and visionary in my college and to the future role of the Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan.

Purpose of the Research

In this study I investigated the extent to which regional college administrators and key decision makers in the Department of Advanced Education and Employment perceived the changes and impact of globalization on Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. This thesis was designed to investigate how regional colleges are and will respond to the influences and pressures of globalization in order for long-term sustainability to deliver their education and training mandate in the 21st century. The study identified, reviewed and interpreted organizational changes in seven Saskatchewan Regional Colleges over the last ten years in response to the economic, cultural, technological and political forces of globalization. This investigation showed the challenges faced by college

administrators and strategies they have used to adapt their institutions to the external forces impacting their organization. In so doing, this study will contribute to the research on globalization and higher education moving forward in the 21st Century and assist educational administrators in their role as organizational leaders.

Statement of the Problem

The research problem was the determination of how the forces of globalization--economic, technological, cultural and political forces--have impacted the role and mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. The problem also was to what extent current college leaders perceive and understand this impact, what strategies and actions the senior administrators in these colleges used to overcome the challenges and obstacles due to these forces and how these institutions have and will continue to change and adapt to these external global forces for their long-term survival.

Globalization may embody considerable threats to the regional colleges under their current mandate and mission, particularly as geographic boundaries fade through new technologies. Frost (2005) claims, “colleges are at a critical crossroads in their development, where the attributes of globalization, including competition over information and resources, continued economic integration, increasing labor and corporate migrations, and the ensuing social imbalances, will eliminate both the value and protection that regional borders once provided, as well as the limited mission these borders provided” (p. 9).

This research investigation used a conceptual framework involving analytical frameworks drawn from globalization theory (Levin 1999, 2001), organizational theory (Levy & Merry, 1986) and an organizational adaptation continuum (Cameron, 1984).

Procedures for coding and then drawing conclusions followed the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994). Additional detail on this conceptual framework and the ideas introduced above are provided in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

Globalization is a phenomenon that impacts the regional colleges' environment today. Given the regional mandate of colleges, pressing local issues, government directives and lack of leadership in the system, the question is to what extent do the current regional college administrators understand the impact of the phenomenon of globalization on their institutions role and mission? Do they connect this phenomenon with the challenges their colleges are facing?

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the investigation:

1. The higher education literature on globalization identifies four key domains or forces that are reshaping higher education. These include economic, political, cultural and technological forces (Held et al, 1999, Levin, 1999, 2001). How have these global forces influenced and changed the mission, culture, structure and functional processes of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges?
2. What are the challenges, obstacles and tensions faced by senior administrators in Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan due to these global forces and what are the strategies employed by these leaders to adapt to these external global forces impacting their organization?
3. How have organizational actions or adaptations been influenced by the external environment versus the internal organization for the long-term survival of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges?

4. What are other key forces that are impacting the future and long-term survival of Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan?

Significance of the Proposed Research

The significance of this research was rooted in the assumption that the landscape--role and mission-- of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges has been impacted by globalization. As higher educational institutions, the Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan play a significant role in education and training in rural and northern Saskatchewan. Colleges are seen to be the catalyst for economic and community development in the pursuit of revitalizing rural and northern Saskatchewan. The Minister of Saskatchewan Learning, in a speech at the Regional Colleges' Conference in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, in May 2005, emphasized, "Regional Colleges will continue to be essential in meeting the ongoing need for a skilled workforce in Saskatchewan...the leadership and important linkages they provide with rural business, industry and education and training is invaluable" (p. 12). This study further defined the changing education and training role and mission of Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan and makes a contribution to the knowledge of change in higher education in the 21st Century. Although several studies were conducted in the late 1990's on the affects of globalization on higher education, there were few on Canadian colleges and none on Saskatchewan colleges. This study identified implications of practice for current and future leaders of colleges within a paradoxical, global environment.

Operative Definitions

To facilitate the communications of the material presented in this study, there are a number of words or phrases used frequently requiring further clarification.

Globalization in this study refers to the economic, political, cultural and technological forces creating change around the world (Levin 2002; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Wagner, 2004).

Saskatchewan Regional Colleges are eight geographically based non-profit corporations established under *The Regional Colleges Act* of January 1, 1988. Their mandate is to broker and deliver educational services or programs that fall within the following general categories: university and technical institute courses provided by way of a contract between the college and a university or technical institute; training programs that prepare individuals for a career or provide education with respect to health and social issues; training programs paid wholly or partly by private businesses, non-profit groups or government agencies; career services; adult basic education, literacy and upgrading programs; and, any other educational activities that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may prescribe in the regulations (*The Regional Colleges Act*, 1988, p. 4).

Organization adaptation refers to a process, not an event, whereby changes are instituted in an organization (Cameron, 1984).

Landscape is a broad term used in this study that refers to the internal and external environment of Regional Colleges including mission, purpose, culture, structure, management, decision-making, communications and policy.

Delimitations and Limitations

This study is delimited to an analysis of data collected from semi-structured interviews, a self-reflective journal and an analysis of institutional and government documents pertaining to higher education. As a current CEO in a Regional College in East-Central Saskatchewan, I have chosen to delimit my research to focus on the other

seven mandated Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. The intent of this study was to gain insight into how senior administrators perceive global forces that have impacted the role and mission of their institutions. The data has limited generalizability because of the unique brokerage model and mandate of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges in Canada. The Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan are not mandated to grant accreditation but rather deliver training and education brokered and accredited from other credit granting institutions.

Limitations arise from restrictions over which the researcher has no control. Limitations that could have affected the outcome of this study include the interviewees not understanding the issues of globalization and its effects on their small institution, the effectiveness of the questions in soliciting the desired information, the political and cultural environment within selected colleges at the time of this study, the length of time the interviewees had been in the job and the close working relationship I have with many of the interviewees.

Format of the Dissertation

This introductory chapter presented the research problem and need for research on the impact of globalization and global forces on the organizational landscape--role and mission--of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. There has been little research focusing on Saskatchewan Regional Colleges and their organizational adaptation over the last 10 years. Chapter 2 provides a literature review on the historical perspective and context of adult education and Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan, on globalization and global forces, on organizational change and on policy development and reactions in Saskatchewan Regional Colleges to global forces. The research design utilized in the

study, the data collection process and the conceptual framework for data analysis is presented in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 provides a contextual policy review of institutional, provincial and federal government documents. Chapter 5 relays the research findings from the semi-structured interviews. Chapter 6 summarizes, interprets and discusses the research findings and the study concludes in Chapter 7 with conclusions and recommendations for the future leadership and direction of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges, implications for practice in higher education and suggestions for future research by scholars.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter begins with a presentation on the historical development of the role of regional colleges set in the environmental context of the province of Saskatchewan. It is a story of how the unique system of community colleges evolved to regional colleges taking on new and diverse roles to meet the challenges of serving adult learners training and education needs within their regions. Today, given the complexity and turbulence created by external forces, regional college leaders must consider the larger environment including the impact of trends around the world on their colleges and communities. This chapter considers globalization, defines it and discusses the four global forces of economics, politics, technology and culture and their impact on higher education policy in Canada and Saskatchewan. The concept of institutional response to change and effective strategies for leaders to manage change was examined.

Historical Development of Role and Mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges

Saskatchewan Context

In the late 1950's and early 1960's in Saskatchewan, the economic and social patterns and values of rural living were being changed by a trend to urbanization (Selman et al., 1998). In reaction to this movement, there was a desire to sustain and improve the quality of life of Saskatchewan's rural communities and the traditional values associated with them. Saskatchewan pioneers were highly individualistic, self-reliant and from a number of different nationalities and cultures. They were also highly cooperative and worked together not just to survive but to prosper. Working bees, barn raisings, and sharing were part of the pioneers' responses to their isolated environment. Individuality

was prized but cooperation was the prime characteristic of these frontier farmers. Non-government agencies such as the Women's Institute, agriculture societies, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and university agriculture extension work were involved in the early delivery of adult education in Saskatchewan. The election of the first socialist government in Canada, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) in Saskatchewan under Tommy Douglas, was the impetus for the establishment of an Adult Education Division in the government of Saskatchewan in 1944 with the aims to liquidate illiteracy, promote co-operative citizen action, clarify societal issues and encourage creative community life (Welton, 1987). The Adult Education Division was tasked to protect the social fabric of the province's traditional rural way of life through adult educational activities.

Adult Education in Saskatchewan

The Adult Education Division in the government of Saskatchewan made provisions for a limited amount of community education opportunities by way of the "lighted school house" idea providing evening classes to adults utilizing school facilities (Selman et al, 1998, p. 278). In 1956 the Saskatchewan government appointed a Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life (Selman et al., 1998. p. 116) to address the concerns of preserving the quality of rural life in the province. As a result of the Commissions findings, the Center for Community Studies was established at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon to produce resource materials for use in the field of adult education to support community life. In 1962 a Ministers' Committee on Continuing Education developed a policy of continuing education for the province outlining roles and responsibilities of agencies and organizations active in the field. The Adult Education Division became the Community Education Branch that utilized

regional field staff to provide leadership for adult education in rural communities (Selman et al., 1998, p. 279). In 1964 a change to a Liberal government emphasized a pressing need for expansion of technical training through the Institutes of Applied Arts and Science in the province phasing out the Community Education Branch. Two reports, the *Spinks Report* (1967) and the *McLeod Report* (1971), on post-school education in the province identified the need for a review of the adult system in the province. That review occurred following the provincial election of 1971 with a return of the New Democratic Party.

Decade of the 70's

Saskatchewan Context

New economic growth in the energy and natural resource areas in Saskatchewan during the 1970's stimulated a demand for skilled labour. The return of the NDP government put attention back onto sustaining Saskatchewan's rural communities and the traditional social and cultural values associated with them. In rural Saskatchewan, the agriculture economy was strong with bumper crops and high grain prices for Saskatchewan's high quality wheat. A number of events and reports in the early 1970s supported social change and community development through adult education initiatives in Canada and the provinces. The federal government in early 1970 began contributing annual grants to organized labour in Canada in support of educational activities. *The Royal Commission on the Status of Women* (1970) was issued as a result of the women's movement of the 1960's. There was a strong educational component to this movement. A number of publications in the early 1970s' emphasized adult education as a profession including *The Adult's Learning Projects* by Allen Tough (1971). The book, *Pedagogy of*

the Oppressed, (Friere, 1972) provided a critique of the adult education movement suggesting that it was based on an education for “domestication, whereas what was needed was an education for freedom” (Selman et al., 1998, p. 377). In 1972, the UNESCO report from the International Commission on the Development of Education entitled *Learning To Be* was issued, endorsing a lifelong learning strategy and calling for increased attention to adult education as a matter of priority in serving the more educationally disadvantaged. This spurred the provincial governments in Canada to make opportunities for continuing education, in academic, vocational and general education areas, available to adults at the local, regional and provincial level.

Saskatchewan Community Colleges

The Ministry of Continuing Education was established on July 1, 1972 to oversee the system of post-secondary learning in the province and to a large extent the response was the development of the Saskatchewan Community College system. *The Community Colleges Act* (1973) was intended to serve the particular needs of Saskatchewan, to uphold the rural values and be an instrument for improving the quality of rural life. The Advisory Committee on Community Colleges, appointed by the Minister and chaired by Ron Faris, investigated a community college system for the province. The committee's founding belief was, “The sense of community in rural Saskatchewan, built on traditions of community participation and co-operation blended with self-help, is among the province's most valued attributes” (p. 6). The Committee, from their consultations, discovered that educational resources and budgets that concentrated on young, post-school opportunities were primarily being confined to urban centers and rural adults were

not aware of educational services available to them. Therefore the Committee in their report of August 1972 recommended,

....that the purpose of community colleges shall be to maximize opportunities for continuing education through a decentralization of formal adult learning opportunities and the organization of programs at a community and regional level to meet informal learning needs and that colleges develop on a regional basis with priority given to rural areas (p. 20).

Saskatchewan Community Colleges were portrayed as, “the college is the community, the community is the college” (Selman, et al., 1998, p. 167). The system was designed to be an instrument for community and social development. Colleges would provide programs of community education and services as determined by the local community. The *Report of the Ministers Advisory Committee on Community Colleges* (August, 1972) defined community as “the interaction of individuals who share similar concerns produces a social dimension known as community.... this community, in turn, influences the people within it” (p. 8). Ron Faris, Chair of the Advisory Committee, described the Saskatchewan version of the community college as being “colleges without walls but foundations” (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986, p. 56).

The original framework of Saskatchewan’s Community College system was based on seven principles:

- To promote formal and informal adult learning in its regional communities.
- To develop programs in response to the expressed concerns of a community that had identified and assessed its needs.

- To provide individual and group counselling in the establishment and achievement of educational goals.
- To assist in community development by offering programs of community education and service to maintain and develop a viable way of life.
- To coordinate the delivery of all adult educational services to the community.
- To be governed by a regional representative council.
- The operation of community colleges shall be under the purview of the Minister of Continuing Education (*Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Community Colleges*, 1972, p. 59).

These principles were reflected in mandate statements developed by all community colleges. *The Community Colleges Act* (1973) provided the legislative authority for each College Board to implement its mandate.

The development of the system of Saskatchewan Community Colleges was unique in Canada due to a number of their development factors. They: acted as brokers of educational programs and services in concert with the province's existing universities and technical institutes; made use of existing facilities within the community; used minimal staff resources for working with communities to identify educational needs; contracted local instructors for specific programs; and, were governed by provincial government appointed boards made up of members from within the extended communities in the regions. Four pilot colleges were established across the province and given a mandate through *The Community Colleges Act* (1973) to test the recommendations of the Ministers' Advisory Committee. By the end of the 1973-74 program year, participation in the four pilot colleges involved 14% of the adult population in 750 educational activities

throughout 150 community locations (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986, p. 56). These four colleges offered primarily general interest classes in response to identified community needs. In the fall of 1974, the Colleges Branch, Department of Continuing Education Program Advisory Committee was asked to review the pilot projects and make recommendations. Four additional colleges opened in June 1974 in rural Saskatchewan and four in the major cities due to the *Harper Committee Report on Community College Development*, released in January 1975. Fifteen recommendations were put forward for further development and refinement of the rural colleges.

The eight rural community colleges progressed in meeting their mandate for community development through delivery of community and individual development courses due in part to the strong Saskatchewan economy and the return of many “baby boomers” to the family farm. Local Contact Committees were organized in many communities to assist the colleges in needs identification and program delivery. Each college had a Principal, a Secretary-Treasurer, program coordinators, and a Board of Governors. Schools, churches and other local facilities were utilized for non-credit program delivery, primarily in the evenings. During the 1970’s, the community colleges added to their program offerings and took over the delivery of Basic Education and technical training from the school systems and university programming from local Catholic Diocese. The government commissioned a task force report, *Voc-Tech 90*, to recommend how to meet the increased demand for skilled labour. This report recommended greater co-ordination and access in the post-secondary system in order to meet the needs of the future labour force. In 1979 the Saskatchewan Community College Trustees Association, the first college trustees group, organized a conference in Fort

Qu'Appelle. Soon after that conference a review of the community colleges implementation was conducted. This review led to change and further development of community colleges in the 1980's.

Decade of the 80's

Saskatchewan Context

A change in government in 1982 to the Progressive Conservatives and a general economic recession instigated an emphasis on economic development. Saskatchewan was beginning to experience more demographic centralization, a shift to information technology and the information age, the beginnings of a recession due in part to lower grain prices and higher unemployment rates. The development of a comprehensive strategy was needed to enable a more effective and efficient use of scarce human and physical resources in the field of adult education. In June of 1984, a task force was established by the Minister of Rural Development to examine issues, problems and opportunities confronting rural Saskatchewan and to help develop a framework for rural development. The subsequent report, *Strategy for the Development of Rural Saskatchewan: Report of the Task Force on Rural Development* was released in May 1985. The Task Force built on the concept that a strong rural economy would enhance and encourage a healthy economy in the cities. The Task Force concluded, "The province has the potential to greatly expand the level of industrial and commercial activity in rural Saskatchewan" (p. 301). The report presented ninety-two recommendations for consideration and action by the Minister of Rural Development, the Government and the people of Saskatchewan. These recommendations would provide the foundation for a new era of economic and social well being for all of Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Community Colleges

The Role of Community Colleges: A Review of Community Colleges

Implementation (1982), examined the major operational features of the community college concept such as accessibility, use of local resources and coordination. The review reflected to a large extent, that colleges had been effective in putting into practice most of the major operational elements in the original concept such as the brokerage role, a flat organizational structure and delivery of courses and curricula based on identified community needs by local community members. The review also highlighted considerations for improvement in planning for adult education in Saskatchewan due to the changing demographic makeup of society, the pace of technological change and the evolution of new culture and social patterns. With a clear sense of direction, colleges would be able to retain key functional elements of their mandate – flexibility, accessibility, local involvement/decision-making and responsiveness.

In 1981 nearly 93,000 adults participated in 7,268 programs delivered in 663 different locations in Saskatchewan including the eight rural community colleges and four urban community colleges (Biss, 1982). By 1986, 20% of the adult population was enrolled in publicly funded adult education or training in some form or another (*Preparing for the Year 2000*, 1987). Specific programs and curricula had been introduced for specific target groups. These included the *Saskatchewan Skills Development Program* to public assistance recipients, the *Non-Status Indian and Métis Program* to native people, the *Saskatchewan Skills Extension Program* for institute training programs in rural Saskatchewan and the *Northern Training Program* for northerners in skill training and literacy upgrading.

In 1987 a major restructuring of the province's education system occurred and it was brought into one single Ministry of Education. A planning document for the post-secondary sector, *Preparing for the Year 2000: Adult Education in Saskatchewan*, presented in 1987 re-oriented the community college system to emphasize skills training. The planning document discussed the social and economic trends that were occurring in the new economy. Saskatchewan, as all of Canada, was moving to an era where the creation of wealth would depend more on technological research and the access of information requiring a shift to a knowledge-based economy and development of human resources. Thus, the challenge for adult education in the next 20 years, as identified in this report, was to "meet and master the needs of the new information age, adapt to an aging population in need of frequent retraining, and achieve higher success rates with the traditional 18 to 24 year old group" (p. 4).

The report, *Preparing for the Year 2000: Adult Education in Saskatchewan* (1987), allowed the Ministry of Education to set a new mandate for the rural community colleges. They were to be known as the Saskatchewan Regional Colleges and a new *The Regional Colleges Act* of 1988 was passed. With this new mandate, regional colleges took on the role for frontline delivery of adult education and skills training outside the four major urban centers. Their boundaries were expanded to include the rural areas surrounding the four cities in the province--Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert--and the four urban community colleges in these cities were folded into the existing technical institutes under a new model, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST). There was a major change in the programming priorities of regional colleges deleting non-credit community and personal interest

courses moving into more skills based and university level training and adult literacy.

The Distance Education Council was formed to advise the Minister on the development of a new network of facilities and programs. The Minister of Education provided new targeted funding to colleges to pursue the objectives of community extension, namely, to provide greater access to adult education for people living outside major urban centers, to provide standard offerings of first and second year university courses, and to increase the provision of institute certificate programs on an extension basis (*Preparing for the Year 2000: Adult Education in Saskatchewan*, 1987, p. 9).

In the 1987 report, *Preparing for the Year 2000: Adult Education in Saskatchewan*, the government also identified the need to make access to education more accessible through initiatives for women into management positions, for students with disabilities, for native education and for increase in northern education. This was at a time when there were many more women entering the workforce due to economic pressures, advocacy groups were becoming stronger in support of the disadvantaged in the province, the young Aboriginal population was growing faster than the non-Aboriginal youth and the north was under-developed economically, geographically isolated and the traditional lifestyle was being eroded. At this time of declining revenues and mounting government deficits, adult educators, including the regional colleges, were required to carry out their functions in a much more prescribed manner moving away from individual and community programming to a skill and knowledge development agenda. The establishment of regional colleges changed the character of the former community colleges. The volunteer base declined due to the ageing population and lack of general interest courses, coordination time was spent more with other provincial

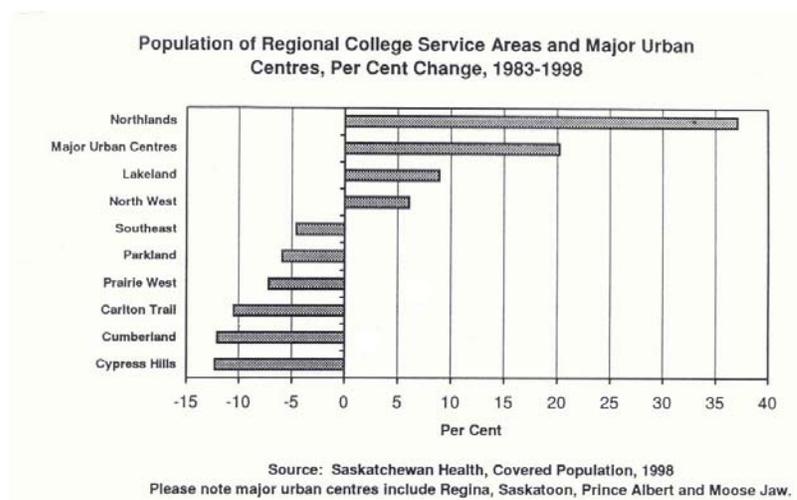
institutions brokering programs and courses, instructional staff were contracted more from the urban centers for their academic qualifications, program funding became more targeted to meet the needs of specific groups, emphasis was placed on the financial bottom-line and distance education utilizing technology became a priority through the development of SCN (Saskatchewan Communications Network). This re-orientation of the community colleges and the development of SIAST was a new, bold move to meet future demands of the 21st Century.

Decade of the 90's

Saskatchewan Context

In November 1992 the government of Saskatchewan released an economic strategy for the province, *Partnership for Renewal: A Strategy for the Saskatchewan Economy*, to address a number of economic and social challenges in the province. These challenges included: the size of the government debt; tight business regulations; under-skilled labor force; impact of labor market policies; resources vulnerable to weak prices and reduced federal government support; dependency on exports; global market competition; land-locked province increases costs; slow rate of employment growth; demographic trends of rural depopulation, ageing population and out-migration of youth; and, retooling of government to learn how to govern more co-operatively (p. 14). Many ongoing patterns of demographics and culture shifts were creating major concerns in the province. These included out-migration of youth from the province, older participants in the workforce, shortage of skilled labor, more complex technology and under-developed Aboriginal population. Figure 1 substantiates this pattern showing the decline in population in rural college service areas as a percent of change from 1983-1998.

Figure 1. The decline in population in rural college service areas as a percent of change from 1983-1998.



Post-secondary institutions were viewed as instruments to address these patterns of change and directed, through government policy, to act as a catalyst and support the development of the future workforce of Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Regional Colleges

The mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges has always been subject to the political priorities of the provincial government of the day (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986). During the period of 1986 to 1993 under the Conservative government, there was a shift to a more market-driven approach to post-secondary education. During this period, the spirit of innovation that created the colleges as instruments of community self-development was redirected to more individualized training focused on employment goals. Levin (2001) agrees, “in the 1990s, the mission of community colleges had less emphasis on education and more on training; less emphasis upon community social needs

and more on the economic needs of business and industry; less upon individual development and more upon work-force preparation and retraining” (p. 171). This shift in mandate created havoc and uncertainty in the college community but also excitement due to the expanded mission for delivery of credit training.

The Regional Colleges Act (1988) required that the mandate and operations of colleges be reviewed every five years. In 1992, *The Regional Colleges Committee of Review* was established to provide recommendations on governance, accountability, accessibility and overall coordination. Extensive public consultations were held. The New Democratic Party (NDP) government was re-elected in 1993 and the Ministry was renamed Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment. The review yielded 41 recommendations regarding every aspect of operations of the college. The central theme of the report, *Regional Colleges: Partners in Rural Renewal* (1993), was the need to re-establish the relationships between colleges and their immediate communities in order to support community economic development through training and retraining. Colleges were to build partnerships with local communities, business and agriculture to support social and economic development, strengthen delivery of university and Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) credits, respond to learning needs of Aboriginal people, coordinate delivery of education programs in rural Saskatchewan for government departments, designate a community as the university center, redraw boundaries for delivery of rural adult education within 50 kilometres of the four major urban cities, and deliver, in rural Saskatchewan, certificates for skills training accredited by the new SIAST Institute (Dennison, 1995, p. 36). In general, these recommendations focused on strategies for maximizing the post-secondary educational resources in a

period of fiscal restraint. This supported the colleges' role as key educational partners in their regions and they levered new additional resources by soliciting strong partnerships with organizations such as Human Resources Development Canada in their regions.

The Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training was established in 1995 as a separate entity from education to handle the growing training agenda as the federal government began to devolve training to the provinces. In 1996, a working paper entitled *Choices for a Saskatchewan Training Strategy* outlined a coordinated provincial training strategy, with increased labour-market information and planning, more skills training for a changing labour market and integration of programs and services. The vision for the resulting plan, *The Saskatchewan Training Strategy: Bridges to Employment* (1997) claimed,

Saskatchewan people will have access to flexible, relevant, quality training opportunities that respond to their needs and the needs of the labour market.

Governments, institutions, industry and communities will work together to enable people to enhance their employability and to contribute to the economics and social development of the province (p. 1).

The final report of the three-year Training Strategy indicated that regional colleges were performing the role of providing quality and access to education and training in rural Saskatchewan while strengthening the links to jobs being created in the province. Federal and provincial policy initiatives and spending primarily concentrated on job-related training in order to adapt the economies to major shifts in the labour market caused by technology, globalization and restructuring of the social services and health-care systems. Following on the Training Strategy and based on the requirements of

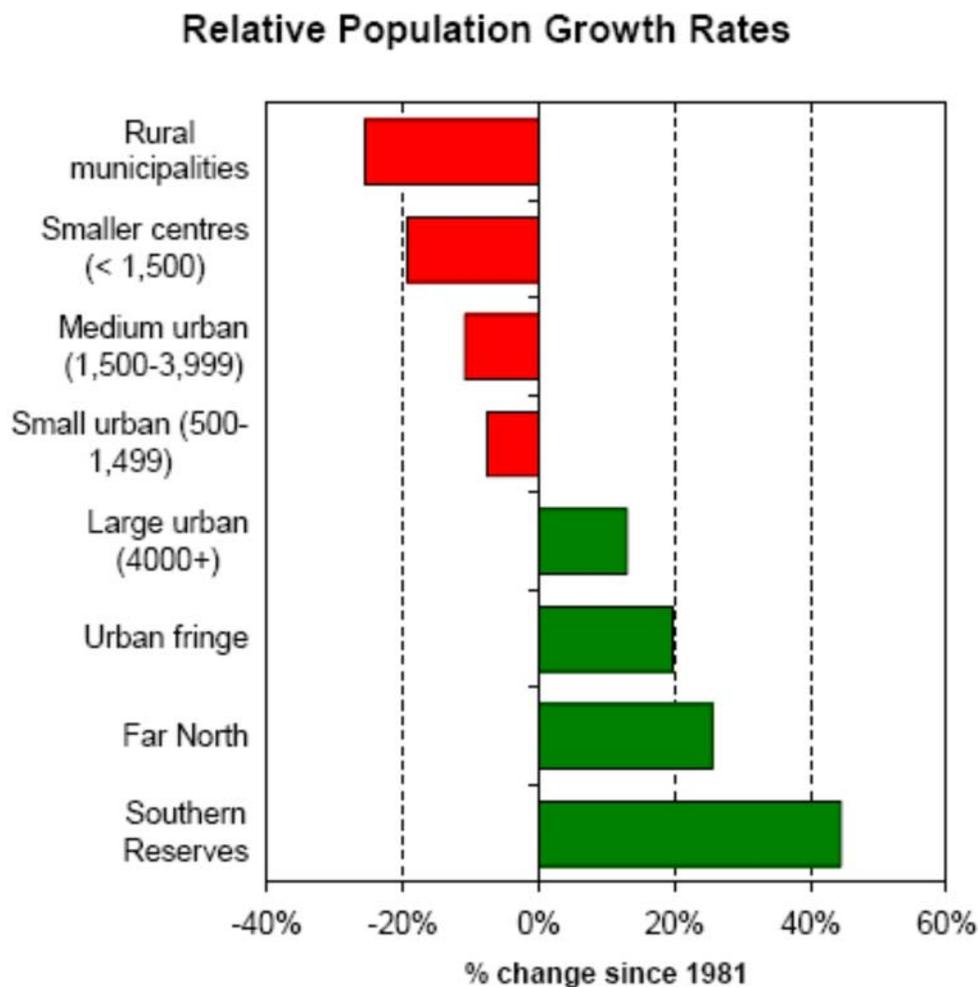
The Regional Colleges Act, in 1999 there was another major review of the Regional Colleges released in March 2000.

Entering the 21st Century

Saskatchewan Context

Saskatchewan, at the turn of the century, was still governed by the NDP government who, in the previous election, was supported primarily by the cities. Rural Saskatchewan was suffering both economically and demographically. The trends of depopulation, competitive grain prices, small business, ageing population, growing Aboriginal population and loss of youth to larger cities and other provinces were seriously affecting all services in rural Saskatchewan. This is depicted in Figure 2 as the percentage of the population decline in rural Saskatchewan from 1981 to March 2003.

Figure 2. Percentage of population decline in rural Saskatchewan from 1981 to March 2003.

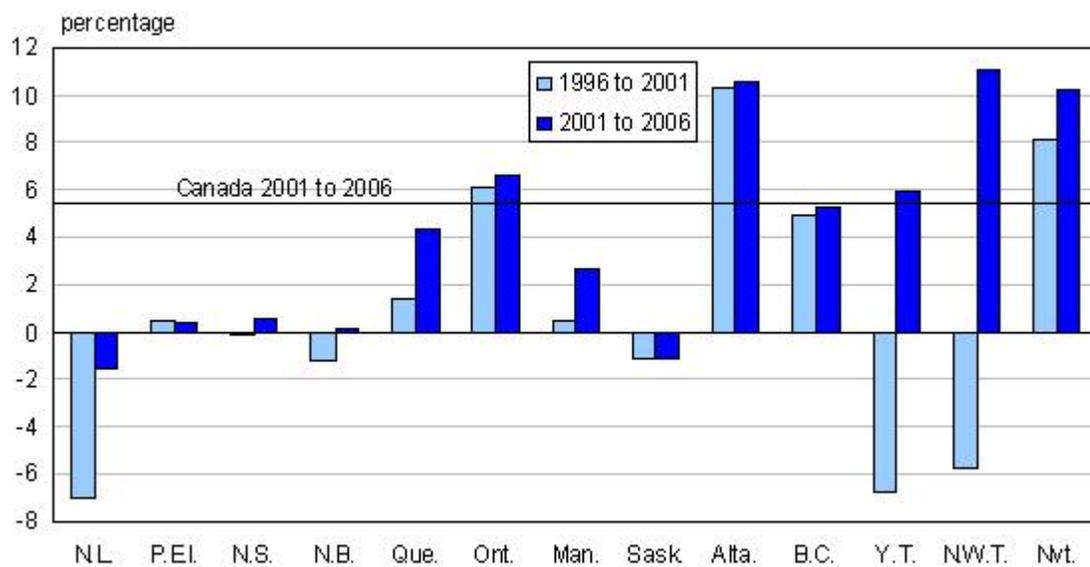


Source: Sask Trends Monitor (2003)

Small and medium urban centers have lost 10% of their population. The largest population decline, close to 25%, has occurred in the rural municipality population. Competing on a global marketplace, increased technological demands, declining employable population and decreased federal support all contributed to a declining labour market in rural Saskatchewan. The economy needed to restructure and diversify in order to respond to the knowledge-based economy where expertise, technology and innovation

were key ingredients. Figure 3 from Statistics Canada 2006 census of population, indicates a continued decline in population in Saskatchewan over the last 5 years.

Figure 3: Population growth of provinces and territories, 1996-2001 and 2001 to 2006.



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1996, 2001 and 2006

These trends were creating requirements for post-secondary programs in rural and northern Saskatchewan to produce skilled workers; provide customized and specialized training; build literacy, employability and technological skills; support ongoing learning and skills acquisition in the workplace; and, support mobility of learners into new careers or further education and training.

Saskatchewan Regional Colleges

Futures Close to Home: Report of the Regional Colleges Committee of Review, released in March 2000 continued to support the Regional Colleges' unique role within Saskatchewan's post-secondary system. The report stated,

The primary purpose of the regional colleges continues to be providing education and training opportunities to adults in rural and northern Saskatchewan. These opportunities enable learners to be economically and socially self-reliant, and contribute to the growth and development of their communities (p. 4).

The review document identified the key strengths of regional colleges as being: the focal point for access to training and education in rural and northern Saskatchewan; unique brokerage arrangements with other institutions; flexible and responsive institutions; strong partnership development; learner-centeredness; documented annual needs assessments and business plans; and, qualified and dedicated staff (p. 30). The existing mandate of regional colleges was reviewed and supported. However, the committee also recommended new directions in technology enhanced learning, employment equity, services to people with disabilities, prior learning assessment and recognition, emphasis on partnerships and international development projects. In June 2003, the Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training signed a policy granting Saskatchewan Regional Colleges the ability to partner with other Canadian community colleges in international development work, thus, expanding their mandate from regional to international. This added to the list of activities and expanded the mission of colleges. This "comprehensive" mandate (Bailey & Morest, 2004) now included activities such as

developmental education, adult basic education, English as a second language, education and training for welfare recipients and others facing serious barriers to employment, customized training for specific companies, preparation for students for industry certification exams, non-credit instruction in diverse areas of interest, small business development, certificate and diploma programs and first and second year university courses (p. 2). The political and fiscal environment of restraint and status quo in which the colleges operate provided strong incentives for the colleges to expand their activities.

Regional Colleges continue to be one of the vehicles through which the provincial government implements its public policy goals at the local and regional level. The colleges are expected to incorporate public policy goals into their vision and operations and to demonstrate accountability for contributing to those goals. The roles and expectations that regional colleges fulfill were highlighted in the 1999 *Report on Public Expectations of Post-secondary Education in Canada*. The public expectations of the post-secondary sector highlighted in this report included the following principles: quality education and training; accessibility to post-secondary education programs and services; equitable opportunities for participation in learning and working opportunities; relevance to social, cultural and economic development; community service; using a variety of delivery methods including technology, to enhance delivery to diverse populations and geographic areas; and, coordinating programs and services with other post-secondary institutions to increase the efficacy of the post-secondary system.

The Government of Canada released an *Innovation Strategy, Achieving Excellence: Investing in People. Knowledge and Opportunity* (2002) focusing on what Canada must do to ensure quality of opportunity and economic innovation in a

knowledge-based economy and society. This was good news for regional colleges in Saskatchewan as it spoke to and supported the work they were doing in their communities and regions. A goal of the strategy was to ensure all qualified Canadians have access to high-quality post-secondary education through actions including: increased access to post-secondary education to low-income Canadians; encourage low-income Canadians currently in the workforce to “learn while they earn”; facilitate mobility and access to post-secondary education for adult learners; encourage Canadians to look to skilled trades for employment; build on the expertise of community colleges; and, increase the number of highly qualified people (p. 8).

A priority of the Government of Canada, as documented in *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World* (2005) is to strengthen Canada's global competitiveness by ensuring the economic framework is right at home with Canadian people. “Maintaining an accomplished and skilled workforce is a key component of a productive and competitive economy...this means providing lifelong learning opportunities for Canadians and tapping into the dynamism of the immigrant population” (p. 17). Saskatchewan Regional Colleges continue to deliver the mandate to develop and maintain an accomplished and skilled workforce.

In summary, like each of the other Canadian provinces, the college system in Saskatchewan has its own unique history and has always been subject to the political priorities of the government of the day. Dennison and Gallagher (1986) claimed,

College development in Saskatchewan was unlike that in other provinces of Canada. The social history, the rural geography, the powerful political philosophies that have been so influential in this province, the continuing anxiety

about movement of population from rural to urban communities and then an exodus of many from the province itself, limited opportunities for post-secondary education, the individuality of the prairie people, their strength and independence – all of these factors collectively contributed to a college concept which was different, viable, and vital (p. 56).

In Saskatchewan, governments have fluctuated between social democratic orientation and a conservative, more conventional approach and as a result community college education has been influenced – their role, governance, organization, curricula, personnel policies and facility issues. Global forces have impacted governments, economic markets, population mobility and communications and thus are influencing higher education. The following section presents current research on globalization and its' forces affecting public higher education policy today.

Globalization

Globalization is defined in a variety of ways by a number of theorists. Rothenberg (2002) defined globalization simply as “the acceleration and intensification of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations...this process has effects on human beings, on the environment, on culture and on economic development and prosperities of societies across the world” (p. 2). In contrast, Held et al (1999) defined globalization as,

...a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or inter-

regional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power (p. 16).

Stromquist and Monkman (2000) takes this set of processes a step further and makes clear how globalization encompasses economic, political, technological and cultural domains:

Globalization: A set of processes by which the world is rapidly being integrated into one economic space via increased international trade, the internationalization of production and financial markets, the internationalization of a commodity culture promoted by an increasingly networked global telecommunications system (p. 4).

Stromquist and Monkman (2000) adds, “the neo-liberalism of free trade, private enterprise and foreign investment are examples of the economic domain...Flows of people, goods, information and images reflect the influence of communication processes” (p. 4).

Global forces are a set of processes that are making supranational connections and are predominantly economic, political, technological and cultural. Economic globalization refers to the international integration of economies and systems of communication. There is an increasing global nature of markets, capital, labour and production and distribution of goods and services (Porter, 2000). There are many opposing views to this neo-liberal market driven process of economic globalization. Yang (2003) purported “the real purpose of the global economy is to conserve the wealth of the rich, to protect the privileged, to maintain the advantages of the G-7 over the rest of the

world” (p. 273). Held et al. (1999) support this view in, “economic globalization is generating a new pattern of winners and losers in the global economy” (p. 4).

Political globalization is seen as breaking up large political conglomerates into smaller components and on the other hand bringing others closer together. For example, the United Kingdom is joining the larger European Union at the same time it is moving towards more autonomy for its subunits such as Scotland and Wales (Porter, 2000). These are creating political as well as economic alignments. It is the economic dimension that has dominated the policy agenda of governments and is creating this shift to a global view. Countries and governments respond to globalization through policy initiatives in order to position themselves favourably in a competitive global market. Porter (2000) wrote, “they turn to markets for answers, supply-side economics, privatization, competition theory, promotion of free trade and reduction of tariffs and both a micro and macro economic reform....changes in government policies, markets and work have resulted in integrating markets into larger trading areas, increasing capital mobility through dismantling trade barriers and greater specialization in productive, niche industries” (p. 5). The government of Saskatchewan, with its traditional agrarian resource based economy, has had to make significant public policy changes as a result of global economic realities of lower grain prices, loss of world markets and higher costs of production and transportation. The support and direction for value-added processes, small business support and development, optional programs for farm families to diversify and support of marketing and trade boards are examples of public policy direction.

The symbols of global technology are electronic communications technologies, synchronous global television broadcasts and synchronous worldwide web postings. This

has resulted in an increase in the speed and quantity of information exchange. Altbach (2001) stressed, “trends such as the rise of the Internet and the globalization of knowledge have the potential for creating problems for academic institutions and systems in smaller, poorer nations....information technology companies dominate the new international commerce in knowledge, knowledge-based products, and information technology” (p. 2). Freidman, (2006) on the other hand, proposed the “convergence of the personal computer... with fibre-optic cable... the rise of work flow software is the newfound power for individuals to collaborate and compete globally” (p. 10).

Globalization connects cultures and groups, integrating people and their differences. It is a social process. The transformation of labour and production relationships and the development of new global flows of communications, ideas, images and people is the centerpiece of globalization (Castells, 1996). Many countries are concerned that the increase of immigration, multiple languages, different religions and cultural lifestyles are threatening their cultural identities. It suggests a condition - the world as a single place (Robertson, 1992). On the one hand, it is viewed as “Americanization” (Dudley, 1998, p. 24) or a process driven by American consumer culture rolling over other cultures and, on the other hand, a way cultures interact and learn from each other. “A paradoxical consequence of the process of globalization,” wrote Porter (2000), “is not to produce homogeneity but to familiarize us with greater diversity, the extensive range of local cultures” (p. 3). Freidman (2006) supported this view of cultural globalization and terms it “globalization of the local, which allows communities around the world to use today’s global media networks to cling to their local

mores, news, traditions, and friends ...the flat-world platform enables you to take your own local culture and upload it to the world” (p. 507).

Globalization has empowering and disempowering, homogenizing and particularizing, democratizing and authoritarian tendencies all built into it (Freidman, 2006). These tendencies will be further explored in relationship to the development of higher education policy in Canada and the province of Saskatchewan.

Higher Education Policy and Reactions to Globalization

The competitive global economy affects government revenues and in turn affects higher education institutions through alterations in funding and policy initiatives. In his critical analysis of globalization and higher education development, Yang (2003) stated, “education is less part of social policy but is increasingly viewed as a sub-sector of economic policy” (p. 278). In his latest writing, Freidman (2006) suggested, “tertiary education is more critical the flatter the world gets, because technology will be churning old jobs, and spawning new, more complex ones” (p. 373).

Higher education institutions are affected as they become increasingly oriented to the market place, more responsive to public demands and more directed by provincial governments to serve both political and economic priorities. Government policies are directing higher education toward economic goals, emphasizing workforce training, efficiency and accountability improvements, increased productivity and responsive to business and industry. The response by institutions is to change their mission towards marketization, productivity and efficiency in the pursuit of economic ends. However, Wagner (2004) emphasized, “we need to think about globalization in a way that may

create new economic, cultural and political forms and does not destroy existing forms” (p. 11).

Themes

Porter (2000) discussed a number of common themes in the reaction of higher education policy to globalization and its impact on changes at the institutional level (p. 456). Government budget reductions have induced institutions to do more with less just as they are continuing to expand in all areas of “life-long” learning. Saskatchewan Regional Colleges have maintained status quo funding levels but in order to address rising costs at the same time as expanding programs and services, they have become more adept at fundraising and developing program and financial partnerships. There is a push by the institutions to access income from the private sector with such measures as increasing tuition fees, recruiting international students for full cost recovery fees, competing for research grants, emphasizing consultancies, packaging and marketing various intellectual products and philanthropic appeals to alumni for gifts and bequests. Regional Colleges began fundraising primarily through the establishment of the provincial Ministry’s *Merit Scholarship Program* where public funds were allocated to colleges to be matched with private sector funds to encourage the development of student scholarships.

An increase in “commodification” of intellectual property connecting the work of institutions to business and industry through open and distance learning is a reaction of higher education to globalization (Porter, 2000, p. 456). Differential fees, full cost recovery and the establishment of programs for profit are part of this trend. (Fisher & Rubenson, 1998, p. 96). This has been tied to the need for income diversification.

Regional Colleges have developed contract training units with full cost recovery programs to financially support on-going public training.

“Performativity” (Porter, 2000, p. 456), the indication of specific performance levels, has become the norm with greater accountability through the implementation of performance indicators to government and performance review and assessment at the individual academic level. All regional colleges are required to set annual key performance indicators in their business plans with a baseline and targets for that program year. These business plans require approval of the Minister of Advanced Education and Employment.

The corporate model of emphasis on managerialism imported from the private sector involves a focus on outcomes instead of inputs, measures for quality control, concern for efficiency and a focus on service to clients. Although these are positive measurements, some opponents to globalization of higher education indicate the corporate model overemphasizes efficiency over effectiveness.

Categories

Levin (2001) identified a set of nine categories or activities characterized by higher education institutions as they respond to global forces. He suggests “the global context has become internalized, both reflected in and reproduced by the ideology of economic efficiency, productivity and the commodification of education and training” (p. 13). Through these categories Levin claims higher education internalizes in responding to globalization are internationalism, multiculturalism, commodification, homogenization, marketization, restructuring, labour alterations, productivity and efficiency, and electronic communication and information. (p. 240).

Internationalization consists of activities such as recruiting international students, delivery of institutional curriculum to other countries, student and staff exchanges between countries, internationalizing the campus and the curriculum with international images, symbols and practices. Frost (2005) states, “international education is the primary conduit by which community colleges engage the world beyond their district boundaries...part of a college’s recognition of the need to operate as more than a community-based institution, if not completely as a global institution” (p. 33).

Multiculturalism behaviour sees institutions promoting equality among groups along the lines of ethnic origins, class and gender orientation at the same time favouring strategies that give special status to the underrepresented or under-privileged groups. This is evidenced in the report and recommendations of Rae (2005), *Ontario: A Leader in Learning* that speaks to the goal of “opportunities for more people...reach out to and expand the opportunities for those capable of participating in higher education...including Aboriginal students, students with disabilities and international students” (p. 11).

Commodification entails the development of programs to fit the requirements of business and industry including delivery of instruction or training to their specifications. Differential fees, full cost recovery and the establishment of programs for profit are all part of this trend in higher education (Fisher & Rubenson, 1998).

Homogenization is where institutions attempt to make their products and services similar in an attempt to develop a niche market. They routinize work, simplify practises and objectify curriculum to reduce it to its basic elements. In contrast is particularization, where the whole range of local content, traditions, diversity of programs and services are

presented to the world. Friedman (2006) suggests, due to the “flat-world platform,” the forces of particularization are as strong as the forces of homogenization (p. 506). In agreement, Waters (2001) sees globalization as “differentiating as well as a homogenizing process....It pluralizes the world by recognizing the value of cultural niches and local abilities” (p. 192).

Marketization activity refers to institutions aligning with the private sector and competing for revenues through donations of money, goods and services that they acknowledge publicity through tax benefits. As the fiscal support to maintain operations and deliver their mandate remained static over the years from both federal and provincial governments, colleges have been forced to secure other sources of funding and partnerships and move to a more corporate, business-like operation through restructuring, changing of work patterns, services provided, job changes and reallocation of resources.

Labour alterations refer to changes in the nature and duration of work and the modification of workloads and work practices. This is particularly evidenced in the changing nature of work due to technological advances. Friedman (2006) proposed one prime example of labour alterations for business success is the “outsourcing to innovate faster and more cheaply in order to grow larger, gain market share and hire more and different specialists” (p. 446). Productivity and efficiency behaviour is characterized by institutions turning to the private sector, raising productivity of existing workers or lowering the costs by reducing the workforce.

And finally, electronic communication and information refers to institutions using electronic technologies for work processes and education delivery. The Internet has

created a means for an organization to create a digital “buffet” for the customer to serve themselves (Freidman, 2006, p. 437).

Impacts

Globalization follows a neo-liberal agenda with a market-driven set of processes that embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions generating transcontinental or inter-regional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power (Yang, 2003, p. 284). Slaughter and Leslie (1997) described, from their point of view, the positive and negative impacts of globalization on higher education policy and practice. The negative impacts involve less discretionary government funding, institutional destabilization, greater differentiation developing between institutions, greater concentration on accessing research funds linked to the needs of industry, staff and programs that are market-driven given more autonomy, increase in fees and tuitions, increased employment for part-time and contract staff, increased dissatisfaction of the public with the quality of the teaching. Conversely, the positive impacts of globalization on higher education policy and practice involve some discretionary funding for pilot projects, concentration of specialized institutions to develop profit centers, development of relevant information technology, some commitment of research funds to non-market driven research, balance of teaching and research, greater role of academic governance for staff and the development of small niche units to match student demand and community needs.

Currie (2004) explores the potential benefits and dangers of globalization on higher education. The potential benefits include the spread of access and opportunity to every corner of the world; internationalization through the exchange of students and

exposure to other countries leading to greater tolerance and acceptance of the plurality of cultures in the world; increasing links with industry creating greater economic growth; and, operating like a business allowing for quicker decisions and new markets. The potential dangers include increased inequality given the heightened competition, increased commodification of knowledge, and instrumentation in the curriculum; skewing of education toward market and vocationalism that changes mission; widening of inequality between information rich and information poor countries; lowering standards and quality by adopting market rather than intellectual standards; increased managerialism and centralization of decision making; change in academic work to more of an entrepreneurial focus; intensification of work due to advanced technical communications; fragmentation and loss of collegiality due to ideology of competition; and, loss of traditional values in the rush to privatize, commercialize and create enterprises (pp. 45-53).

Researchers discussing the concepts and impacts of globalization often do so in the context of a new paradigm involving the phenomena of paradoxes where a statement seems contradictory but is actually valid or true. A paradigm is a set of assumptions, concepts, values and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality for the community that shares them, especially in an intellectual system. Waters (2001) described the phenomena of paradoxes using two different examples. First, he described this contradiction in terms of the shrinking of the planet denoted by the elimination of space and the generalization of time. Due to technology and instant communications across the world, space normally measured by time appears to have shrunk. The world appears to shrink but does not materially do so. Second, he posited globalization involves a “Janus-

faced” mix of risk and trust where individuals extend trust to “unknown persons and impersonal forces....in so doing they place themselves in the hands of the entire set of their fellow human beings” (p. 16). In his book, *Global Paradox*, Naisbitt (1994) uses the concept of paradoxes to provoke fresh thinking on the changing world and bases his thesis on the paradox, “the bigger the world economy, the more powerful its smaller players” (p. 5).

Globalization, as defined above, may encompass considerable threats to the colleges under their current role and mission. Community Colleges have always been preoccupied with the needs of their communities and constituencies, their funding agencies, their mission domain, and their role overall in higher education (Frost, 2005, p. 58). On the other hand, the new environment of globalization may open new opportunities for colleges within a broader, global society. Community colleges with their mandate for skills training may be an ideal medium for ongoing measurements of the impact of these global forces.

Globalization and Its Impact on Community Colleges in Canada

To ensure the survival and well being of our communities, it is imperative that community colleges develop a globally and multi-culturally competent citizenry. Global competency exists when a learner is able to understand the interconnectedness of people and systems, to have a general knowledge of history and world events, to accept and cope with the existence of different cultural values and attitudes and, indeed, to celebrate the richness of this diversity. (*New Expeditions: Charting the Future of Global Education in Community Colleges*, 1998, p. 11).

The community colleges in Canada face a conflict of identity in their confrontation with global forces of change (Dennison, 1995; Gallagher, 1995; Levin, 2002). Community colleges are known for their identity with local communities or regions and for adaptability and responsiveness to the requirements of external stakeholders. Since their conception, the mission of community colleges was to serve the underserved, expand access to post-secondary education and training and fulfill the needs of individual students by imparting knowledge and learning not simply skill acquisition. Colleges were envisioned “not to be an extension of the public school, nor a mini-university, but a social invention, whole and legitimate in their own right, designed to solve a particular problem created by a highly complex society,” (Hill, 2001, p. 5). Levin (1996) claimed, “due to the forces of globalization - economic, political, technological and cultural - community colleges are forfeiting their traditional role and becoming economic and political instruments, directed to serve primarily as trainers for employment” (p. 2). Government policies are directing community colleges toward economic goals, emphasizing workforce training and economic competitiveness as outcomes, requiring colleges to improve efficiencies, increase productivity, and to become accountable to government and responsive to business and industry.

Hartman and Hines (1986) identified five areas where government policy can influence community colleges: government policy and policy implementation can change college goals and purpose through legislation; social policy such as affirmative action can change college values and norms; planning documents, budget processes and funding targets can change college programs and services; collective bargaining can change college management; and, through fiscal allocation can change college funding.

Government policy and government behaviours can shape community colleges as instruments and extensions of the state.

In the 1990's federal government education policy, as a result of global competition, favoured the interests of business, industry and capital. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada in their 1999 report, *A Report on Public Expectations of Postsecondary Education in Canada*, emphasized that Canadians expect post-secondary education to “prepare graduates for good jobs, make vital contributions to the social and cultural well-being of the country, and serve as pillars of regional economic growth and of global competitiveness” (p. 1). The government saw community colleges as a vehicle for their economic policy directing them to greater efficiencies and less reliance on government funding. Colleges attempted to increase productivity as governments required colleges to become more efficient and more orientated to global competition for “the path to globalization for government policy was a path of economic growth” (Levin, 2001, p. 250). These policy directions and change ignored the internal dynamics of individual colleges, the needs of students and communities and the traditional mission and goals of colleges.

The Conference Board of Canada in their 1999 report, *The Economic Implications of International Education for Canada and Nine Comparative Countries: A Comparison of International Education Activities and Economic Performance*, emphasized that “international education is a means of adapting Canada's people-- its human capital-- to the competitive demands of globalization....international education is one of the keys to developing and maintaining this high order competitive advantage” (p. 9). Many

community colleges engaged in international education, at that time, due in part for the revenue generation it could bring to the financial picture of the college.

The Government of Canada released an *Innovation Strategy* (2002) focusing on what Canada must do to ensure quality of opportunity and economic innovation in a knowledge-based economy and society. A goal of the strategy was to ensure all qualified Canadians have access to high-quality post-secondary education through actions including increased access to post-secondary education to low-income Canadians, encouragement of low-income Canadians currently in the workforce to “learn while they earn,” facilitated mobility and access to post-secondary education for adult learners, encouragement of Canadians to look to skilled trades for employment, building on the expertise of community colleges and increased number of highly qualified people. (p. 8). The *Innovation Strategy* (2002) assured the public that Canadian community colleges would be supported for delivery of skill training and for equipping Canadians with the skills they need for the future.

A priority of the Government of Canada, as documented in *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World* (2005), is to strengthen Canada's global competitiveness by ensuring the economic framework is right at home with Canadian people. This document, as well, emphasized the key role for higher education, “Maintaining an accomplished and skilled workforce is a key component of a productive and competitive economy....this means providing lifelong learning opportunities for Canadians and tapping into the dynamism of the immigrant population” (p. 17).

Canadian community colleges have responded to these policy directions with an entrepreneurial response that was market and revenue driven. This entrepreneurial activity included strategic alliances, business and industry training, programming, foundations, fund-raising and friend raising, outsourcing and lobbying in search of new markets (Flannigan, Greene & Jones, 2005). Community colleges are redefining their missions and creating new organizational models and processes to accommodate the impact of globalization. An integrated approach, single division responsibility, a college-wide unit, a subsidiary organization and regional, provincial and national partnerships and consortia are examples of these entrepreneurial models. Knowles (1995) claimed the primary purpose of these entrepreneurial entities is to serve the training needs of business and industry. They are operated as profit centers with considerable autonomy and their “function and role is fulfilling an integral part of the college mission and mandate. They all view restructuring as necessary in order to function effectively in the markets they are attempting to serve” (p. 201). Saskatchewan Regional Colleges are leaders in forming integrated partnerships to address the education and training needs of their communities.

Saskatchewan Regional Colleges - Policy Development

Saskatchewan Community Colleges began with the passage of the *Community Colleges Act* (1973) and have always been subject to the political priorities of the government of the day.

College development in Saskatchewan was unlike that in other provinces of Canada. The social history of the people, the rural geography, the powerful political philosophies which have been so influential in this province, the continuing anxiety about movement of population from rural to urban

communities and then an exodus of many from the province itself, limited opportunities for post-secondary education, the individuality of the prairie people, their strength and independence- all of these factors collectively contributed to a college concept which are different, viable, and vital. (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986, p. 56.)

A shift from a New Democratic Party (NDP) to a Progressive Conservative government in 1982 brought a more market-driven approach to the college system. A policy framework issued by the Saskatchewan government in 1987, entitled *Preparing for the Year 2000* brought changes and reorganization to the college system. *The Regional Colleges Act* of 1988 changed their name and adjusted their mandates to reflect less community orientation and greater emphasis on economic values (Dennison, 1995). In 1992, the NDP were returned to power at a time when major reviews of the college system were being conducted. In the *Regional Colleges Committee of Review* (1993) document, *Regional Colleges: Partners in Rural Renewal*, a future vision was recommended, “places community at the center of the Saskatchewan Regional College system...the vision requires colleges to extend themselves into their local and regional communities and challenges them to develop new partnerships with educational institutions, Aboriginal people, agriculture, business, industry, labour and government departments and agencies” (p. iii). The 2000 Regional Colleges Committee of Review document, *Futures Close to Home*, continued to emphasize the mission of colleges to provide, through continuous learning, the ability for all Saskatchewan people to have the knowledge, skills and abilities to benefit from and contribute to society and the economic prosperity of the province. The review highlighted the fact that education and training

needs in rural and northern Saskatchewan were growing due to factors such as economic diversification, migratory patterns, demographic change and technological innovation. These recommendations provided a broad public policy context and direction for the colleges' future planning as they moved into the 21st Century.

In June 2001, the Province of Saskatchewan released a new economic strategy, *Partnership for Prosperity, Success in the New Economy, Towards 2005*. A key element of this strategy was to keep youth in the province. This was to be accomplished by: providing university and other post-secondary education that is world-class, ongoing, future focused and technology-based; enhancing programs such as mentorship, work experience and apprenticeship to provide stronger linkages between education and access to jobs; and, integrating IT training into more areas of advanced education to maximize the benefits of new technologies in all areas of the economy (p. 6).

The emphasis by government on economics and higher education continued with the release by Saskatchewan Learning of the 2005-06 *Provincial Budget Performance Plan*. The plan included the vision, "through lifelong learning, all Saskatchewan people become knowledgeable and skilled citizens contributing to and benefiting from society and the economy....the province is enriched socially, culturally linguistically and economically through the leadership of the learning sector" (p. 6).

Saskatchewan Regional Colleges - International Development

The *Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Community Colleges* (1972), better known as the *Faris Report*, made a number of recommendations in the establishment of the Saskatchewan college system. One of the main tenets recommended for the community colleges, now known as regional colleges, was that

“community colleges grant no degrees or diplomas, but that formal programs be contracted as required from existing educational institutions” (p. 21). This “brokerage” model is unique in Canada and allows Saskatchewan Regional Colleges the ability to focus on program flexibility and responsiveness to meet identified training needs, special skills and expertise in support to learners and opportunity to deliver creative programs close to where the learners live and work. Each regional college has a defined geographic area and mandate as defined in *The Regional Colleges Act*, 1988 and a seven member Board of Governors who set policy and who are accountable to the Minister of Advanced Education and Employment. Upon pressure from regional colleges to expand their horizons and contribute their skills to developing countries, Recommendation 19 in the regional college review document, *Futures Close to Home* (2000) opened up the potential for the mandate of regional colleges to include international education.

The potential for regional colleges to be involved in international development and education was a response by government in acknowledging the changing and expanding role of regional colleges. An *International Education and Development Project Participation* policy was developed and signed by the Minister of Learning in June 2003. Increased visibility at the local and global level, building international partnerships, promoting the colleges’ “niche” programs and services, and becoming more globally connected were benefits listed that would increase the recognition of Saskatchewan as a leading provider of education and skills development programs and services. The Regional Colleges would benefit through faculty and staff development and renewal, international student exchanges to support programming, positive marketing tool to increase recruitment potential, become part of the global educational market and

legitimize what colleges are doing at home. This public policy approved by government was very significant for regional colleges in that it expanded their boundaries from a regional mandate to now having the ability to embrace a role in global education and training. It signalled a response as well as a proactive strategy by colleges to forces changing the behaviour of adult education institutions across the globe.

Institutional Response to Change

Community colleges, like most other social institutions, are being forced to respond to the unrelenting waves of rapid and radical change that are accompanying a shift to a new socio-economic age (Lorenzo, 1998, p. 1). During times of significant societal transformation, social institutions, including community colleges, must strive to emulate the direction, pace, and proportion of social change that surrounds them. Organizational change designates a fundamental and radical re-orientation in the way an organization operates. Typically, organizations must undertake organization-wide change to evolve to a different level in their life cycle. Skolnik (2004) describes this as “plasticity” in reference to community colleges as he states a fundamental characteristic of colleges is the “capacity to reinvent themselves as the needs and problems that they are asked to address change” (p. 44). The current economic and social transformation is requiring fundamental change to the very core of the college institutional life. Bailey (2002) argues, “colleges are now faced with a challenging environment.... to maintain their viability, they must respond to changes in demographic trends; conflicting expectations of students, parents, and policymakers; unstable funding; and changes in pedagogical technology” (p. 46). There has been considerable debate on this need for a broader, comprehensive strategy. Critics suggest that colleges must choose to focus on a

smaller set of functions; that by trying to take on too many activities, the quality of each function suffers (Bailey & Averianova, 1998). However, Bailey (2002) further contended, “political and fiscal forces, as well as a commitment to serving the various needs of their communities, push colleges to acquire more functions” (p. 48).

Organizational change affects five key aspects of an institution - culture, structure, technology, physical setting and people (Robbins & Langton, 2003). An organization’s structure is defined by how tasks are formally divided, grouped and coordinated. Major technological changes usually involve the introduction of new equipment, tools, methods, automation or computerization. The physical setting depends on work demands, interactions and social needs. The processes of communication, decision-making and problem solving determine the changing attitudes and behaviours of organizational members. Culture sets the tone for how employees interact with each other, what things are valued by the organization and what the expectations are of the employees (pp. 530-534). How, then, does a community college engage in the change process?

Boyce (2003) believed organizational learning is essential to achieving and sustaining change in higher education. She identified the categories of change and learning as “first- and second-order change” and “single- and double-loop learning.” First-order change is “instrumental, incremental, developmental, evolutionary, programmable and linear” such as structural and procedural changes. The purpose is to implement institutional policies or accomplish goals. First-order change is normally aligned with the concept of single-loop learning where the overall framework of the institution goes unchallenged. In the case of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges a first order change

occurred with the negotiations of a class plan under the equal pay for equal work public policy direction. Second-order change involves changing the underlying “assumptions and values” of an organization such as “mission, vision, culture, structure, processes, performance and behaviour” (pp. 125-127). Attached to second-order change, two types of double-loop learning are distinguished - temporary change in organizational outcomes and change in fundamental values that drive an organization (Argyris, 1999). The development and implementation of a new strategic plan with new vision and mission statements would be an example of a second-order change in regional colleges. The introduction of an employment equity plan or representative workplace strategy affected the fundamental values of three regional colleges. Boyce (2003) further emphasized, “Those in higher education committed to successful institutional change should be rigorous in inquiry, skilful in dialogue, and fearless in examining the institution in the context of its environment” (p. 133). A number of strategies and frameworks have been designed to assist leaders in the management of organizational change.

Fullan (2003) proposed a management model for effective leadership of change involving five dimensions: moral purpose, an end to be accomplished and factors that motivate individuals to achieve that end; understanding change, adaptations to change bring with them a learning curve; relationships, ideas and input bring more options; knowledge building, through sharing and interaction; and, coherence making, through self-organizing conditions and processes. From a varying perspective, Senge (1998) addressed organizational change through the concept of “discipline of innovation: focusing on mission, defining significant results and doing rigorous assessments” (p. 1). Senge (1998) further contended,

...mastering the discipline of innovation requires organizations working together, learning from one another's efforts....to do something new, people invariably experience periods of profound discomfort....confronting the threat and uncertainty such change brings is best done together, not in isolation (p. 7).

Whatever the strategy adopted by leaders for the management of change, it is imperative community colleges respond to a rapidly changing external environment in order to fulfill their mandate. In his book, *The Learning College*, O'Banion (1997) argued that in this age of knowledge, "community colleges need a new model of education, a model that incorporates the best practices and philosophies of its past with the expanding base of new knowledge about learning and technology....the learning college places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners anyway, anyplace and anytime" (p. 47).

Summary

What can we conclude about globalization and its impact on higher education policy, practice and behaviour in Saskatchewan? Globalization, interdependence, the pace of technological innovation, the growing pre-eminence of knowledge-based economies, and the urgent need to address the sustainability of the planet, are factors that require Canadian community colleges to adjust (Gallagher, 1995, p. 272). Saskatchewan Regional Colleges, mandated as brokering agents to serve the learning needs of a geographic region of the province, are being impacted by the forces of globalization through the need to: provide business training services; respond to increasing global business activities through increasing orientation to occupational training; and, an ability to outreach in international education. This literature review of the historical and recent

trends of the evolving mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges tied to public policy point out some of the central themes that appear in the globalization literature: increasing marketization and neo-liberal economic agenda; benefits of technology and the value of information; advanced accountability and efficiencies in response to political direction; need for increased intercultural understanding and what “local” means today in an open economic environment. As Regional Colleges respond and adapt in this knowledge based economy, they would be wise to heed the words of Dellow and Romano (2006),

...those who think seriously about the future will realize that, in order to serve those local needs, as the global economy becomes more robust, community college educators must once again reinvent themselves to find ways of responding to events halfway around the world, and better yet...anticipating them (p. 22).

Chapter 3

Research Design

Chapter Three presents the methods and design used in completing this study. This chapter defines the unit of analysis, identifies the research questions, describes the research design procedures for completing data collection and data analysis and outlines how the results will be discussed. This study employed a conceptual framework depicted in Figure 4 based on research by Cameron (1984), Levin (2001) and Levy and Merry (1986). Chapter Three presents the methods and design that allowed for a detailed analysis of how the forces of globalization have impacted the role and mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges.

Methodology

This research was based on qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) defined qualitative research as:

“a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations.

Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (p. 3).

Guba (1990), cited in Denzin and Lincoln (2005), claimed all research is “interpretive and guided by the researcher’s set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied...a paradigm or an interpretive framework, a basic set

of beliefs that guide action” (p. 22). A section in Chapter 1 portrays the career history, perspectives and beliefs of the researcher of this study.

This qualitative study accumulates the knowledge or findings through “building blocks” adding to an “edifice of knowledge....The researcher is the informer of decision makers, policy makers and change agents” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 196). This study seeks to examine how globalization has had an impact on higher education institutions in Saskatchewan. The building blocks of this study included a macro and micro context for collection and content analysis of data. The researcher in this study is primarily informed through perspectives held by college leaders and direction of public policy. The macro context involved collection and analysis of institutional and government policy documents to determine how these documents relate, direct and impact higher education in Canada, Saskatchewan and regional colleges in terms of globalization categories defined by Levin (2001). The micro context involved administering and analyzing in-depth interviews based on a structured interview guide of 29 college senior administrators and provincial government decision-makers on their perspectives of how global forces have impacted the role, mission, culture and functional processes of regional colleges. In addition, the interviews provided the basis for analysis of how colleges have and will continue to adapt to these external influences for the long-term survival of their institutions.

Problem, Purpose and Questions

Globalization and its global forces – economics, political, cultural and technological – are changing the environment in which regional colleges operate and as a result are altering and modifying their role. The problem is how these global forces are

currently impacting colleges and to what extent college senior administrators understand the effects on their colleges. In addition, identifying what challenges these leaders are facing as a result of the impact of globalization and how are they adapting their institutions in response to these external influences for their long-term survival.

The process of understanding globalization produces questions about the future that pertain to the operating environment of a regional college. Given the historical mandate of colleges as serving a geographic region, these global forces may be interpreted as a threat or an opportunity to the future role and survival of regional colleges. The purpose of this thesis is to investigate, through participant interviews and policy document analysis, how regional colleges are and will respond to the external influences of global forces in order to remain pertinent and relevant in the 21st Century.

This study asked *how have the global forces – economic, political, cultural and technological – influenced and changed the mission, culture, structure and functional processes of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges*. The problem this study identifies is, given the regional mandate of colleges, the pressing local issues and government directives, to what extent do the administrators of regional colleges understand the impact of the phenomena of globalization on their institutions. Additional research questions included:

1. What are the challenges, obstacles and tensions faced by senior administrators in regional colleges in Saskatchewan due to these global forces and what are the strategies employed by these leaders to adapt to these external forces impacting their organizations?

2. How have organizational actions or adaptations been influenced by the external environment versus the internal organization for the long-term survival of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges?
3. What are other key forces that are impacting the future and long-term survival of Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan?

Unit of Analysis

College Site Selection

The unit of analysis for this study was the Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. There are eight Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan plus an inter-provincial college situated on the border of Saskatchewan and Alberta. The geographic locations, boundaries and names of these Saskatchewan colleges are depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Saskatchewan Regional Colleges



Source: Parkland Regional College

The inter-provincial college, Lakeland College, was not selected in this study due to its mandate and urban status and Parkland Regional College was excluded, as the researcher is currently the CEO of that college. The seven regional colleges selected are mandated, under *The Regional Colleges Act* (1988) to provide adult education and post-secondary opportunities to the rural and northern adult population of Saskatchewan. These colleges are unique in Canada as they are not credit granting post-secondary institutions. Rather, their mandate is to broker, coordinate and deliver credit training from other accredited institutions where the training need has been identified for their geographic region. Included in this brokerage model are functions of administration, student support, instruction of curriculum, as developed by the accrediting institution, and marketing of the program. The mandate of these colleges include a continuum of education and training delivery from literacy and adult upgrading, to technical training and university courses, to non-credit and contract training with business and industry. These regional colleges have some uniformity in the types of training delivered, in their enrolments and have an economy based on agriculture, light manufacturing and service industries. The most northern college differs in its high Aboriginal population, resource based economy and large geographic region. These colleges are all outside but surround the major urban centers of Saskatchewan, namely, Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert. Because of the influences of global forces on fiscal government revenues, cost of technology advances and demographic patterns in the regions, the environment in which these rural and northern regional colleges operate has changed and as a result, has altered their role and mission. A formal letter of request and invitation was sent to the seven Chief Executive Officers of the regional colleges as well as to the Minister of

Learning (now Advanced Education and Employment) for agreement to have their organizations participate in the study. The Ministry was selected as an important element in the study due to its significant development and monitoring role in respect to the legislation governing regional colleges. All responded in the affirmative.

Population Selection

The population of the study was drawn purposefully as the leaders, decision-makers and policy-makers of the regional colleges in Saskatchewan. This population of positions was also selected based on their ability to influence and orient their planning and development toward a future agenda. Thirty-four Saskatchewan Regional College and Ministry senior leaders and administrators were sent an initial letter of introduction. The invited population included seven Chief Executive Officers, seven Board Chairs, seven Directors of Finance and Administration, five Directors of Programs, five Directors of Human Resources from regional colleges and the Minister, Deputy Minister and Executive Director of the Department of Advanced Education and Employment. The letter of introduction outlined the purpose of the research, why they were chosen as potential participants, their role in a semi-structured interview, risks and benefits of the research to the participants, where and when the interview would take place and the required time commitment. To guard against coercion, the letter also indicated the interview was on a volunteer basis and they were able to withdraw from the study or withdraw all or some of the data they generated with no adverse consequences. A copy of their signed consent form was made available to each participant. Five of the thirty-four invitees were unavailable to interview due to the following reasons: one on sick leave, two vacant positions, one on leave from the position and another due to the length of

distance to travel to an interview. This study describes, from the perspective of these key stakeholders, the challenges, obstacles and tensions they have faced as a result of external forces and the strategies they have employed to respond and adapt to the forces shaping their college evolution.

Data Collection

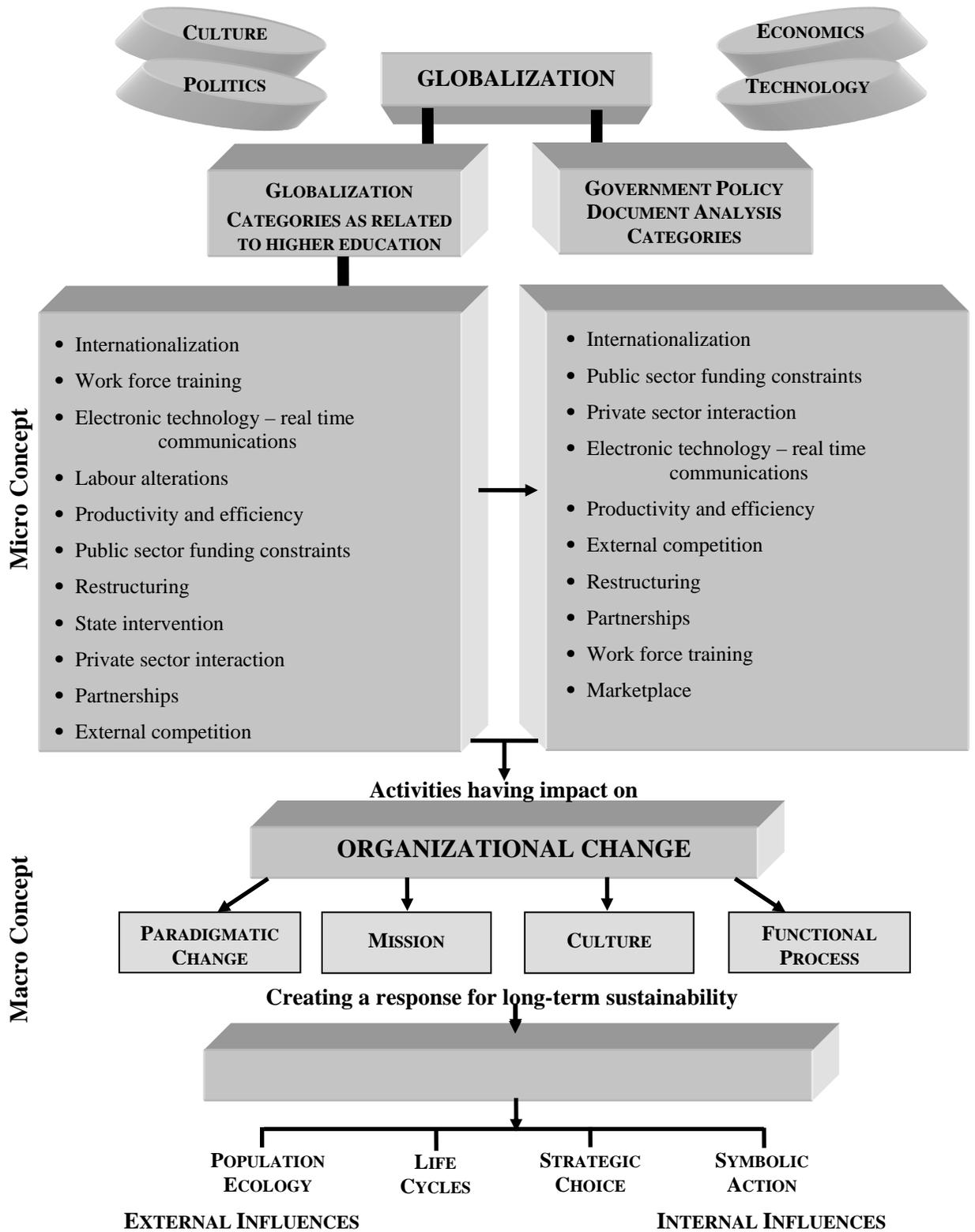
Interview questions were developed based on the research purpose. Pilot testing of the interview guide was accomplished at a college site that was not part of the investigation, namely, my college. Interview questions were edited and revised based on the response from the pilot testing. Formal, one hour, in-depth interviews conducted in the interviewee's office were based on this revised structured interview guide (see Appendix C). Glesne (2006) claimed, "The special strength of interviewing in qualitative inquiry is the opportunity to learn about what you cannot see and to explore alternative explanations of what you do see" (p. 81). Chiseri-Strater and Sustain (2006) underlined that interviewing requires you to be:

...structured and flexible at the same time. While it's important to prepare for an interview with questions to guide your conversation, it is equally important to follow your interviewee's lead. Like teaching, asking interview questions involves collaborative listening (p. 124).

However, a strict interview process was followed with the interviewer addressing each question for appropriate coding in the data analysis phase of the study. The interviews were conducted from February 2006 to May 2006 at each college site. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim for appropriate coding and comparisons across the interviews.

To provide a macro context in which to place these interviews of senior administrators, the research also included the review and analysis of institutional, provincial and federal government documents pertinent to higher education policy in Saskatchewan and Canada. Institutional documents were comprised of individual Regional College business plans, annual reports, needs assessments, collective agreements, policies, institutional reports and program/course delivery. Federal and provincial government documents were comprised of legislation, policies, reviews, policy discussion papers and reports dealing with higher education and globalization from various departments and organizations.

Figure 5: Conceptual Framework



Data Analysis

The data was analyzed based upon a conceptual framework depicted in Figure 5 devised from three analytical frameworks developed from literature – globalization theory (Currie, 2004; Freidman, 2006; Held et al, 1999; Levin, 2001; Waters, 2001; Walters, 1997), organizational change theory (Fullan, 2003; Levin, 2001; Levy & Merry, 1986) and organizational adaptation theory (Cameron 1984; Levin, 2001). The purpose of this conceptual framework was to visually construct the process for coding and analyzing the data collected through interviews and document review. The micro concept of the framework denotes analysis of data according to categories or behaviours attributed to the field of higher education in response to globalization (Levin, 2001). The macro concept is depicted in the conceptual framework through analysis of coded data according to two analytical frameworks. First, the impact of these global behaviours on assumptions or paradigms of the institution and the impact on mission, culture and functional processes of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges and the resulting organization change (Levy & Merry, 1986). The second analytical framework depicts the continuum of adaptation of the institution in response to external and internal influence in order to restore equilibrium to the institution (Cameron, 1984). The coding and analysis based on each of these analytical frameworks will be explored further in the following sections.

Globalization Categories

Procedures for coding and then drawing conclusions followed the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994). Interview data was initially pattern coded using globalization categories from the literature (Levin, 2001) as portrayed in Figure 5. Institutional, federal and provincial policy document data underwent a coding and analysis according to their

jurisdiction - federal or provincial; source - government or institution; and, type - legislation, policy, or report - and coded using a modified pattern of globalization categories as portrayed in Figure 5. After coding to the categories, content analysis of the data included counting of coded data by category and identifying specific themes within the categories. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to formulate a clearer understanding of the impact of global forces on the behaviour of higher education institutions.

Organizational Change

In this study, organizational change was premised upon the analytical framework of Levy and Merry (1986) depicting four major categories of change: paradigmatic change, mission and purpose change, cultural change and change in functional processes. Paradigmatic change refers to the change in assumptions held by stakeholders of the regional college, in this study - leaders, administrators and policy-makers. Mission and purpose refers to the intentions of the organization that guide the actions and outcomes of the stakeholders. The beliefs, norms and values held by organizational members constitute the cultural change of an organization. Functional processes include structures, management, technology, decision making and communication patterns. Interview data was coded thematically and identified as connected to one or more of the categories to describe the changing landscape of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges due to global forces.

Organizational Adaptation

Organizational adaptation refers to modifications and alterations of an organization or its components in order to adjust to changes in the external environment. Its purpose is to restore equilibrium to an imbalanced condition. Adaptations generally

refer to a process, not an event, where changes are instituted in an organization (Cameron, 1984). The four categories in Cameron's (1984) organizational adaptation continuum model of analysis are based on the importance of the actions taken by the external environment and by management in influencing organizational survival. The four categories are: population ecology - prominent role for environment with no role for management action; life cycles - prominent role for environment and some discretion for management; strategic choice - prominent role for both environment and management; and, symbolic action - prominent role for management (p. 125). Interview data was thematically coded according to these four categories of action in order to provide a description of the level of internal organizational influence versus external environmental influence on the colleges. Adaptation of higher education institutions to these influences will ensure their future viability in the 21st Century.

Data Reliability

In this research design, the responsibility of trustworthiness of the data was addressed in a number of ways. To ensure the data in the study and analysis of the findings has credibility the process of triangulation was used. First, the interview data was verified with the individual participants for accuracy. The data was further verified through the checking of multiple sources of data including a self-reflective journal of the researcher and through analysis of institutional, provincial and federal government documents. As a current CEO at the eighth Regional College in Saskatchewan, the researcher was a participant observer in the interviews. Knowledge of the college system, relationship to the interviewees and heightened awareness of the issues by the researcher may have been a limitation to the study. The use of the self-reflective journal to set aside

biases and opinions and to articulate and review additional avenues for discovery assisted in verification of the research. The generalizability of the findings was limited and modest due to the unique role and mandate of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges in Canada. However, the findings of this study will contribute to the overall knowledge of the impact of globalization on higher education and training in Saskatchewan and Canada.

From application of the research design and methods described above, this study derived findings that are presented in Chapters 5 and 6. The conceptual framework guided the coding of the data to allow for analysis of how senior administrators perceived the forces of globalization affecting the future of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges.

Chapter 4

Federal, Provincial and Institutional Policy Framework

Federal, provincial and institutional documents were reviewed to study, examine and provide a context to understand how policy development and directions have shaped the changing role and mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges over the last 10 years. Saskatchewan Regional Colleges are considered “third party” to government meaning they have autonomous Boards of Governors appointed through an Order in Council by the Saskatchewan Government. Each seven member Board of Governors is responsible for the fiscal management and policy directions of their college and at the same time is accountable to the Minister of Advanced Education and Employment. Federal and provincial policy reports and studies were examined and analyzed to provide the context of global forces potentially underpinning the changing role and mission of colleges in Saskatchewan. As Regional Colleges are funded primarily through provincial government grants and project funds from the federal government, public policy influences and directs the work and purpose of colleges. Regional College documents were reviewed to describe institutional response to changes under the direction of senior administrators to these public policy expectations and challenges on the current role and mission of colleges due in part to the impact of globalization.

Federal Documents

Federal public policy documents on post-secondary education from the last 10 years were reviewed in this study to assist in understanding the direction and vision for Canadian public post-secondary institutions in response to globalization. These policy documents spoke to the role, challenges and adaptations required of the public post-

secondary system in Canada. This federal policy review provided a context in understanding the impact of globalization on Saskatchewan Regional Colleges.

A Report on Public Expectations of Post-secondary Education in Canada

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, released a report in February 1999 on public expectations for post-secondary education in Canada. The Honourable Maynard Sonntag, Saskatchewan's Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training who acted as the lead for this project, stated,

Canadians expect post-secondary education to be of high quality, to be broadly accessible and to be relevant and responsive to changing societal and economic needs. Education and research are vital for our prosperity, as individuals and as a country, in our knowledge-intensive age. Canadians appreciate this and have high expectations (Communiqué, 1999, p. 30).

The *Report on Public Expectations of Postsecondary Education in Canada* (1999) began by declaring that education is an "investment in the individuals and communities of Canada and their capacity to fashion a prosperous future together in a global community" (p. 3). The report claimed that Canadians expect postsecondary education to be of the highest quality and to be affordable and accessible to Canadians throughout their lives, graduate young people who are independent, knowledgeable, versatile and creative, prepare graduates for good jobs, make a vital contribution to the social and cultural well-being of the country, contribute to, and draw from, the international network of research that supports prosperity and well-being and that serves to enhance our understanding of the world around us and serve as pillars of regional economic growth and of global competitiveness.

The wider context forcing change in society was discussed in this report. The revolution in “information and telecommunication technology,” the recognition of “environmental fragilities” and the competing “fiscal demands and pressures” at the government levels are helping to drive economic restructuring, globalization and political and social change. Within this wider context, there is a growing emphasis on lifelong learning for the individual and collective good of Canadians.

The report listed five key functions of post-secondary education and six overarching themes or desired outcomes that indicate the direction for Canadian post-secondary institutions. The key functions were to inspire and enable individuals throughout their lives, to develop their capacities to the highest potential levels, to advance, preserve and disseminate knowledge and understanding, to serve the learning and knowledge needs of an adaptable, sustainable, knowledge-based economy at local, regional and national levels, to foster the application of knowledge and understanding to the benefit of the economy and society and to help shape a healthy, democratic civil society. The desired outcomes were quality, accessibility, mobility and portability, relevance and responsiveness, research and scholarship, accountability and responsibilities of governments to the public. These functions and desired outcomes of the federal government influence the provincial policy direction and ultimately influence direction at the post-secondary institutional level.

Canada's Innovation Strategy

Canada's Innovation Strategy was launched in February 2002 by Human Resource Development Canada and included two primary papers, *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians* and *Achieving Excellence: Investing in People*,

Knowledge and Opportunities. Both of these papers focused on what Canada must do to ensure equality of opportunity and economic innovation in a knowledge-based economy and society. *Knowledge Matters* (2002) spoke to building on the expertise of community colleges in “equipping Canadians with the skills they need for the future” (p. 8).

The challenges behind the skills agenda were three-fold. First, the knowledge-based economy meant an increasing demand for a well-educated and skilled workforce in all parts of the country. Canada is facing skills shortages and in the globally competitive market, Canadian employers must compete for skilled workers to remain productive. Second, the demographic crunch of the ageing workforce and low participation rates for the low-skilled meant the future labour supply would be inadequate to meet the demands of the economy. Third, the learning system must be strengthened to meet the labour force demand of the next decades. Four challenges, in order to improve Canada’s innovation performance in the world, were discussed. Increasing research and development investment in all sectors in Canada, ensuring Canada has highly skilled people with the skills for a knowledge-based economy, supporting and recognizing innovation and investment excellence and supporting innovation at the local community level so that communities continue to be magnets for investment and opportunity are crucial.

Knowledge Matters (2002) stated that for “Canadians to have the skills they need to participate fully in society and to secure Canada’s position as a leader in the world economy, future action is required” (p. 4). A Canada-wide skills and learning agenda was required so that the existing workforce has opportunities to upgrade its skills and acquire new ones, the learning system can develop a labour force to meet current and future skills needs and the supply of skilled workers continues to grow. In this report, the federal

government called for actions in making post-secondary education more financially accessible to low-income Canadians, encouraging Canadians currently in the workforce to participate in post-secondary education by “learning while they earn,” facilitating mobility and access to post-secondary education for adult learners and students, encouraging Canadians to look to skilled trades for employment, building on the expertise of community colleges and increasing the number of highly qualified people. These actions would influence public policy on post-secondary education at the provincial and institutional levels across Canada.

Canada’s International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World, Overview

This *International Policy Statement* (2005) established the principles and priorities that would guide the next generation of Canadian global engagement. This document stated, “Globalization has connected people and places and has blurred the lines around national economies. Yet many have been left behind and threats have emerged” (p. 1). The government of Canada’s response and action to these threats were to remain a secure and prosperous nation and to promote collective action at both the regional and global level, collaborate with others to design and implement successful reforms, assist the powerless before they find new and more ominous ways to make their voices heard and find new competition for markets, skilled workers, leading edge technology and foreign direct investment.

The *International Policy Statement* (2005) defined globalization as the “explosion and rapid movement across borders of information, technology, people, goods, services and knowledge....the result of these processes is a world that is smaller and more

interdependent...interdependence has fostered prosperity and a sense of a global community but also the spread of disease and access to deadly weapons” (p. 11).

This federal policy paper “charted a new course” for a Canadian government approach to development cooperation around the world. This policy paper held implications for the provinces in Canada and the training and education sectors within those provinces. Maintaining an accomplished and skilled workforce will be a “key component of a productive and competitive economy.” This will mean providing “lifelong learning opportunities” for Canadians.

Canadian Post-Secondary Education: A Positive Record – An Uncertain Future

The Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) released its first annual report on post-secondary education in Canada from a nationwide perspective. The report aimed to inform Canadians about the extent to which Canada’s post-secondary education and training sector is meeting Canada’s social and economic objectives, the sector’s ability to respond to the fast changing global environment and how Canada’s approach to higher education compares to other leading developed countries. CCL listed the following goals for the review and assessment of post-secondary education: skilled and adaptable workforce; capacity for innovation, knowledge creation and knowledge transfer; active, healthy citizenry; quality training; access; participation and success for under-represented groups; lifelong learning; and, affordable and sustainable training.

The report indicated that the post-secondary system in Canada faces severe challenges to achieving these goals. Skill shortages in skilled trades, low research and development intensity, unequal distribution for access and benefits of post-secondary education, low level literacy skills, unmet job-related training needs, unmet flexible,

affordable and responsive access and lack of a national level mechanism for coordination are listed as those challenges.

From this report compiled by CCL, three major priorities emerged for urgent attention from a national perspective. First priority is the need to develop a set of explicit, well-defined national goals and objectives for postsecondary education in Canada. Second priority is to develop comprehensive indicators and measures to enable ongoing assessment of performance and progress. Third priority is the need to create nationwide mechanisms to accomplish the first two priorities.

In summary, these federal documents are significant to Saskatchewan Regional Colleges in that they set the expectations and direction for the educational sectors across the nation. These documents provide a clear picture of the role provincial departments and institutions of higher education across Canada need to play in order to remain a competitive nation in the global economy. It is imperative that senior college administrators are aware of these documents, reflect on their expectations and meet the challenges and expectations of higher education held by the federal government.

Province of Saskatchewan Documents

Provincial public policy documents and reports reviewed in this study set the context to understand the direction, vision and agenda the province held for post-secondary education in Saskatchewan. These documents and reports spoke to the changing role, challenges and adaptations of the provincial post-secondary system, including regional colleges, in Saskatchewan. The review of these provincial documents provided a context for understanding the impact of globalization on Saskatchewan Regional Colleges.

The Regional Colleges Act, 1988

The Regional Colleges Act (1988) enacted the current mandate of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. A regional college, as a brokering institution, may provide educational services or programs that fall within the following general categories:

- University and technical institute courses provided by way of a contract between the college and a university or technical institute
- Training programs that prepare individuals for a career or provide education with respect to health and social issues
- Training programs paid wholly or partly by private businesses, non-profit groups or government agencies
- Career services
- Adult basic education, literacy and upgrading programs
- Any other educational activities that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may prescribe in the regulations.

This mandate only allowed colleges to deliver educational programs from other credit granting institutions in a geographic region of the province.

Saskatchewan Regional College Reviews

A provision in *The Regional Colleges Act* (1988) requires a formal review and report of the mandate of the Saskatchewan Regional Colleges every five years. This study looked at the last two reports along with their recommendations--*Futures Close to Home*, March 2000 and *Training System Review*, November 2005--to understand the impact of global forces on colleges.

The March 2000 review was conducted by an internal college/department review committee and included only a review of the Regional Colleges. The purpose of the review was to provide recommendations on the future mandate and role of regional colleges for the next five to 10 years within the context of an integrated delivery system of education, training and labour market services. The internal review committee was to develop a shared understanding of strategic directions as well as public policy goals and expectations for Regional Colleges. The review was set in the context of the Saskatchewan environment and an assessment of the social and economic trends.

The report showed that the regional colleges continue to embody the original principles set out by the system at its inception in 1973. However, changing social and economic conditions necessitate that priority be given to enhanced access to post-secondary education and skills training close to home, including the use of technology-enhanced learning; improved responsiveness to the needs of individual learners and the labour market; a more strategic, system-wide planning approach for colleges within the post-secondary education, training and employment services sector; and, a strengthened governance, management and support systems for colleges to meet the challenges and resource pressures of the future.

The challenges for the colleges in the future as articulated in the review were limited capacity of colleges due to size and resources available to address unmet education and training needs, technology-enhanced learning and increased demand for partnerships in labour market planning and development. Additional challenges included defining a future role in community education and development training, providing a range of support services and quality instruction to address the diversity of learners'

needs that exist in rural and northern areas, addressing the lack of a rational approach for supporting college infrastructure, needing to extend their collaborative efforts while maintaining the ability to manage their operations in a manner that fits regional conditions, increasing demand for accountability and strengthening relationships with the provincial Department based on clear and realistic expectations.

The March 2000 review suggested strategies and approaches for colleges to explore and implement to respond to change and adapt in order to take advantage of opportunities. These included taking advantage of technology-enhanced learning to increase access for students, building community capacity for change, adopting a learner-centered philosophy for their institution, increasing the variety of partnerships and alliances for mutual benefits including international partnerships, adopting prior learning and assessment recognition to allow their learners to gain advanced standing for their previous learning or experience, and introducing key performance indicators aligned with their college strategic goals and business plans for improved accountability.

Recommendation 19 of the *Report of the Regional Colleges' Committee of Review* (2000) suggested “regional colleges have an ability to become involved in international development projects, where colleges have another institutional partner and all direct and indirect costs associated with a project are fully recovered” (p. 50).

The *Training System Review* (2005) was an external commissioned review by Saskatchewan Learning for the Saskatchewan training sector which included the regional colleges, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology and the Apprenticeship and Trade Commission. The work of the Training System Review Panel,

appointed by the Minister of Learning, was to undertake a comprehensive, future oriented review of the public training system.

The final report of the Review Panel supported a New Training Model as a means of better meeting individual and labour market needs. The New Training Model provided vision and direction for the training system including regional colleges. The *Training System Review* (2005) report articulated a vision for the training system based on the New Training Model,

Through training linked to personal development and employment, Saskatchewan people from all regions and communities will, to the greatest degree that they are able and willing, participate in dynamic, highly skilled, knowledge economy of the future, serving local, regional and international markets (p. 74).

A number of challenges for the regional colleges were discussed in the report. Changing demographics of the widely dispersed rural and northern population, defined and limiting college regions, need to follow the legislated mandate in program delivery, parameters of the brokerage model, competitive nature of the interaction with SIAST, limited coordination between colleges, role of technology in the delivery of training programs, insufficient funding levels to meet the training demands and need for upgrades and expanded facilities were documented challenges.

The Training System Review Panel spoke in support of Regional Colleges, “as they continue to respond to the needs and challenges of rural communities with new strategies and innovative approaches” (p. 213). Some of the innovative approaches listed included: becoming a central part of rural networks in order to strengthen capacity in support of community and economic development; supporting and providing industry

based training; becoming self-regulating and self-monitoring with respect to the brokerage model with SIAST; adhering to the New Training Model; involvement in a strategic central planning committee to improve overall coordination of the training system; empowering colleges to grant their own credit for certificate programs; and, focusing on mobilization of the First Nations and Métis for work in the provincial economy. The Review Panel in its *Training System Review* (2005) report recommended, “Regional Colleges make the support of regional development a priority” and “government support maximum involvement of the regional colleges in all phases of planning and implementation of rural strategies” (p. 214).

Action Committee on the Rural Economy, Phase II: Final Report, 2005

An *Action Committee on the Rural Economy* (ACRE) of 43 members was appointed by the provincial government in 2000 to work at the grassroots level of rural Saskatchewan to identify solutions for the economic future of rural Saskatchewan. In the first phase of ACRE, 183 recommendations were presented to the Province of Saskatchewan on all aspects of the rural economy. In December 2002, the provincial government expanded and extended the mandate of ACRE resulting in additional subcommittees, consultations and recommendations. The Phase II report included thirty-five recommendations to government on policy issues that would have an impact on regional colleges in rural Saskatchewan.

The *Rural Employment Subcommittee* of ACRE was created to suggest ways to enhance employers’ abilities to create rural employment opportunities. This committee developed a number of key messages and recommendations to government that would impact regional colleges. They indicated the province must create a friendly labour-

business climate, improve the training system as it relates to preparing people for jobs in the trades, provide more rural-based training and career advice for students and engage the Aboriginal population in the labour force.

Saskatchewan Action Plan for the Economy, 2005

The Saskatchewan Department of Industry and Resources released a policy document, *Action Plan for the Economy: a New Century of Opportunity* (2005), which presented a broad vision to “launch the province of Saskatchewan into a second century of opportunity and growth” (p. 7). The plan set out actions for sustained growth on four strategic fronts. First, expand and build on natural strengths. Second, extend success in research and innovation. Third, enhance and promote Saskatchewan’s competitive advantage. Fourth, broaden the economy, workforce and jobs.

The framework had significance for the training system and regional colleges through specific actions listed within the document. The action plan called for expanded training opportunities within the province, increased province wide access to technology enhanced learning and e-learning and additional language training opportunities for immigrants. It specifically called for the Department of Saskatchewan Rural Development to work with partners in education and industry to increase the capacity of regional colleges to respond to industry needs for skilled labour with operational and training funding.

The action plan laid out a means for building international recognition in order to promote Saskatchewan’s benefits and products, including educational products. The plan suggested the development of partnerships with business to send missions to markets around the world, to build relationships and generate leads in key business sectors and to

work with Canada's embassies around the world to promote Saskatchewan's competitive advantages and investment opportunities.

Recognizing Prior Learning in Saskatchewan, Provincial Policy Framework, 2005

Saskatchewan Learning developed a provincial policy framework on recognizing prior learning. The articulated vision in the *Provincial Policy Framework* (2005) that included a role for regional colleges was,

Saskatchewan's education and training sector, trade associations, regulatory bodies, government, industry and communities work collaboratively to promote and support the recognition of all learning, contributing to the development of a skilled, flexible, and responsive labour force, making Saskatchewan an ideal place to live and work. All learning is valued because it contributes to the social and economic well-being and growth of individuals and communities (p. 4).

The framework set out 14 guiding principles for the development of an effective provincial system for the recognition of prior learning. These principles were accessibility, transparency, effective service, high-quality assessment, relevance, flexibility, efficiency and right of appeal. Prior learning was comprised of three categories: qualification recognition, credit transfer and prior learning assessment and recognition.

The policy suggested that recognition of prior learning can assist colleges to increase recruitment and retention of learners, make better use of resources, broaden assessment tools available to use with learners and forge strategic partnerships with industry and the community. The plan suggested that the adoption of a collaborative

approach to the management and delivery of recognition of prior learning services is required by all stakeholders.

In summary, these provincial documents provide context and direction for regional colleges' role and mission in rural and northern Saskatchewan. The documents support the continued need for a responsive, flexible delivery model of post-secondary education and training in Saskatchewan that responds to the future challenges of global forces in the 21st Century.

Saskatchewan Regional College Documents

Regional Needs Assessments

The 2006-2007 Regional Needs Assessments of the seven colleges in this study were examined. Regional Needs Assessments reports are developed and written by colleges, in consultation with a number of regional partners, identify gaps in the delivery of training and services in the region. These regional reports provide information on demographics, labour market, training and career and employment needs within the seven college regions and inform the college Business Plans for their operations and program and service delivery for the following year. The majority of the needs assessments identified the growing Aboriginal population, the out-migration of youth, the ageing population and the rural depopulation as demographic challenges. All of the colleges conducted primary and secondary research of their regional labour market through sector studies and surveys. The challenges of the labour market identified throughout the reports were the skills shortages, low literacy levels of under-represented groups and the under-employed workforce.

In responding to these regional needs assessments, it is the colleges' role to identify and deliver training, education and employment services to address the needs of the region and of the labour market. All seven colleges responded to the identification of needs with a training plan and formal business plan.

Business Plans

The 1997-98 and 2007-08 Regional College Business Plans of the seven colleges in this study were inspected in order to highlight and understand new directions and initiatives that may have been a result of global forces.

Each regional college articulated a mission statement in their Business Plan. In most colleges the mission statement was very similar from year to year. In one college the mission statement was exactly the same from 1997 to 2007, "to provide adult learning opportunities and to promote lifelong learning as a means of enhancing the cultural, economic and social life of the individuals and communities it serves." In another college, the mission statement had only changed with the addition of the phrase "prepare Northerners to participate in the labour market." This brings into question whether colleges are just lagging behind in changing their mission or purpose statement or whether they recognize and accept the change to a labour market focus? If their mission statement does not reflect that change, then how can they use it to guide their operational decisions? In 1997-98 Business Plans there were only two colleges that used the words "economic, economy or labour market" in their mission statement whereas in 2007-08 the words were used by three colleges. Although these words were not within college mission statements of 1997, they became a major part of their role in the release by

government of the new public policy document, the *Saskatchewan Training Strategy* (1997).

All regional colleges made reference to the new *Saskatchewan Training Strategy* in their 1997-98 Business Plans. One college business plan indicated a challenge in the next 3 years would be, “modifying the focus and role of the College and regional colleges system consistent with the goals and objectives of the Saskatchewan Training Strategy.” In another college business plan, the Training Strategy was viewed rather as an opportunity, “as the Training Strategy evolves, rural residents will have a single point of contact for a range of services and training opportunities....regional colleges are well positioned to provide that single point of contact.” The *Saskatchewan Training Strategy* had been released by the Department of Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training in April 1997 and was directed to the public training system of Saskatchewan including regional colleges. The vision of the *Saskatchewan Training Strategy* (1997), “Saskatchewan people will have access to flexible, relevant, quality training opportunities that respond to their needs and the needs of the labour market. Government, institutions, industry and communities will walk together to enable people to enhance their employability and to contribute to the economic and social development of the province” (p. 1). This vision added new dimensions to the role of colleges. These included training directed to the workforce to meet the needs of business and industry in the regions, integrated service delivery and expanded upgrading and student support programs.

The 1997-98 Business Plans stated challenges primarily around this new public policy document, the *Saskatchewan Training Strategy* (1997). Colleges were being asked to develop an “integrated delivery system for training and labour market services”

through the establishment of Regional Education Training and Employment Partnerships (RETEPs), deliver a new *Links to Employment* program and administer a new *Provincial Training Allowance*. Additional challenges documented by colleges included: the decline in federal funding to colleges as training funds were devolved to the province; the inability to address the growing training needs of Aboriginal communities with status quo funding; the maintenance of a level of flexibility in order to react to long- term and short-term training needs including community interest programs; and, the need to develop realistic long-term plans in a time of unpredictability.

The 2007-08 Regional College Business Plans looked much more professional and business-like in appearance than in 1997-98 indicating a more corporate, business culture in the organization. The Business Plans documents all included college logos and used a variety of color, professional photographs, enhanced paper quality and various fonts. A number of additions had been made to the information. The documents now included information technology plans, key performance indicators, five year facility plans and a more extensive financial plan including a reserve utilization plan. The role of the colleges was much more employment focused as articulated in comments from a college business plan as, “important in the economic sustainability and growth of the region” and from another college business plan, “the basis of the development of that skilled northern workforce.”

The 2007-08 Business Plans all made reference to the *Saskatchewan Training System Review* conducted in the fall of 2005 that laid out recommendations for the colleges and others in the training sector. The work of regional colleges was recognized and strongly supported in this *Training System Review*. College C wrote, “The review

recognizes the maturity of the regional college system and the need to serve learners, employers and communities close to home” (p. 9).

The challenges cited by Regional Colleges in their 2007-08 Business Plans matched the funding constraints of 1997-98 but were more specific to facility, technology and human resource requirements. The increased emphasis by government on accountability, labour force training and Aboriginal workforce training are stretching the resources of colleges. “The demand for training far exceeds the availability of resources” was a common theme throughout the seven Business Plans.

“The college will continue to strive to expand education and training opportunities and increase access through partnership development, the use of technology and a proactive approach in project proposal development,” claimed a college business plan. The 2007-08 College Business Plans listed many examples of how they have adapted to challenges and changes in the environment in which they work. Longer term planning such as five year capital plans, staff succession plans, five year information technology plans and three to five year strategic plans are in place to guide their institutions. Accountability measures such as key performance indicators, deficit management plans, equity participation enrolments and graduate follow-up statistics are in place to inform the public and government on achievements. A balanced score card is being utilized by one college to measure performance. Human resources and workplace initiatives to adjust to demographic changes and expectations of government included union/management committees, professional development opportunities, representative workforce agreements in three colleges, an employment equity program in one college and restructuring of the organizational structure in another college. One college indicated

in its 2006-2007 Business Plan, “the re-organization of our structure created a hybrid of functional program coordination with local and regional responsiveness.”

It was evident from the Business Plans that colleges changed and adapted their programs and services in order to provide additional access to training and supports to students. All 2007-08 college Business Plans included a section on technology enhanced learning opportunities, a section on program plans with an emphasis on skills training as opposed to individual development programs of the past and a section on the extensive student supports available. One college noted participation in a national project, along with 15 other colleges in Canada, to develop and test an evaluation tool to help institutions evaluate their level of student centeredness and ways of achieving this goal.

Colleges continued to engage in diverse and extensive partnerships to expand their capabilities and adapt to challenges within their environment. Examples of these partnerships from the 2006-07 Business plans included K-12 school divisions, First Nations and Métis organizations and Institutions, Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions and committees such as Campus Saskatchewan, Sector Training Committees in areas of health, mining, transportation and forestry, community organizations such as Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Associations, non-government organizations and community based organizations and government organizations and departments such as rural cooperative development and agriculture.

Colleges have also adapted and expanded their program and service capabilities through facility and capital equipment purchases and upgrades. The 2006-07 Business Plans indicate all colleges have completed significant building projects and renovations either as stand alone facilities or joint-use facilities with the K-12 system. All colleges

documented advanced technology equipment and systems including video-conferencing, smart boards, college intranets and on-line program and service delivery.

Annual Reports

A number of financial statistics were reviewed between the 1997-98 and 2005-06 Annual Reports of the seven colleges in this study to determine if college finances have changed over the last 10 years. The statistics compiled from the college audited financial statements included the annual operating fund schedule of revenues, percent of contribution of government funding to colleges and capital asset funds. Other statistics such as number of students, number and type of programs delivered and program grants that would have been helpful to understand the impact of global forces were not comparable as the calculations and method of reporting these statistics changed a number of times over the last 10 years.

Table 1 and Table 2 indicate the operating fund revenues of individual colleges in 1997-98 and 2005-06 and the percent of provincial and federal government funds that make up the revenues. Other revenues include tuition fees, contract training and resale items. It is interesting to note that the average percentage of government revenue has stayed relatively constant over the 10 years with only two colleges changing significantly – one experiencing less reliance and another relying more heavily on government revenues.

Table 1: 1997-98 College Operating Revenues

Operating Revenues (Schedule 1)							
College	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Provincial	\$2,238,059	\$2,596,768	\$1,988,922	\$6,641,617	\$2,618,681	\$2,122,750	\$2,429,259
Federal	\$424,631	\$293,021	\$207,955	\$712,628	\$644,523	\$402,797	\$811,049
Other	\$996,477	\$696,026	\$631,275	\$1,588,117	\$1,323,393	\$594,427	\$2,200,435
Total	\$3,659,167	\$3,585,815	\$2,828,152	\$8,942,360	\$4,586,597	\$3,119,974	\$5,440,743
% of Prov/Fed funds of total.	73%	80%	78%	82%	71%	81%	59%
Average	75%						

Source: 1997/98 Regional College Annual Reports

Table 2: 2005-06 College Operating Revenues

Operating Revenues (Schedule 1)							
College	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Provincial	\$3,260,440	\$3,336,734	\$3,176,483	\$9,718,418	\$5,399,557	\$3,001,923	\$4,303,381
Federal	\$808,684	\$51,507	\$85,642	\$317,172	\$29,000		
Other	\$762,952	\$989,400	\$851,642	\$3,201,082	\$1,850,029	\$1,226,142	\$2,732,858
Total	\$4,832,076	\$4,377,641	\$4,113,767	\$13,236,652	\$7,278,586	\$4,228,065	\$7,036,239
% of Prov/Fed funds of total.	84%	78%	79%	76%	75%	71%	61%
Average	77%						

Source: 2005/06 Regional College Annual Reports

This indication of status quo funding, on average an increase of only 2%, from the government in colleges over the last 10 years, for the most part, is important to note as it has required colleges to adopt new approaches to revenue generation in order to fund the

increasing costs of infrastructure. Regional Colleges have needed to become entrepreneurial and seek out new sources of revenue through development of funding partnerships with such agencies as Workers Compensation Board, niche training markets with business and industry such as safety training and development of pilot projects in response to a research request in such areas as special needs training.

Collective Bargaining Agreements

The Collective Bargaining Agreements between the Saskatchewan Regional Colleges and Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union are negotiated every three years. The last three signed agreements were reviewed in this study – September 1, 1997 to August 31, 2000; September 1, 2000 to August 31, 2003; and, September 1, 2003 to September 2006. These collective agreements involve five out of the seven colleges in this study as the northern college bargains separately except for the government compensation mandate and one of the southern colleges in this study is non-unionized. The purpose of reviewing these collective agreements signed by college management and college employees was to document changes and adaptations in a unionized workplace over the 10 years that may have been a result of global forces.

The 1997- 2000 collective agreement contained specific articles on harassment and technological change. Easter Monday was added to the holiday list. Maternity/paternity leave or family leave was six months in length. Childcare expenses for overnight travel were negotiated in. This agreement changed significantly for the southern colleges as they reached monetary parity with the northern college and also achieved pay equity which resulted in an equal pay for equal work of equal value classification plan effective September 1, 1999. This brought a higher level of

compensation to the college staff which contributed to a higher level of credibility and satisfaction to the workforce.

The 2000-2003 collective agreement included an appendix on the newly formed *Pay Equity Classification Plan*. Maternity/paternity leave or family leave was increased to 12 months in length. A *Deferred Educational Salary Leave Plan* was negotiated into the agreement as well as new letters of understanding on future benefit cost increases, scope clause, “regulated” employees and pressing necessity. These adjustments were significant in that they contributed to a more flexible, responsive workplace.

The 2003-2006 collective agreement had a number of changes and additions to the articles and letters of understanding. There was a change in the definition of temporary employee to anyone working six months or less. A top-up of up to 60% salary for the first 17 weeks of maternity leave was added. The *Deferred Salary Leave Plan* was opened up to other approved leaves besides educational. The harassment clause was changed to an anti-harassment clause with a provincial committee struck to gain consistency in the procedure. Employees requested to report for work for a minimum of three hours would now be compensated at their regular rate of pay. Benefit increases up to January 2006 would be the responsibility of the employer.

In summary, the collective bargaining agreements in the unionized Saskatchewan Regional Colleges are required to follow the government mandate in regards to compensation increases. This mandate can be applied to salaries or benefits. However, the other clauses in the agreement are negotiated based a number of influences including new labour standards, similar provincial agreements and workplace culture. Regional College negotiations are influenced by provincial labour practices. College agreements

are usually negotiated following the signing of government employee contracts. The review of these three collective agreements was important to highlight the changes in the culture of the workplace over the last 10 years as a result of the new economy. Child care, anti-harassment, education leave and additional benefits all reflect the need for colleges to become more flexible and responsive in their personnel practices due to the increasing diversity of Saskatchewan demographics. The need to adopt a life-long learning agenda and continually upgrade skills is reflective of the knowledge worker of today.

Network of Technology Enhanced Learning Services

The Saskatchewan Regional Colleges *Network of Technology Enhanced Learning Services Strategy* (2005) was inspected to assist in understanding the impact of information and communications technology on regional colleges. The report stated that “Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) has become an integral part of all dimensions of college operations, program offerings, and student services... and developed by colleges to create a network of TEL services to “enhance access to education and training opportunities for students residing in rural and northern Saskatchewan” (p. 1)

The strategy outlined the role of regional colleges in technology enhanced learning in three key areas: programs and services, access to TEL tools and student support and skill development. The strategic directions outlined in the strategy included uniform access with a common basic TEL service across Saskatchewan, human support to ensure student success, capacity building that promotes consistency, innovation and economies of scale, course development coordination and awareness using a joint marketing strategy to promote TEL programs and services.

The challenges and requirements for this network of TEL services to be successful were noted as funding requirements for purchase, upgrades and replacement of equipment; training component for staff and students on equipment and delivery mediums, available technical expertise and support, adequate bandwidth, complementary relationships with credit granting institutions and plans for future sustainability and growth of TEL.

The Regional Colleges, in their TEL strategy, committed to focusing on access and support and to providing common basic services. These services included access to computers, software, the Internet and other technologies, facilitation and tutoring through orientation to equipment, ongoing technical support, face-to-face tutoring, study skills development and peer/mentor support and counselling and coordination in career and academic planning and advising. The services involved assisting students with course/program selection, registration and support services, coordinating Tel course delivery and management and collaborating through TEL monitoring, annual planning and reporting, and coordinating and extending TEL services among partners.

In summary, this federal, provincial and institutional document review provided a public policy context of higher education in Canada and the province of Saskatchewan. This investigation of documents was significant as it defined indicators of colleges operating in a global context. The purpose of this document review was to understand how public policy has shaped the changing role and mission of regional colleges. It is evident that both federal and provincial policy is concerned with the ability of Canada to remain a competitive nation in the global economy. The training of knowledge workers, development of skills required in the technology age, opening of boundaries and space,

opportunities for trading resources, diminishing government resources and diversity of the population through immigration are all part of the rapidly integrating globalization process. As a result of this integration, higher education in Canada and Saskatchewan needs to adapt to a new global environment. A study of these documents provides the recognition that globalization is affecting nearly every level of education, society and the economy. This investigation of policy documents further demonstrates the need for senior college administrators to be aware of the globalization process, aware of the impact this changing external environment is having on higher education and then to provide the creative leadership required to adapt their institutions to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

Chapter 5

Perspectives of Senior Administrators: Impact of Globalization on Regional Colleges

This study examined in detail the responses of 29 senior administrators from seven Saskatchewan Regional Colleges and the Department of Advanced Education and Employment on their awareness and perspectives of how the forces of globalization – economics, political, technological and cultural – have impacted the role and mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges, the strategies and actions they have implemented to overcome the challenges and obstacles of these forces and their understanding of how their institution has changed and adapted to accommodate these external global forces. A review of federal, provincial government and institutional documents ranging from 1997-2006 in Chapter 4 assisted in setting the context of the study within public policy to determine the impact of global forces on the changing landscape of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges.

Defining Role and Responsibilities

A face-to-face personal interview using semi-structured interview questions was conducted with 29 participants out of a potential of 34 candidates. Five candidates were unavailable for interviewing due to, one on sick leave, two vacant positions, one on a leave from the position and another due to length of travel distance. The 26 senior Regional College administrators interviewed consisted of six Chairs of Board of Governors, six Chief Executive Officers (CEO), four Directors of Programs, six Directors of Finance and four Directors of Human Resources. The Minister, Deputy Minister and Executive Director from Advanced Education and Employment were the three government leaders interviewed. Fourteen males and 15 females made up the gender

balance of the participants with age range spanning from 35 to 63 years of age. There was a continuum of education levels of the participants ranging from Grade 12 certification(one), one year post-secondary certificate level (one), two year post-secondary diploma level (two), one year Arts and Science university courses(one), Certified Management Accountant designation (three), Bachelors Degree (13) including one Law Degree, up to a Masters degree level (six). The length of time participants have been in their present positions varied from 2 months to 15 years and the length of time involved with the Regional College system varied from 3 years to 31 years in length. The purpose of selecting this respondent group within the colleges was to gain knowledge of the range in roles and responsibilities, to understand the senior administrative structure of colleges and to gather information on the types of experience and educational background required to perform these senior administrative roles in the Saskatchewan Regional College system.

The participants defined their role and area of responsibility and described the professional background and experience they brought to their position. The six Chairs of Boards of Governors articulated their role as one of leadership in working with the Board of Governors to ensure the college mission and objectives are met; liaison between the Board of Governors and the CEO; contact with the Minister of Advanced Education and Employment; setting agendas, chair and facilitate Board of Governors meetings; public relations role in the communities; and, addressing issues through consultation and discussion with the CEO and senior management. The Board Chairs identified various professional backgrounds and experiences that assisted them in performing their roles and responsibilities including: educational background; dealing with people and difficult

issues; chairing various community and business meetings; various church, community and municipal experiences; business and managerial experience; and, volunteer efforts. One Board Chair attributed her experience through sitting on other Boards “ranging from parks and recreation, to celebration committees for the community, high school reunions, and organizations that range from minor hockey to church to school.”

The six Chief Executive Officers defined their role and area of responsibility as: setting the direction and strategies for the Board of Governors to satisfy the mission and goals of the college; leadership in marshalling the knowledge, skills, abilities, creativity and innovation of the people in the organization; engaging external partners from the public and private sector in the educational process to meet their needs; and, overall responsibility and administration for the college direction and operations. A variety of backgrounds and experiences were defined by the CEOs in the interviews as assisting in meeting the responsibilities of their current leadership position. They included experience in different positions in a college from instructing, counselling, coordinating and administrative, understanding processes from an administrative, management, leadership and change perspective, economic development work, experience within government bureaucracy and some knowledge of finance.

The role and area of responsibilities of four Directors of Programs were described as senior academic officers responsible for all programs delivered by the college, ensuring college mandate is fulfilled by identifying, developing and delivering effective programs, connecting to external and internal key stakeholders, data collection and accountability reporting to Advanced Education and Employment and providing advice and guidance on programming to college management and Board of Governors. The

various backgrounds and experiences that contributed to their expertise were related to experience working with counselling and youth groups, experience in health, education, business and finance and returning to school as a mature student.

The six Directors of Finance listed their roles and area of responsibilities as: record keeping for the college including the student information system; facility and equipment issues and maintenance; information technology functions; legislative requirements; internal financial and administrative functions, controls and reports; and, supervision of relevant staff. Dealing with a variety of people in the workplace, work experience in seeing the larger picture of an organization, knowledge of northern Saskatchewan and its people, and experience from working in the health, finance and business sectors have contributed to meeting the requirements of their present positions.

Roles and areas of responsibility stated by four Directors of Human Resources are: the human resources department; personnel related issues; college representative on the provincial college Human Resources committee; management bargaining representative and administration of the union contract/collective agreement; employment equity and anti-harassment officer for the college; and, staff professional development planning. The experiences and background that these four Directors of Human Resources bring to their position are: previous instruction, counselling and coordination in the college system; training in mediation and harassment, previous administration of union contracts; and, strongly developed interpersonal skills.

The Minister of Advanced Education and Employment has been a member of the legislature for 20 years and a member of government for 15 years in a variety of cabinet postings – health, education, training and employment, social services, minister

responsible for Crown Investment Corporation and the Public Service Commission. Educated in the teaching profession, she is currently also Minister responsible for Immigration and Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission. She is currently Vice Chair of the Treasury Board and involved in a number of other committees of cabinet. The Minister affirms her education and experience in the interview, “I think because of my training in philosophy and education and of how I think about education and learning, and of my experience as a minister and how government works, I think that is what I bring to this position.”

The role and responsibilities of the Deputy Minister of Advanced Education and Employment has four components. They are giving advice to government, taking direction from government on what advice you have given them and taking direction to implement, managing of the Advanced Education and Employment department and participating with the group of Deputy Ministers of other government departments. She has been in the Saskatchewan public service for 20 years with five as a Deputy Minister. She credits these years in the public service as a “good thing” and “equipped me to do the kind of role I have now.” Her background and experience that she brings to her position include financial planning, law practice, policy development, legislative work and in the social services area. “Most of my career has been in the policy area particularly the experience in social services I think is relevant to this world of training.”

The Executive Director of the Institutions Branch of Advanced Education and Employment claimed his branch has “responsibility for the training institutions within Saskatchewan, both public and private. This Branch is the liaison between the Minister and third party training institutions to ensure compliance with the legislation.” He noted

the branch has policy responsibility for recognition of prior learning, credit transfer and foreign credential recognition. The array of training institutions the Branch is responsible for include Regional Colleges, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST), Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission, Dumont Technical Institute and private vocational schools. The Executive Director has 20 years of experience within government bureaucracy.

In summary, the participants perceived their roles and responsibilities as senior administrators as similar in terms of job descriptions, title, functions and leadership of their institution but different in that some are more complex due to the breadth and scope of the administration positions and the size of the college. For example, the northern college has a much larger budget, staffing component and geographic region with a more diverse population than the southern colleges resulting in a larger number of senior administrators with a larger scope of duties. The variance among colleges in the number of senior leadership positions could suggest a gap in management capacity in such areas as human resources management and academic institutional planning in some colleges or a greater diffusion of leadership and decision-making throughout the coordination staff of those smaller organizations. Either could potentially affect the awareness level and adaptation of a college to external forces as time may potentially be taken up with the internal management of the institution. Less time would be available for the development of external partners, preparation for strategic planning and environmental scanning and research and study of innovative and best practices of adult education and training. Advanced Education and Employment participants perceived their roles as broad across the provincial post-secondary institutions. A key participant described the role as,

“responsibility for the training institutions within Saskatchewan, both public and private...ensuring the legislation for which the Minister is responsible for ultimately is complied with.” The colleges are one small component within the bigger training sector and possibly do not hold as much influence with the bureaucracy, the result being, colleges primarily acting as instruments of public policy with little room for innovation or creativity. Their targeted budgets are small and strictly monitored by government. Their mandate as “brokers of training” rather than credit granting in their own right, limits their level of perceived credibility by some stakeholders. As autonomous small, rural and northern institutions, they do not have a high level of political influence at the Ministry level. The varied educational and experiential backgrounds of the respondents could be a factor in their individual awareness of global forces and the challenges to their institution. This contextual background of the respondents was important to sketch a view of the skills and abilities of the current leadership within the colleges who are tasked with adapting their institutions to the impacts of globalization.

Perceptions and Awareness of Globalization

This section of the study identified and analyzed data gathered specifically from the interviews conducted with regional college senior administrators and Ministry leaders. The interviews followed the question guide (see Appendix C) to inform this study on the perceptions and awareness level of college senior administrators on the concept of globalization and its impact on the role and mission of regional colleges. From the data gathered through interviews, it appeared few senior college administrators have had the opportunity to research, consider or discuss the concept of globalization and its impact on higher education. This low level of awareness may be due to a number of

factors: the constraints of the local mandate orientation on regional colleges; the immediate, diverse internal needs of the college driving the leadership agenda leaving little time for reflection and study; lack of time devoted to college system discussion and strategic planning; or, the low level of leadership provided to the college sector at the ministerial level. It was evident to the researcher that with up front time to reflect on the interview questions and through progression of the one-hour interview, the participants made some connections between globalization and higher education at a general macro level but more relevant connections at their own college micro level.

In reflecting upon the impact of globalization on higher education in general, many discussed increased access and communications using technology through the internet and the worldwide web. "Education is becoming globalized," stated a Director of Human Resources, "and there are new ways to access information and to learn. It is a global market where a product can be sold to anyone in the world, anyplace at anytime." One key informant suggested, "Rapid advance in technology and communications mediums can be seen as a threat or as an opportunity but has become a way of doing business. In most cases it has required a huge learning curve with ongoing maintenance and costly upgrades." A Director of Finance perceived technology as a global force "impacting all areas of education and the college including administration of payroll, student registrations and information, payments by multi-currencies, program and course delivery through multiple options, instant employee communications, marketing and recruiting on-line, and partnerships and relationships worldwide." This advance in instant communications technologies has affected the regional colleges by increasing the cost of delivering education, increasing the level of competition for students, decreasing the time

for response, increasing the pace of work and challenging the future role and need of regional colleges given the onslaught of virtual classrooms and education mediums.

A participant described globalization in terms of interconnectedness of the world, “larger than just what happens with our own little nucleus. It takes into account what’s happening outside the community, within the province, with the country and out of the country. Globalization is really bringing our world closer – being more connected to other countries, other people, other cultures and other ways of being.” For regional colleges, this means a demand to serve and support an even greater diversity of student population putting strain on the current student support systems and requiring knowledge, training and future planning of support staff.

A CEO commented that we are “not isolated but part of a global economy” and that we need to “diversify our resources to a worldwide market.” This will force changes in terms of “how we educate people, how we think about our province and how we think about the educational structures in our province.” Regional Colleges and others in the Saskatchewan training sector need time to pursue and analyze the impact of these changes. One participant used the term “glocalization” where there are global forces such as information and communications technology creating universal accessibility through compression of time and space. At the same time, these forces are driving the economy at the local level to become more global and to market their products to the world. He suggested, “Colleges play an important role in being animators in our local communities to increase the social capital and knowledge of the issues around globalization.” He was adamant that colleges can be a vehicle to provide knowledge of global issues in order to support and shape community economic development initiatives. This means that college

administrators and staff need to be knowledgeable and apprised of the external environment shaping the internal strategic planning of the institution.

Two participants emphatically claimed that the “economic engine is driving the global agenda.” One viewed it in terms of Canada and Saskatchewan’s dependency on exporting natural resources. “Saskatchewan is a producer of raw resources. The global market place determines what those resources are worth, in turn, determines the dollars in government coffers. That in turn, does determine the dollars that are available to the college for delivery of training.” Another participant gave an example using oil prices, “As the world oil prices increase, activity in the oil sector increases, skilled labour demand increases and the need for training in all parts of Saskatchewan increases.” This means that colleges are expected to quickly deliver training in response to local labour market needs with little financial resources in place to deliver in a timely manner. Business and industry will not wait for colleges to catch up but will go elsewhere to meet their need for a trained workforce. Colleges respond to this pressure through delivery of short-term skilled training, variety of training methods and modes and expanded partnership development to extend their capabilities.

The knowledge of what’s going on across the world in real time, due to the media, makes the world much smaller. The mobility of students around the globe and the diverse job opportunities in the global market has required broader training opportunities, accommodation of cultural and linguistic needs, recognition of prior learning and educational credentials and provision of remedial, language or cultural training. A number of the respondents claimed their role was to perceive and understand these changes in order to assist others, particularly local businesses identify the global impacts

through having a broader understanding of the world issues. “It is being able to put the local perspective in the context of the global marketplace in the world we live in,” declared a CEO and followed with an example of how recently immigration has become a major piece of the Saskatchewan provincial policy development – an example of an economic and political global force. This has meant higher expectations of colleges to provide the training and services to these new immigrants with little planning or funding.

The senior administrators identified many issues to be resolved that could be associated to and a result of the impact of global forces. They included student mobility, language and cultural requirements, culture and expectations of work/family balance, expanded management and staff training in handling complaints, evaluations and supports, compensation levels and competition for current and future employees, and change in knowledge, skills and abilities required of current and future staff. An example of this change in skills was in the need to hire Information Technicians who have “broader, more up to date skills, higher education and a wider experience in the technology field” in order to manage the expanded communication systems.

In summary, a few of the respondents were aware of globalization, its forces and its impact on the colleges but many were not. Job duties, numbers of management staff in the college, use of the internet and technology, priority and allocation of time to research and acquiring knowledge and their “regional” designation may be factors that determined their level of awareness on connections between global forces and the planning and operations of the colleges. For some, their knowledge of global issues had assisted them in setting a vision for their college. A CEO confirmed, “When we’re in the process of strategic planning, the foundation of information that we’re dealing with is not just our

local world. It is about the world marketplace.” For others, with time to think, contemplate and discuss during the interview, the impact of globalization and its forces on colleges became more relevant and material. Early in one interview, a respondent claimed, “Because of the nature of the regional college system in Saskatchewan, we are less impacted by globalization because we are rural based. We’re regional, very regionally directed.” However as the interview progressed he began to think and relay a different message in, “Globalization has resulted in a major time compression that has affected all of our work. It affects how we live, breathe and work.” For most senior administrators in the regional college system, globalization appears to be more of a concern on how it impacts their operations and day-to-day mission of delivering and supporting adult education to the residents of their region such as training for recent immigrants rather than on the larger economic picture at the provincial and national level.

Role and Mission of Regional Colleges

To further determine their level of awareness, senior administrators were requested to provide their view of the impact of globalization on the role and mission of the regional colleges. “The role and mission of regional colleges has been transformed,” declares a government official. “The regional colleges have moved away from the role of trying to figure out and meet the individual community needs to more of how to plan for and help with the labour market in the region.” An administrator felt colleges are “well positioned to respond to change” due to their small size, flexibility, quick responses and local focus. Many of the college senior administrators spoke to the change in types of training and education delivered in order to meet the labour market requirements of the

region which signalled a major shift away from the original community development role of the colleges to more of an economic development role.

A respondent suggested the way we think and access education has changed and this may be due to global forces. “Cross country shopping, cross world shopping has affected where to recruit students and has erased college boundaries to a certain extent.” A CEO confirmed the need to “educate on transferable skills to go into the world” and the need to “inform young people as to the choices and validate of those choices” as a continuing role for colleges.

“Advances in information and communications technology are probably at the heart of what’s driving a lot of the phenomena around globalization. Broadcasting does not have to be just inside our borders as the big market out there is the rest of the world,” concluded a CEO. His view of Saskatchewan colleges was that the focus has always been on “what we can do to share what we’re doing inside the province” when, in fact, the “world is really the oyster of the student.”

The world of work has changed. We’re all impacted by a “barrage of information resulting in a major time compression. Decisions are made quicker than they’ve ever been before because we have access to information quicker,” expressed a CEO. A Board Chair described how the “values of the workforce have changed” towards gender neutral, diverse workdays and working from home. Immigrant workers are seen as a way to sustain rural communities. A number of colleges described their experiences with skilled immigrant workers who require English as a Second language and cultural training, extra time and supports, and training courses delivered in a variety of ways. This has required the development of new partnerships with such agencies as the Open Door Society.

The college needs to become more “regionally industry-specific” in order to support the local economy in the world of globalization suggested a Director of Finance. A Ministry participant believed Saskatchewan is still an “agrarian economy” which has gone under tremendous pressures due to global changes in markets, prices, transportation costs and political elements including free trade. She indicated an example of that impact is the huge demand for truck driver training to move the grain to inland grain terminals. With the elimination of the “crow rate,” which was a subsidized rate for farmers transporting grain by railcars, the railways have all but disappeared from the Saskatchewan landscape. She also noted, “Saskatchewan has a rich resource base in terms of mineral and oil and gas that are required by world economies.” As a result, the role and mission of regional colleges have been “transformed.” Training is focused more on the workplace, skills training and jobs connected to the industry. Colleges are working more with employers in human resource planning, trades and skills training and in a capacity development role with local businesses.” A Board Chair stated it simply as, “the labour market training needs have superseded individual community needs.”

In summary, the majority of college senior administrators indicated the role and mission of regional colleges has changed towards a “broader community and economic development role focused on labour market development.” The government participants clearly indicated that with “different labour markets emerging in the regional economies,” colleges needed to focus on providing education and training to “support those labour markets.” What became evident in these interviews was that senior administrators were very knowledgeable on the changing role and mission of colleges within their “regions” but did not necessarily relate those changes to an impact of global

forces. The regional perspective overshadowed any broader role for colleges in the provincial, national or global context. The role and mission of the colleges was further examined with respondents regarding the challenges to their college operations that may be due to global forces.

Challenges Creating Change

This section of the study explored the challenges senior administrators are facing in response to provincial, national and global forces. This is important to set the stage for understanding the organizational changes and adaptive strategies of senior administrators in responding to global forces.

The 29 senior administrators interviewed, perceived a number of challenges facing colleges as a result of global forces, some of which were felt indirectly from the provincial and national level. The major challenges highlighted included: demographic shifts creating diverse student needs; technology capability; traditional role and image of colleges questioned; workforce training requirements; partnership development; and, enhanced accountability measures. These challenges have and are currently creating change in the Saskatchewan Regional College system.

Demographic Shifts

The participants claimed the make-up of the colleges' student population was increasingly more diverse with a greater need for interventions creating a higher level of counselling, instructing and administrative supports needed in order to be successful in their training. With the increased mobility of people across provincial, national and global borders, the Saskatchewan population continues to require educational upgrading and retraining. An example given was the increasing number of immigrants being

brought into the region to fill a local labour market shortage. A Director of Human Resources verified that in their administrative meeting agendas they now talk about “immigrants, international students and visas. Those would not have appeared on our agenda ten years ago. Our student body has certainly changed.”

A Board Chair emphasized the increase in Aboriginal students in their college, which has challenged the curriculum content, culture and workplace practises. She attributed this to, “First Nations leaders putting pressure on their communities to obtain more education in order to take control of themselves and their lives.” The Ministry personnel all spoke to the political emphasis on the development and delivery of Aboriginal skills training through the Regional Colleges to prepare the future workforce of Saskatchewan. The need for skilled workers in Saskatchewan is a need felt across Canada and North America in order to compete in the world marketplace.

Many of the participants commented on the challenge of meeting the increasing needs of this diverse student population. The diversity of the student body is requiring colleges to “rethink student services.” A Director of Programs stated the challenge as, “not only providing students with specific skills, but the skills to work in a global world.” Colleges are being challenged to deliver additional training and services such as English as Second Language training, assessments and diagnosis on learning styles and practices, extensive literacy training and cultural components into curriculum. The make-up and needs of this diverse student population is putting pressure on the teaching and learning process. A senior government official was adamant in identifying the challenge. “The challenge now in rural areas of the country, is to move marginalized groups of people- the underdeveloped, underemployed groups- to the mainstream. Therefore the direction is

labour market planning to provide basic education, employability skills, technical training and jobs.” The challenge, to improve the intellectual capital of the province, is felt at all levels of government.

Technology Capability

Costs, technical support, technical requirements, upgrading, training and infrastructure all contribute to the challenge of acquiring and maintaining technology capacity. E-learning requires investment in development, training, hardware, software, video-conferencing systems and other technologies. A Director of Finance pointed out, “We don’t have the resources to keep up. We’re forever one step behind everything that’s happening. We’re not funded for it.” In some colleges, resources have been diverted from other areas to ensure that technology is available to access and support programs. One CEO gave an overview of this increased investment, “our functions, in terms of how we deliver programs and services, are so Internet based and technological based now...it has increased cost because we have had to provide computers for more staff and access to more training.”

The majority of participants believed that access to up to date information technology systems are crucial for the educational process in colleges. Access by students to computer labs, development of web-based programs, delivery of technology training, availability of personal notebooks and individualized programming through technology continue to be challenges. Computer literacy of staff and students, quality of on-line training and the continuing need to integrate technology enhanced learning initiatives in order to satisfy government expectations continually challenge the colleges.

A CEO described how access to extensive information on the “world-wide web” has challenged communications and the teaching/learning process. “Information is coming from so many different areas, because there is so much, it really puts a strain on the communication mechanisms that you have in place,” declared a respondent. This information requires careful “analysis and assessment” by both the teacher and the learner. In designing new programs, teachers have access to the “best practises” from around the world, as “experts” in any field can be accessed through their own web-pages. Instructors have an added responsibility to “stay current” as there is an ever increasing demand by learners to understand what’s happening around the world.

Participants believed technology has added to the complexity of college systems, increased expectations of staff, students and the public and increased management requirements of systems and information. A Director of Finance explained, “Technology adds to the complexity of the systems one creates and because it can produce more information, the expectation increases and this causes more work.” The challenge is to make technology work for the individual core needs of the college and for the system. Technology allows colleges “to be a broader network than just geographic location” and “allows us to work together as a system. It changes the duties of staff right down to the entry-level receptionist in terms of how people, customers and clients are handled,” declares a Director. A department participant voiced the question, “How can colleges work together through the use of technology to provide for the future workforces?” So as the government encourages colleges to integrate technology more and more into their training and workplaces, the question for colleges becomes how to strike the balance

between their need to access information and processes with their funding capacity to fulfill their role and mandate.

Traditional Role and Image

Many of the participants claimed the traditional role of the colleges has primarily focused on the individual college region in terms of building capacity and revitalizing rural and northern Saskatchewan. However, the challenge now is for colleges to be “plugged into” what is happening in the rest of the world stated a CEO,

Colleges are in many ways a big part of the social capital of their communities; and they’re important for building community capacity to be sustainable. So if colleges aren’t plugged in to what’s happening in the rest of the world and how things might unfold through trends and encouraged to do so by the public policy makers of the day, how do their communities access that type of information in order to be able to respond?

According to four respondents, the “community” college of former years still impacts the college today and hinders their ability to be viewed as credible organizations in a broader context. “One of the main challenges the colleges have in identification is the fact that we are called regional colleges. Anywhere else a college is a college,” stated a Board Chair. So the questions to be asked are, why have not more than three out of the seven colleges in this study removed the word “regional” from their name? Is it because they do not see their horizons any larger than regional?

The provisions of *The Regional Colleges Act* (1988) legislates the colleges to deliver training through a “brokerage” model, not as a credit granting institution. Due to their inability to grant credit, this has challenged the ability of colleges to meet some of

the unique regional training needs. The lack of credit granting status, geographic boundaries of colleges and lack of capital infrastructure within the Regional Colleges' legislation was suggested by a few as having created in the minds of potential students and stakeholders, a perceived low level "pecking order" and some inability of the colleges to collaborate as a system. This lack of collaboration is counter-productive given the global networking capabilities and global access to education. The challenge for senior administrators is whether they will ever be perceived as "credible" given their brokerage status.

Colleges are challenged by their dependency on government funding, government policies, government direction, the political nature of decisions, and the desire for control by politicians and bureaucrats. A Director of Finance is adamant, "Our ability to exist depends on the provincial funding that we receive and every time we go through a Regional College review, a change in government, a change in national direction – any of these forces on a political level, it impacts what we do significantly because of our reliance on them for funding." As a third party to government, colleges require approvals in implementing their role and mandate.

Political choices of the federal and provincial governments have impacted funding levels and challenged the ability of colleges to deliver traditional programs. A CEO believed that globalization and its emphasis on economics has led governments to spend less on "social areas" resulting in a "steady decline in educational funding, health funding and welfare funding over the years." All respondents commented on the fact that government policy impacts colleges. While colleges may have some influence on it, "in the final analysis it is beyond our control." As a result colleges have taken on a more

corporate culture and an entrepreneurial role whereby they augment government funding through direct contract training with business and industry.

Workforce Training

In order to compete in the global marketplace, Regional Colleges have been called upon, by all levels of government, to deliver training for labour market development. A Ministry participant defined the challenge, “the community training needs of the past are now an economic focus today.” A CEO claimed colleges need to become “part of economic development” not just deliverers of the educational component. The federal and provincial social policy on education has been directed, due to the skills shortages and need for intellectual capital in the country to compete in a global economy, towards a “labour market focus with a tighter accountability framework.” Examples given of provincial policy direction supporting economic development were the *JobStart/FutureSkills* program of support to business and industry within the Department of Advanced education and Employment and the *Jobs First* program within the Department of Social Services.

A Ministry respondent emphasized the expectation of government for the training system to respond to the needs of “marginalized folks in the province more aggressively. People on social assistance are underemployed and need essential skills in order to move up the food chain of employment.” The delivery of adult upgrading and employability skills is not new to colleges however linking that training to employment and jobs added an additional accountability challenge.

“If we are going to compete in a world market, we have to keep up with the world market, so we have to be productive. We have to sustain our industries and develop

more,” declared a Director. However, there is considerable debate within colleges on training for profit versus education primarily paid by the state. The challenge is the need for a “cultural shift” in the organization - a shift towards a more entrepreneurial approach. “One of the biggest challenges is accepting the changes that are going on out there,” declared a key informant.

Four colleges spoke about the “Alberta economic engine” creating jobs for people in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan people, particularly the youth, are commuting to high paying jobs in the oil sands and oil and gas economy of Alberta. The decline of forestry, the depressed agricultural economy and lack of good paying jobs has resulted in huge numbers of youth leaving Saskatchewan. This presents a challenge for Regional Colleges in their ability to sustain funding and programming levels in rural areas of the province where most of the emigrating youth originate. Depopulation of rural Saskatchewan with an older generation of people in rural Saskatchewan has a “limiting effect” on the organizations that serve the rural environment. “An organization needs a critical mass to sustain itself,” suggested a respondent. Colleges have been challenged in some programs to maintain their traditional student enrolments at the same time connecting with business and industry to prepare and train the current and future workforce. However, it has been proven that “those who train at home are more likely to stay at home.” Regional Colleges must take up the challenge and deliver creative and innovative training in a variety of modes in support of the learner to remain sustainable over the long-term.

Partnerships

Networking and partnership development is crucial for colleges in this changing, dynamic global environment. The challenge for small, rural colleges is the time and effort

of human resources to maintain and build these partnerships both internal and external to the college. Some colleges depend on the development and maintenance of partnerships to expand their programming levels and support the infrastructure of the college. Other colleges attribute their ability to be informed and enhance their community and economic development expertise to networking with partners.

The *Training System Review* (2005) indicated a challenge for Regional Colleges was to foster better relationships with other education and training institutions in Saskatchewan in order to collaborate on meeting the skills shortage agenda and the needs of the knowledge based economy. The Ministry agreed, “We need to find a working relationship that recognizes the qualities of the institutions. We need an organized system in place that delivers a set of programs to the Saskatchewan people. If Saskatchewan is to play any part in the global economy with its rich, natural resources, all parts of its systems must be working together in harmony.”

Accountability

Regional Colleges are accountable to the Minister of Advanced Education and Employment of the government of Saskatchewan. This accountability is formally through the Deputy Minister and bureaucrats working in Branches within the Department. Colleges are challenged by the high level of accountability measures required by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Employment. This relationship was referred to by many of the respondents as one of “master-servant.” This included references to the limitations of the college mandate, the control and micromanagement by the Ministry in the name of accountability, the perceived lack of political clout and influence by colleges and the historical low level of funding for colleges.

The mandate of colleges includes limited ability to develop and deliver on-line programs due to the “brokering relationship” with Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology and universities. Examples that illustrate the micromanagement of colleges by the Ministry were: extensive reporting and accountability requirements and cycles of control including template formats and budget previews. In 1997 in order to be approved to access government funding, the Minister of Learning required colleges to submit formal Business Plans, facility plans, technology plans and human resources plans, thus, moving to more of a business or corporate model of accountability. “Colleges are small in the post-secondary system of Saskatchewan and therefore have very little funding and very little political clout,” stated a Board Chair. Although each college is autonomous, the Board Chair and Board members are appointed by the Minister and therefore follow closely the political agenda and accountability measures of the day. Colleges and their administration are challenged to meet the diverse and changing levels of accountability to numerous stakeholders – students, communities, labour markets and most noticeably, government.

This raises a number of questions. Is the economic force of globalization driving the agenda for greater accountability of colleges to the Ministry and the public? Is the economic force of globalization transcending regional, provincial and national boundaries? Have accountability measures been heightened across the globe in order to maximize the economic potential of nations? A positive response can be given to these questions as government policies are directing colleges toward economic goals and less reliance on government funding, emphasizing workforce training as outcomes for the economy rather than the community interest training and compelling colleges to improve

efficiencies and increase productivity and to become more accountable to government through a business, corporate model of operation. These are questions and challenges for not only Regional Colleges but for the larger training sector in the province.

In summary, most of the college senior administrators could identify challenges impinging on Regional Colleges as a result of provincial, national and global forces. However, two participants suggested that the colleges' mission is *fundamentally* the same as originally legislated in that they are still community based and deliver training within a geographic region. This was supported by comments from a Ministry respondent, "Education is education and the role of colleges remains community development, human infrastructure and skill development." A CEO claimed, "We are geographically bound. It's embedded in our culture. The challenge is to get buy-in that the world that we need to serve or that we need to respond to isn't just within the boundaries of our region." How these senior administrators are responding to this challenge and others created by globalization is documented in the following section.

Adaptive Strategies and Change

All respondents in the study identified strategies they have adopted to address challenges created by globalization. These strategies have led to significant change in the colleges over the last 10 years. Some of these changes are not only a result of adaptive strategies of management but also as a result of all stakeholders in the college system – students, staff, employers, communities and policy makers.

Student Focused

One or two key informants described how the unique features of Regional Colleges--the broad continuum of learning opportunities offered from literacy and basic

education to technical and trades training to university and post-graduate level education, the ability to adapt and customize training and the unique brokerage model--has contributed to meeting the demands and challenges of an increasingly diverse student population. Examples of initiatives undertaken recently that illustrate how these unique features are meeting the increasingly diverse student needs were: the redesign of Basic Education with a more “Aboriginal focus” in the curricula; introduction of “workplace essential skills” in the technical training curricula to prepare students for jobs; international examples in the curricula, particularly in the business programs to present a global perspective; student testing, assessments and diagnosis by counsellors and learning specialists to assist in developing productive learning styles; and, the addition of tutors in many programs to assist with technology, language and specific individual learning needs.

Colleges focus on student needs and success. “The majority of our people are there because of the students and they want student success.” One Director spoke of staff “working hard” to make things “easier and better for the learner.” However, a CEO also pointed out that the current focus on “student success linked to employment” is in part due to the provincial accountability framework.

Technology Strategies

A Director pointed out that their college, in order to provide access to information, has moved the Information Technology function from being a “low-level administrative support” to being a “strategic part” of the college. “Our IT function has gone from reactive to proactive,” stated a CEO and gave an example. “We were looking over our student recruitment process. We have come to the conclusion that by the use of

file sharing and other tools we will be able to smooth out that process, speed it up a little bit, and also have greater accuracy in our process of communications.”

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) was the most common reference to new initiatives in response to the impact of globalization on program and project planning in the colleges. TEL encompasses “technology managed tutorial labs, video-conferencing, on-line delivered courses, computer software training and electronic classrooms” to connect students and communities. Colleges have integrated TEL services and supports throughout their organizations.

Colleges have adapted both internal and external communication patterns through the use of technology. “Technology has opened up internal communications between college offices,” noted a Director. E-mail and videoconferencing were the most commonly mentioned technology tools utilized by colleges. These technology tools have allowed a “broader participation in decision making,” according to another Director, as well as a “leadership network” where people from all areas of the college meet to focus on strategic issues

Many spoke on the impact that technology has had on financial and facility planning. Colleges have acquired proper space, infrastructure and equipment in order to be responsive to administrative and programming technology needs. A Director of Finance spoke on his experience of “acquiring and implementing” new accounting software. Even though he started with a local supplier, the “amalgamation and consolidation of businesses globally” has meant that the college has ended up with a vendor that is “international” and the support for the software can be found instantly on-

line. Access to information on-line has impacted all of the day-to-day functional processes of college operations.

Emerging Role

A major public policy direction, favoured by many senior administrators, was the increased role to deliver training for labour market development. A Board Chair spoke of this as the “rural revitalization role” of colleges. A Ministry respondent defined this emerging role as “colleges changing from a community development base focused on community needs to a more economic focus today. People no longer see colleges as the macramé sort of center but as educational institutions that create leadership in communities by development of citizens through education.”

A CEO claimed that colleges are becoming a “part of economic development” not just the deliverers of the educational component. This is happening, he explained, through “staff participation on economic development committees as part of the decision-making process” in areas such as assisting the development of a particular industry in an area. In the northern college this “focus on labour market development is not new,” stated a respondent. She went on to explain, “With the creation of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan in 1972, the objective was to build up the infrastructure of the north. The college training was always predominantly employment related from the beginning to support economic development of the north.” So then why was this not the original role of southern colleges as well? Perhaps it was due to the strong economy of the agriculture sector in the south in the early 1970’s when colleges were initiated.

Several participants felt that the colleges have matured with a resulting enhanced credibility. A Director of Programs stated, “Colleges have grown and matured across not

only the province but the country and they have a reputation that they have worked at and gained. Their credibility has improved provincially and nationally with the increase in delivery of technical and university programs and also their increased links with business and industry.” Other initiatives were increased student focus and learner supports to ensure success, increased business training and the move to a more entrepreneurial, money making institution where “Staff has gotten more professional.” It was suggested this change in image was also a result of increased marketing of academic programs, greater community profile with permanent facilities and signage, success of students in local college programs such as Practical Nursing leading to local jobs and more involvement in the community by the college staff.

Development of expertise and abilities, enhancement of credibility and movement to a greater self-reliance has granted colleges a heightened maturity level and increased confidence level. “Labour market” has been inserted in much of the language of college planning. A Director of Finance noted, “Economic development is probably one of the main messages for us....promote economic development in our region.” The “definition of community” has also expanded declared a CEO. “Look at the marketplace that extends beyond our region. We are investigating what are the training opportunities and requirements for the tar sands in Alberta because our population is going to take advantage of those and we want to give them the strongest competitive advantage to work there but live here.” This is an indication of the emerging role of colleges in the economic development of their regions.

Entrepreneurial Culture

Colleges have become more entrepreneurial, innovative and flexible in the nature of their work in order to, meet the demands of the economy, engage students and meet public policy directions. Respondents referred to colleges as being “opportunity driven,” more accepting of “new ideas and risk” and attracting people that are prepared to “hustle and think outside the box.” The competitive edge of colleges required in an entrepreneurial climate, came through in the data as well. “We’ve become more competitive for our kinds of students. We’ve become more willing to say we’re not just an option for you but we’re your first choice,” commented a Director of Programs. A Department participant noted the competitive nature of colleges for “students, populations and funding.” As a result of this increased competitiveness, a respondent claims the “public perception” of the college has changed. The colleges are now part of the conversation. The college’s flexible nature was referred to in program delivery and response time. “We change our product based on the demands of our clients.”

One college described their marketing strategies and plans as more business focused including “one-on-one client contacts” to ensure they are delivering the programs required by the employers in their region. “We recognized the need for an entrepreneurial type program division with a market and promotional strategy if we were going to grow and growth was one of our strategic goals,” explained a Director of Programs.

One college gave coordinators training and a “tool kit.” The first piece was to garner information – “going deeper into the market and talking to clients one to one asking did this training work for you? Did it impact what you wanted to do?” Second, colleges engaged individuals in a more direct fashion in order to “make colleges the

trainers of choice in the area” and “start to sell our capacity to employers.” This was a major shift for the majority of colleges whose primary level of support in the past were government grants targeted to delivery of specific programming. Although this support continued, it did not fund the additional economic development work colleges were expected to perform. Due to this shift in expectation, colleges took on a more corporate style of management.

Management Style of Leaders

The majority of respondents referred to the management style within colleges as open and transparent, utilizing a participatory team approach. A Director concluded, “the more information people have, the more open and honest you are, the more buy in you get and the more they see the process that decisions are arrived at and therefore they’ll be on side with you.” A CEO spoke to the “Generation M” employees who are technically savvy, better informed and expect to be part of how the organization functions. People no longer are willing to put up with “my way or the highway” attitude which has resulted in the requirement of an “inclusive” style of management. This is evident in the negotiations and changes made within the collective agreements over the past few years; change such as remuneration of child care expenses when away on business trips.

A Board Chairperson suggested, “People want to work in an atmosphere that’s pleasant and conducive to doing good work. People will do good work if they know they are appreciated and receive mutual respect.” Another indicated a need for a “mix of styles” on the team - people who are focused on a task, people who work well with people, and people who are good listeners, to people who are creative and challenged to think outside the box. “Involvement in decisions, input from everyone and people being

better informed are part of the participatory management style,” concluded three of the respondents. A CEO reflected, “I think people have always wanted to be part of the decision-making process. People have a need to be engaged in where we’re going and have their views reflected. It’s incumbent upon managers to understand and acknowledge those views.”

Respondents referred to additional elements of the management style developing in colleges. Delegation and more authority given to managers, less hands on management and more of a “keeper and promoter of the vision,” willingness to take risks, more professional, educated and informed and a greater level of leadership skills and connectivity to the rest of the world, were mentioned. This style of management has changed the workplace to more of an open forum with all staff included in marketing and promoting the college in order to meet the growing demands for training.

Management, however, appears to be doing little in succession planning in the colleges. Recruitment of experienced, qualified staff is becoming a growing issue in all sectors of the Saskatchewan and Canadian workforce. Two colleges are monitoring their projected retirements and one has developed a plan with respect to specific imminent retirements. “We are tracking our average age of employees and projecting what we’re going to need to replace, and having discussions on how we will replace those people,” commented a Director of Human Resources. “We haven’t implemented any clear strategies except to identify the time that we will experience some gaps in the organization.” Colleges are using the internet for recruitment and receiving applications from around the globe.

Accountability Processes

Saskatchewan Regional Colleges are primarily accountable to the Minister of Advanced Education and Employment but also to their stakeholders – students, businesses, communities and the general public. Accountability measures have been heightened across the globe in order to maximize the economic potential of nations. Colleges have responded to these increased accountability expectations. The preparation of formal Business Plans, development of an on-line student information system, integration of new accounting packages, Annual Reports and financials, programming, facility and technology plans, are a few examples of requirements measures prepared by colleges.

The need to remain current and up to date on administrative and personnel policies is a result of increased accountability measures. A Board Chair indicated they review their policies on a regular basis to ensure they are “meaningful in a strategic way.” The CEOs noted “new policies” have been written and implemented due to the impact of heightened accountability. They included policies on information technology that governs new technology tools and resources, risk management governing new systems, Board recruitment ensures the right mix of expertise is recruited, anti-harassment and security responds to the legal and political pressures and personnel policies led by collective agreement negotiation.

In summary, the senior administrators are adopting initiatives and strategies for their colleges in response to challenges as a result of global forces. The question to be considered is, how successful are these strategies in terms of meeting the training and education needs of students, industry and communities in their region – the population

Regional Colleges were originally mandated to serve? The Annual Reports tabled by the colleges indicate this local, regional mandate continues to take precedence in spite of the pressures and challenges of the global, external environment.

Summary

An analysis of this study by a CEO indicated, “Our roles have expanded. The little enclaves that we may have worked in and had comfort in, those boundaries are gone. What we have to bring is the global perspective to the local marketplace.” Demographics, economics and technology together with public policy have extended the role and mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. This inflationary role is common to higher educational institutions in the new economy of the 21st Century. How successful colleges will be in the long-term is dependent on their perception and awareness of global forces, identification of the resulting complex issues and challenges and development of strategies and initiatives in their organization to adapt to this new economy. But how will these administrators balance this paradigm shift of higher education from local to global? According to one, “I think it’s more than colleges. It’s all of us. That we have to be flexible--gamblers--willing to take a chance to try that new road.”

From the evidence gathered through interviews, it appears regional colleges are ready, willing and able to play an active role in their communities. However in recent years the economic mission has superseded the original community and social development mission. It will be imperative that colleges seek better ways of offering an educational experience to the individual student, being involved and supportive in the students learning plan and modeling the role of a knowledge worker of today in seeking knowledge and skill development throughout life. Friedman (2005) defines this role as a

“social entrepreneur,” that, in order to make a positive social impact, one must “teach people how to fish, in hopes of feeding them for a lifetime” (p. 449). This holds true and can be transposed to lifelong learning and education. Here is where regional colleges can reconsider their mission given the ongoing need of knowledge workers to upgrade and up-skill within this global economy.

Chapter 6

Summary and Discussion

This study involves a survey of the perspectives of senior administrators on how the forces of globalization have impacted the role and mission of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges, what strategies and actions they utilized in these colleges to overcome the challenges and obstacles due to these forces and how these institutions have changed and adapted to accommodate these external global forces. Chapter 6 demonstrates the expertise gained by the researcher through identification and synthesis of data gathered from senior college administrators and substantiated and extended from a review of relevant literature. This has allowed the researcher to suggest solutions and projections on the future of regional colleges including challenges and opportunities. My specific research objectives were:

1. to understand how global forces of economics, culture, technology and politics have influenced and changed the mission, culture, structure and functional processes of the Regional Colleges
2. to identify challenges, obstacles and tensions faced by senior administrators due to the global forces and identify what strategies they employed to adapt to these global forces
3. to determine to what extent the organizational adaptation was influenced by the external environment versus the internal organization for its long-term survival
4. to identify other key forces impacting the future and long-term survival of Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan.

This qualitative research included a literature review, personal interviews and a document review. Interviews were conducted with 26 senior college administrators and three key Ministry personnel in the Department of Advanced Education and Employment to reveal their perceptions on key challenges impacting the role of regional colleges. Institutional and provincial and federal government documents were reviewed to further define and examine the changing terrain of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges.

My interest in this topic stems from a 20 year career in the field of higher education in Saskatchewan. As a current Chief Executive Officer of a Regional College, I was interested in better understanding the context of globalization and of the internal and external forces that shape and direct the mission and direction of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. This research will inform my continued role as a leader and decision-maker in a regional college and has implications for the Regional College system and the Saskatchewan training sector as a whole.

Summary of Results

The summary of results in addressing the four research objectives is based on a conceptual framework adopted from Levin's (2001) work which depicted three theories: globalization, organizational change and organizational adaptation. The summary of findings encompasses links to and among the literature review, personal interviews and document analysis in order to determine the changing role and mission of regional colleges in responding to globalization.

Globalization Theory

Globalization is a term used to describe the economic, political, technological and cultural change occurring around the world and defines and provides the macro context

of this research. In this study these changes are categorized according to Levin's (2001) set of nine categories of activities of higher education institutions as they respond to global forces: internationalization, workforce training, electronic technology, labour alterations, productivity and efficiency, public sector funding constraints, restructuring, state intervention, private sector interaction, partnerships, external competition, homogenization and commodification. These activities will be the lens through which the changing vista of regional colleges will be summarized.

Internationalization.

Internationalization consists of such actions as recruiting international students, delivery of institutional curriculum to other countries, student and staff exchanges between other countries and internationalizing the campus and the curriculum with images, symbols and practices (Levin, 2001). Only one out of the seven regional colleges studied is currently engaged in any of these behaviours. They are primarily focused on recruiting international students to their university program (College B, Annual Report, 2005-2006). The opportunity for colleges to be engaged in international work became mandated through a Ministerial letter of approval in June 2003. Government and colleges believed international education projects could benefit from Saskatchewan's experience and the province and colleges could realize economic benefits through international contacts. Most colleges are not engaged in direct international activities due in part to the training demands of their regional population and to the additional upfront resources for development and marketing. Therefore, due to their more regional mandate and low capacity level to respond to international training and markets, the majority of colleges have not engaged in international work. With the expansion of technology capability

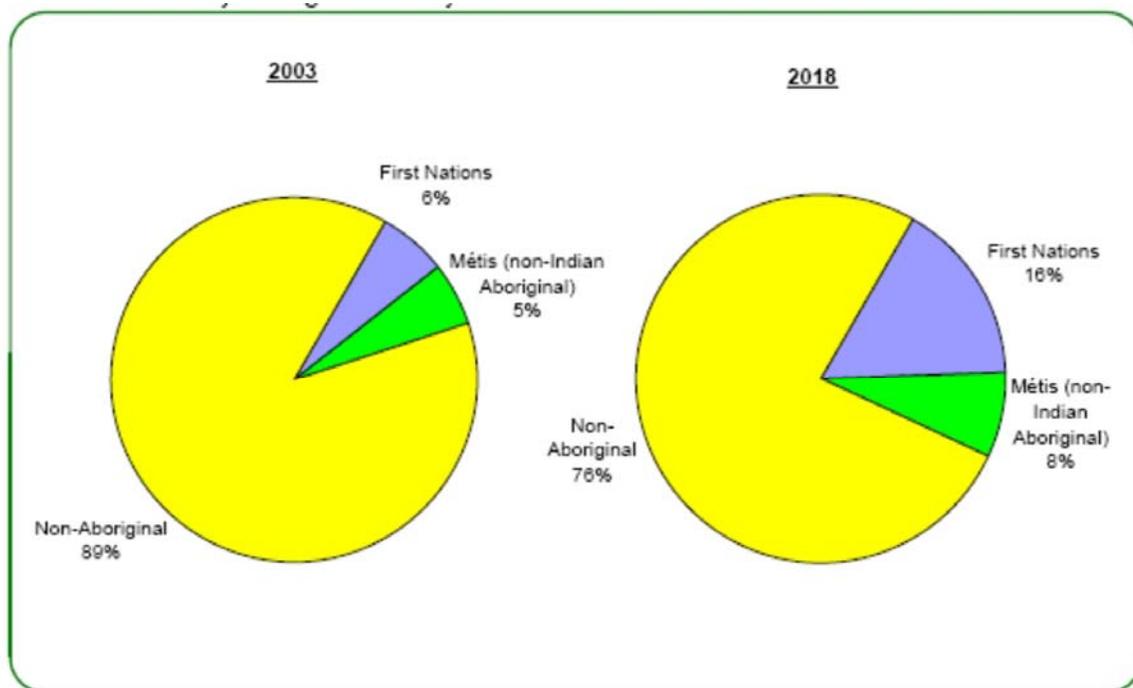
providing distance learning and virtual classrooms, an opportunity for regional colleges in delivery of specific niche areas of training could be recognized at an international level.

While internationalization is on the government agenda, Regional Colleges are much more engaged in working closely with the Aboriginal communities in their regions. The young Aboriginal population is increasing and at the same time the rest of the Saskatchewan population is ageing. As the young Aboriginal population in their regions continues to rise, the colleges are being called on through documented expectations of government, to partner and to prepare them for the future workforce (Deputy Minister, March 2005, budget letter). The Deputy Minister of Advanced Education and Employment, in her April 2006 budget letter to colleges, emphasized this expectation:

In 2006-07, we have targeted 500 additional training opportunities for Aboriginal people across the post-secondary training system to be achieved within existing and new funding allocations. While this is an ambitious goal, with your cooperation, I believe it can be achieved. Department officials will work with you during the business planning process to ensure these opportunities identified.

Figure 6 shows the growing Aboriginal youth population (15 to 29 years). With expected increasing labour force participation due to preparation and training, the share of Aboriginal youth in the labour force more than doubles from 11% in 2003 to 24% in 2018. Looked at another way, one in four new entrants to the labour market will be Aboriginal in 2018 compared with one in 10 of the new entrants in 2003.

Figure 6: Aboriginal labour force participation



Source: Sask Labour Market Trends (2004)

Four of the seven colleges have signed Aboriginal Employment Development Program contracts with the Department of First Nations and Métis Relations agreeing to work towards a representative workforce within their institutions. One college has recruited a full-time Aboriginal Program Coordinator to work directly with First Nations Bands and Métis organizations in order to identify and address their training needs. Another college has partnered with Aboriginal groups, for many years, to expand their training opportunities and provide facilities and infrastructure to meet the demands for post-secondary training in their region. One college has developed and implemented an employment equity policy and plan within their workplace. Most of the colleges have a high number of Aboriginal students within their Basic Education and Literacy programs

(Regional College Annual Reports, 2005-06). As Saskatchewan progresses in the 21st Century, the education and training of the Aboriginal population is essential to maintaining the provinces economic base. This fact constrains regional colleges in terms of their response to global markets as there is a pressing need for them to address employment issues and economic sustainability throughout rural and northern Saskatchewan.

A research report by the Conference Board of Canada, *Aboriginal Digital Opportunities: Addressing Aboriginal Learning Needs Through the use of Learning Technologies* (2001) indicates that Aboriginal people continue to have lower rates of participation in the labour force than of the general population. This is due to a number of challenges affecting their ability to take advantage of education and employment-creating opportunities. These challenges are limited financial resources, geographic isolation and low level of literacy. This research also demonstrates a gap between the current levels of education and skills of Aboriginal people and the education and skill requirements of the economy. In March, 2005 the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, approved the implementation of an action plan to address Aboriginal education. The action plan called for provinces to,

...collaborate with local Aboriginal representatives, education stakeholders, and the federal government to identify and share best practices in Aboriginal education, including teacher training and recruitment, and to establish and/or share education indicators specific to Aboriginal student outcomes (p. 1).

Regional Colleges are being called upon to work with Aboriginal communities in order to upgrade their skills so they can compete, not just with other Canadians but also

increasingly with other people around the world. Pressure to do more need identification, partnering and training delivery with Aboriginal communities is taxing the resources of regional colleges and adding complexity to a very traditional organization.

Immigration is another policy direction by the province that is expanding the multicultural environment of regional colleges and taxing their resources. Provincial direction and funding are stressing new and expanded immigration strategies to assist in meeting the looming labour force gap (Government of Saskatchewan, 2007). Two colleges have direct experience in attempting to meet the demands of new immigrant workers and their families in the region. A CEO stated, “colleges have a role ...in regards to immigrants that have come to this region...insuring that they have what they need, that we can provide within our mandate, to be successful and accepted in our communities....a lot of them are coming in with the skills.” This has required extra effort on the part of the colleges to provide services and supports in the form of language training and cultural mores as these new immigrants take their place within the communities. Although the government has expanded resources in their immigration department to produce policy and practice, there has been minimal support to increase the resources to colleges to fully integrate a program for new immigrants in their communities. Currently, there is no college system approach to this dilemma. Many college administrators suggest this is just a stop off as most immigrants eventually move to larger urban centers where they are more likely to find a group of their own ethnic background. One administrator from a southern rural college commented,

I suspect immigration will end up bringing people into the big cities. How many in Saskatchewan will we see? Certainly some, but I think the big focus will be

Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert. I think that's what's going to happen.

A clear mandate for regional colleges is to implement government policy in the development of the future labour market in Saskatchewan through engagement of diverse Aboriginal and immigrant populations in skill development and training.

Workforce Training.

Countries and governments respond to globalization through policy initiatives in order to position themselves favourably in a competitive global market. This became evident in Canada and the province of Saskatchewan in the late 1990's. The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, in 1999 called for post-secondary education to "prepare graduates for good jobs for the knowledge economy." The *Saskatchewan Training Strategy* (1997) influenced colleges, through policy and direction, to engage significantly in workforce training. This strategy called for colleges to connect much more with business and industry, to prepare and meet the demands of the labour market and in so doing rely less on government funding. This concerted effort to develop strong partnerships with business and industry moved colleges towards a more entrepreneurial model in response to economic demands of the province. Colleges needed to become much more entrepreneurial in order to increase revenue that would support their infrastructure. At that time many colleges shifted their human resources and program delivery away from the traditional recreational and leisure programming to direct business and industry training. The colleges took on a more corporate business culture with students as "clients," the development of business plans and the financial bottom-line becoming much more critical.

Post-secondary education is continuing to be called upon to prioritize workforce training in its panorama of programming and services. More and more resources are being utilized in meeting the employment needs of business and industry and assisting them in the knowledge of the global economy. As the percentage of government revenues has remained relatively static for most colleges over the last 10 years, it has been imperative that colleges move to more contract and industry training to financially support their increased costs and support the historical programming of basic education and literacy areas where resources are limited.

Across Canada there is a noted “skills shortage” as documented in the *Innovation Strategy* (2002) requiring post-secondary education to move towards filling the skills gap in the labour market. It called for Canadian community colleges to deliver skills training and equip Canadians for the skills they need for the future competitive global market. This is true for Saskatchewan Regional Colleges but a current CEO expressed some trepidation,

Colleges more and more are being pushed into a single focus and that’s labour market development, so we’ve seen a shift of the system to a much more single agenda than we’ve ever had before.

So what is the current and future role of regional colleges in delivering training and education in rural and northern Saskatchewan? How do they continue to meet the social and community needs with a stronger focus and role on economic development? How do small colleges address the skills shortages within their own regions given limited public funds? Colleges have addressed these challenges by diversifying their mission and mandate to garner new sources of revenue, increasing the development capacity of

employees and moving resources into training for the labour market through expanded partnerships with industry.

Electronic Technology.

Freidman (2006) speaks of the “flat-world platform” in the era of “Globalization 3” created by the convergence of the personal computer with fibre optic cable with the rise of work flow software (p. 10). He indicated this era was entered around the year 2000 as these three pieces all came together. This era opened up the marketplace to the world and opened the economies of nations to much more advanced competition. This onset of technology, advanced communications and increased information created a huge challenge for the regional colleges. The colleges began by instructing short-term computer classes, primarily on software applications, as recreational courses. Today, colleges have invested in hardware, software and communication tools for the organization and for program delivery. Technology has been both an opportunity and a threat. Colleges have moved into email, video-conferencing, smart boards, and open source tools such as Moodle for content management, computer labs and hardware servers to support and enhance the learning process. This move has required a well-planned strategy both at the individual college level and at the systems level. The challenges are: provincial resources have remained at the same level over the past five years, colleges are still independently “doing their own thing” in regards to platforms and hardware and the cost to maintain and upgrade the technology systems is pulling resources away from other functions of the colleges. A CEO confirmed, “We’ve had to divert resources from various initiatives we may have taken...so we could build technology capacity.”

Electronic technology has opened up opportunities for access to individual students and to staff. It has affected the culture of the colleges, as students are often virtual rather than face-to-face. It has required ongoing investment in training staff and students to be computer literate and techno-savvy. Email has speeded up the communications process. New human resource functions have been added in the form of technicians and content management developers and coordinators. It has opened up a new avenue to marketing with individual websites and on-line links to relevant partners.

There are also downsides to this technology boom for small rural and northern colleges. It has required that more and more services be available to students, services that are not financially supported and thus pulls resources from other areas. Many of the college students do not have technical capacity at home and require a great deal of support to overcome the “digital divide” that is occurring between the elements of society who have access to technology and those who do not. There is more and more expectation by the Ministry for e-learning capacity in colleges. The Ministry required colleges to collectively develop an electronic student information system, for accountability measures, which took a great deal of time and resources. It resulted in the need for designated registrars in each college to work with this system. At the same time there are heightened expectations by students for access and support to the latest technology at any time and at any college location.

The current and future technology capabilities put into question the future role of regional colleges. They are primarily serving a role in the provision of distance education and training within rural and northern communities. If that education and training becomes available on-line from anywhere in the world, accessible within a student’s own

home, then what is the role of regional colleges? Is it to continue delivering face-to-face training in central locations in the region? Is it to support individual students through their learning difficulties and experiences? Is it to supply access to the technology and infrastructure? Is it to continue to be the “broker” of training as legislated in *The Regional Colleges Act* (1988) matching the individual, organization, business with quality training and education through a variety of mediums? These questions or challenges continue to create tension within and among colleges. They have tended to speed up the role of colleges to do more. They have created competition for limited government funding.

Labour Alterations.

Labour alterations are institutional behaviours that change work patterns including the nature and duration of work, modification of workloads and work practices (Levin, 2001, p. 41). How has the impact of globalization changed the types of jobs, the knowledge base and the evolution of the workplace in the past 10 years? In the regional college system, counselling and support of students has taken on a bigger role, as the students are more diverse. A CEO explained it as, “focusing on students as individuals and every student needs a slightly different process....transformative learning means dealing with the individual and taking them from where they are at to where they want to go and where they need to be and working with the whole person.” Expertise in testing and assessments, diagnosing and adaptations to different styles of learning, career counselling including on-line opportunities, and partnership development are new and expanding roles for the career and student support functions. Instructors are steered into using more diverse lesson plans including on-line resources and delivery. Coordinators

and managers are spending more time networking, partnering and developing projects for revenue than the original role of community development. Professional development and in-service training has increased due to ongoing technology development. Highly qualified and experienced staff is required for the organization to stay competitive and meet the training and education needs of the region.

These labour alterations have resulted in tensions between union and management on hours of work, in-scope union classifications and recruitment practices. The representative workforce and employment equity initiatives have added additional diversity and complexities to the workplace. With the demographic changes occurring in Saskatchewan, the recruitment of qualified and experienced staff is becoming difficult. The diverse methods of communicating and high expectations of technology literacy, for the staff, are adding additional pressures to the workplace.

Provincial policy and legislation have altered labour relations in the colleges. New *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations*, *Equal Pay for Equal Work* personnel policy and the *Representative Workplace Initiative* have called for additional training, development and policies within the college workplace. All of these alterations, demands and expectations from government are without additional resources to adjust and put them into effect. With this increased complexity in labour relations, colleges are changing their structures to increase flexibility and responsiveness to their employees. A Human Resources Director, in her daily work, asks the question, “What are we going to offer them to make them want to be in the regional college system?” The result is more part-time work, job-share arrangements, additional technology capacity and development of

on-line internal communications. Most colleges have added a Human Resources function within their structure which has resulted in added strain on limited resources.

Productivity and Efficiency.

To adjust and satisfy revenue needs and accountability expectations, educational institutions pursue greater efficiency in work including raising productivity of existing workers or lowering costs by reducing the workforce (Levin, 2001). The drive by the federal government to remain competitive in the global economy involves high productivity and efficiency levels within public institutions (*Canada's Innovation Strategy*, 2002). At the regional college level, this has resulted in competition for student enrolment numbers, funding allocations and recognition within the provincial training system. Competition rather than cooperation among the colleges has created fragmentation, low student participation numbers and inability to deliver provincial wide training. Cooperation would allow for the development of Centers of Excellence, province-wide marketing expertise and a stronger voice in the post-secondary system.

“Do more with less” has been the mantra for college management and personnel for some time. Expectations set up through public policy with no administrative funding attached, such as the administration of the provincial training allowance, has stretched the resources of the colleges. The work of the college has needed to expand to be “all things to all people” by expanding partnerships, growing enrolments, preparing the future labour market and meeting the needs of a diverse population.

As the revenue stream has remained static, accountability and reporting requirements to the Ministry have increased. Over the last 10 years, business plans, capital plans, technology enhanced learning plans, key performance indicators,

Aboriginal participation rates, an electronic student information system and a financial accounting system have added to and expanded government expectations of colleges. The Ministry instigated a number of additional policies required of colleges. These included an *International Development Policy* (2003), *Net Asset Reserve Utilization Policy* (2002), *Capital Asset Policy* (2001) and *Board Member Recruitment Policy* (2004). This high level of accountability has increased the level of work with the existing staff at the colleges and tightened controls on the autonomy of colleges.

The onset of technology and the world-wide web have had a huge impact on the productivity and efficiency of the colleges. A Director of Finance revealed the impact on their college,

...technology has made accounting a new world. We have the ability to produce reporting within days of transactions compared to years ago when we were using adding machines. We have much more information at our fingertips. With that, there's a greater expectation for being able to understand what that information is and to be able to project and predict.

There are high expectations from government to integrate technology enhanced learning throughout the institutions with little funding attached. Due to the decline in population, it is imperative colleges adopt a mode of delivering training that provides access and upgrading to individuals and individual businesses across the region and beyond. This imperative continues to put pressure on all technological processes within and among colleges. The conundrum is that colleges are not working together to address this challenge. Each is autonomous in developing technology capacity on their own based on limited resources pulled from all parts of the organization. As the level of technology

capacity increases, colleges will be stretched even more to keep abreast in implementing their mandate and government directions.

Public Sector Funding Constraint.

In much of the literature, it is documented that government revenues for higher education have decreased over the years due to global factors. From Yang's (2003) critical perspective on globalization, he indicates there has been a "general trend towards the reduction of per capita funding to higher education leading to the current fiscal crisis of higher education" (p. 279). Table 3 and Table 4 in this study indicate that on the average provincial and federal government revenues, as a percentage, shows that the total revenues have not declined but increased a small amount in the seven colleges over the last 10 years. This would indicate that colleges are receiving as much funding percentage wise but providing a larger diversity of programs and services with an increase in technology enhanced learning and multicultural student population.

Public sector funding constraints due to economic competition throughout the world is driving colleges to entrepreneurial behaviours such as marketization (Levin, 2001). Colleges are aligning themselves closer to the private sector and compete with other institutions and organizations for revenue. They are forming associations with private business and industry to combine resources to do more training. A senior college administrator describes how his college links with business to expand their training.

It's basically going out into the field and finding the right person to talk to at each company. We have an advisory committee that we ask people to sit on, so we try and get key players out of the industry to sit on that advisory board.... Meet three

times a year and they basically tell us what's going on in the industry. What kinds of trends are happening? What kinds of training opportunities are coming?

Colleges are soliciting private donations for capital costs and student scholarships. All of this takes time and resources away from the original role of the colleges, which was to support community development by providing training opportunities close to home. This need for colleges to generate revenue to sustain infrastructure and capital is a result of government no longer willing to finance the total cost of higher education and putting some of the onus on business and industry to share the costs of development of their own labour force.

The shift in college resources and time from primarily delivering education programs to garnering revenue has created a rift in the environment of colleges. Instructional and non-instructional staff, for the most part have grown further apart in their philosophies. Instructional staff believe their role, first and foremost is as educators and often do not recognize their part in promoting partnerships and marketing the college. Non-instructional staff must take a much broader role and recognize and support the need to develop partnerships, address training needs, build revenues and at times cut expenses. This notion of making money from education is not a widely held philosophy in the college system. One senior administrator emphasized, "We should not have to apologize for successes or making money off education." In reality, in this global economy of knowledge workers, "training" is a commodity to be traded.

Provincial funding constraints have hampered colleges for many years. Regional Colleges have traditionally only received a small piece of the post-secondary education budget of the province. This holds true for capital and infrastructure costs as well.

Colleges were only recently allocated \$25,000 per year for equipment costs. Prior to that funding for equipment needed to be allocated through the operating budgets. The Ministry only has capital funding for colleges to alleviate accessibility or Occupational Health and Safety issues within college campuses and not for any new capital projects. This has put most of the colleges in dire need of quality space and infrastructure to deliver much needed training in rural and northern Saskatchewan (College B, Business Plan, 2006-07). This leads to the question of credibility of colleges and the training they deliver compared to the urban centers with their capital expansions and infrastructure. It also hampers the type of training that can be delivered as adequate space and resources are not accessible. As a result, colleges continue to be creative in their approaches to training delivery using technology for access and distance delivery to targeted groups, developing partnerships with industry for specialized resources and on-site training and developing, planning and delivering pilot projects for research into best practices for specific target groups in partnership with organizations and other institutions.

Technology and technology enhanced learning is a prime example of the provincial funding constraints. The Regional Colleges' Network of TEL Services was introduced in 2001 with funding from the Ministry and a requirement for an institutional plan. The funding was constrained by criteria set by the Ministry on how much could be spent on hardware, service and support. Since that inception there have been no additional funds from the Ministry for capital purchases or development within the colleges – only requirement of reports and annual plans to access the existing funds (Regional College Business Plans, 2006-07). Colleges were required to submit an updated system plan on a network of TEL Services Strategy in 2005 but to date no new

resources have been allocated to that plan. As a result each college is continuing to “do its own thing” with no benefit of collaboration. As globalization hinges on information and communications technology it may be that colleges will fall further and further behind in achieving their role and mission.

Restructuring.

Restructuring is a set of activities that involve structural alterations and modifications to change work patterns that lead to job change, job loss, and reallocation of resources due for the most part to the scarcity of resources (Levin, 2001). This restructuring is due, for the most part, to the business and corporate model captured by education institutions in response to funding constraints. Regional Colleges have made significant changes to adapt their organization to a more economically oriented business model. *The Regional Colleges Act* (1988) did allow the Board of Governors to hire a Principal or Chief Executive Officer to operate the college. Over the past number of years, most of the colleges have moved to the designation of President for their leader, this is perceived to be a more corporate rather than educational connotation.

Contract training units have taken on a much higher priority in staff allocation and time. From the original roots of organizing and delivering recreational and social programs, these units have evolved as the entrepreneurial hub of colleges with experienced and trained “salespeople” in place to connect with business and industry. Two of the colleges have designated these units as “institutes” or “centers” of excellence in a designated area of need such as safety training. This has created a need to train existing staff in sales and marketing or the recruitment of personnel with specific marketing and salesmanship skills. A Program Director spoke to this change,

...driven by the change to more of an entrepreneurial type program division....we needed a market strategy and promotional strategy if we were going to grow and growth was one of our strategic goals. That was the reason for hiring a marketing person.

Work patterns have also changed due to a change in priorities, policies and union/management negotiations. A Director of Human Resources has seen a “shift to more part-time work, more job-sharing, more flexibility in terms of ‘my kids have a 3:30 hockey game and I’m going....I’ll work at 6:00 in the morning,’ those types of things.” Colleges still recruit part-time instructional staff for contract training but fewer in number as they have more specialized skills than those previously instructing recreational and leisure programs. There is a higher cost to colleges for these contract instructors due to their specialized skills. Other work patterns that have changed due to the need for revenue generation include: an increase in marketing and advocacy by colleges with the recruitment of a marketing coordinator at most colleges; recruitment of an Aboriginal coordinator at one college to connect with Aboriginal communities and work towards a representative workforce within the college; recruitment of Human Resources Manager to handle labour relations directions and issues; and, introduction and recruitment of Institutional Development Officers to lead the development of new initiatives and projects in the college (College Business Plans, 2006-07).

Another major influence on restructuring in the colleges was the onset of technology and e-learning. New roles and positions have emerged to support and service on-line and e-learning including technicians, learning center coordinators, computer training coordinators, technology managers and content management developers. For the

most part these positions have added personnel time to existing part-time employees. Again the lack of a coordinated system approach to technology and e-learning has resulted in a fractured, inefficient delivery system with resources spent re-inventing and developing parallel processes across the province. Ekos Research Associates Inc. (2005) in their review of the TEL Action Plan stated, “lack of a strategic approach in incorporating TEL into institutions’ plans and priorities, together with weak project management within the institutions in some instances served to undermine efficiency” (p. 77).

State Intervention.

The Saskatchewan Department of Advanced Education and Employment is the post-secondary Ministry to which Regional Colleges are accountable. The globalization activity of state intervention is described by Levin (2001) as the increased intervening and interfering role of the state in affairs and operations of higher educational institutions. In Saskatchewan and particularly Regional Colleges, there is evidence of the Department's role in post-secondary education. Over many years the Department has treated regional colleges all the same as far as percentage of funding allocations and policy initiatives even though their regions in the province are quite diverse in their economies and training and educational needs. College operations differ in size and complexity. This restrictive treatment by the Department has led to competition among and between colleges.

Since 1994 the New Democratic Party, whose history supports state ownership and state control, has governed Saskatchewan. However, due to the diminished agriculture economy, demographic trends of rural depopulation and the need for job

creation, the government has moved closer to the middle ground of political philosophy. Their rhetoric in the past few years has centered on job creation, participation in the labour market and the importance of entrepreneurialism and small business. This has impinged on the traditional social and community development role of regional colleges. However, government expectations for colleges which include greater involvement in skills training, Aboriginal training and links with business and industry require government investment. This was documented by a college senior administrator,

It is a recognized fact that a primary source of our future workforce in the western world will be that segment of the population who for the most part are under-employed and under-educated. Our continued prosperity will be determined by how well we succeed in fully engaging this marginalized group. For this segment of the population, the lack of a high school education will continue to be a major barrier. Nowhere is this education gap more evident than the Aboriginal population. Governments need to make a significant and concerted investment in closing that gap.

Until the fall of 2006 and the March 2007 provincial budget government had not invested sufficiently to support the shift in mandate to more skill training, increased literacy and basic education to prepare the Aboriginal population (Deputy Minister, Budget Letter, 2007).

The Board of Governors of Regional Colleges and the Chairperson are appointed by the Minister of Advanced Education and Employment. It is through the Board of Governors and the Chief Executive Officer that the Department has the most interaction. Policies and government direction influence colleges on a day-to-day basis through such

actions as: approval of the Chief Executive Officer's contract and compensation; approval of Business Plans and financial statements; mandated collective agreement compensation; reserve allocation approvals; and, approval of all facility leases. This at times is very frustrating for the colleges, as much as they need to be entrepreneurial to support their infrastructure, colleges are still accountable to the Department where resources can be withheld or withdrawn through government decisions. For example provincial funding has been withheld from the colleges when they perceive colleges are holding too much reserve. A CEO maintained, "They scooped almost \$450,000 from us, from our restricted reserves....we've tried to be prudent and ethical in how we handle our money but politically we are getting hammered." There is a balancing act required by college senior administrators; they need to balance between supporting the needs of communities, staff and college and implementing public policy direction from the government.

There have been many opportunities for college input into public policy development but little authority or responsibility in the decision-making process. Colleges have been consulted on public policy development in areas such as the *Training Strategy*, *Aboriginal Plan*, *Immigration Plan*, *Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy*, *Recognition for Prior Learning Policy* and funding and reporting templates and platforms. "We are a political beast, and as such, we depend greatly on our political masters and the winds that blow that way," is the position of one senior college administrator. At times colleges will benefit from being so closely tied to government and at other times face obstacles. Those colleges who have a Cabinet Minister within their region are often better served in terms of infrastructure and support. Board members are

appointed by the Minister of the day and can be replaced if a new partisan party is elected. This can create inequities and further competition within the system of regional colleges thus taking away from their day-to-day operations. These issues highlight the need for strong, sound leadership at the Ministerial and Institutional levels in the training sector of Saskatchewan.

Private Sector Interaction and Commodification.

Levin (2001) suggests that a behavior by educational institutions in response to globalization occurs when the institution aligns itself closer to the private sector and competes with other institutions and organizations for revenue. The institution forms associations with private business and industry. Commodification entails the development of programs to fit the requirements of a specific business. It also includes the delivery of training to the specifications of private business and industry (p. 40). All of the regional colleges have moved to this direction over the last 10 years, particularly with industries such as mining, oil and gas and manufacturing. Given the policy direction from government to train for the labour market, regional colleges are connecting with individual business and industry to assist in “growing the economy” of Saskatchewan. In order to align their operations to assist businesses, colleges are building up their contract training units, partnering with agencies to access customized training, developing their own customized training to meet an industry need and increasing their marketing and advocacy efforts towards the industry sectors in their regions. This has resulted in an economic increase to college revenue but also decreasing their emphasis on the historical educational component of the college programming in basic education and literacy.

This shift in emphasis of college resources has created tensions between and among units and programs for resources. The number and amount of business contacts and business partnerships has added strain to the existing systems in the colleges. A new skill set directed to marketing and sales is required for employees working in the contract unit, which has created a new type of recruitment process as well. As the contract unit becomes stronger and more credible in the college, other units are being pushed to adopt this more entrepreneurial view of training. Across the college, in all units, there is more interaction with the private sector.

The Ministry introduced a *JobStart/FutureSkills* program in 1995 that linked colleges and employers closer together. This work-based training for the unemployed program provides financial resources to employers to deliver recognized on-the-job training for unemployed Saskatchewan residents which leads to permanent employment. Program criteria, training costs, financial assistance, and proposal development are all included in this provincially funded program. Table 3 is a summary of the number of agreements or contracts, number of opportunities or trainees and level of provincial funding to this program, and thus to employers in the province, within the seven colleges over the last 10 years. The *JobStart/FutureSkills* program has spearheaded the initiative of work-based training and development and college/business connections. This program continues to be a college marketing tool geared towards businesses and organizations in the region.

Table 3. JobStart/FutureSkills contracts in seven Regional Colleges

Fiscal Year	Agreements	Opportunities	Paid
1997-1998	121	388	\$1,540,726.12
1998-1999	144	426	\$1,336,084.66
1999-2000	135	518	\$1,633,486.03
2000-2001	120	419	\$1,620,340.78
2001-2002	146	359	\$1,242,177.31
2002-2003	132	304	\$1,156,476.65
2003-2004	162	360	\$1,469,882.95
2004-2005	124	300	\$1,291,043.27
2005-2006	101	332	\$1,142,945.40
Total	1,185	3,406	\$12,433,163.17

Source: Department of Advanced Education and Employment

To date colleges have primarily only utilized technology in the training of computer software and marketing of programs and services when interacting with the private sector. As colleges are brokers of training, they do not grant the credit so they do not develop curriculum. Most often colleges will modify or customize the training to meet the requested need of industry but technology is seldom part of this. The handicap here, again for colleges, is human resource time and expertise to connect and build partnerships with business and industry.

Partnerships.

Freidman (2006) states that due to globalization the “world is moving from a vertical – command and control – system for creating value to a more horizontal – connect and collaborate – value-creation model” (p. 234). This means many of the roles, habits and management practises are going to have to be adjusted. Regional Colleges have traditionally been collaborative in their regional approach as community-based organizations. The strained economy of Saskatchewan in the past 10 years has continued to require more and more cooperation at the community and local levels in order to sustain infrastructure and the local economy. Colleges are integral partners in their regions with a wide variety of stakeholders: industry sectors, School Divisions, Health Boards, Municipal and provincial government bodies, regional economic development authorities, Chambers of Commerce and Métis and First Nations organizations (Regional College Annual Reports, 2005-06). This has ensured that colleges are part of the terrain in their regions and integral to decision-making.

However, Regional Colleges have demonstrated few partnerships between their institutions in the past. Areas they have attempted to collaborate in have been in

marketing, advocacy, program delivery and technology enhanced learning. The Association of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges (ASRC) is made up of CEOs and Board Chairs from each of the eight colleges. For the past five years the main purpose of ASRC has been advocacy. There has been some progress made in advocating to government for additional funding particularly in the Adult Basic Education area but little progress made towards a systems approach of program and service delivery. The autonomous nature of the governance of colleges has hampered the development of true partnerships between and among the colleges to their detriment. This was posited by an interviewee, “I believe that we as colleges are so protectionist that we’re going to do ourselves in ultimately.”

The policy makers in the Ministry have convened and are chairing a high level committee with the provincial training institutes to adopt a system approach to post-secondary training in Saskatchewan. As recommended in the *Training System Report* (2005) the training sector has become fragmented and competitive and if it is to build and support the economy of Saskatchewan, the institutions must work more cooperatively. Politically, the policy makers across Canada are requiring partnerships in all project and service agreements. Again this creates challenges in expanding college resources to meet administrative tasks.

Technology and technology enhanced learning is a prime example of where partnerships are created within the regions but very few are created among or between colleges or among training institutions in the province. *Campus Saskatchewan* was created in 2002 to integrate technology and technology course development within the public training sector of the province. The Management Board of *Campus Saskatchewan*, through their committees, has been successful in creating a program approach to on-line

curriculum development, faculty training and creation of a provincial directory for university, SIAST and Regional College programs (Campus Saskatchewan, 2007). They have been unsuccessful in furthering a collaborative training sector partnership because of the competitive nature of the funding resources on their table. Senior administrative time is taken away from their own institutions, through direction of policy makers, in an attempt to collaborate--a dichotomy of opposing agendas--on a competitive resource allocation from government.

External Competition.

Globalization is creating competition at all levels of the economy, culture, politics and technology. Yang (2003) insists globalization causes “education to become characterized increasingly as a commodity” (p. 285). In agreement, Altbach (2001) stated, “higher education is increasingly seen as a commercial product to be bought and sold like any other commodity” (p. 1). This will lead to higher education institutions “competing to capture a share of the demand for education and competing world wide in the business of funding for research” (Wagner, 2004, p. 11).

The research findings indicate regional colleges are facing competition for students and revenues from many sources – regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally. A senior administrator made note in his interview, “We are not the only game in town nor should we be. There are many opportunities for people to experience education from different parts of the world.” As small regional institutions, colleges receive their provincial funding through “envelope” grants targeted to specific programs and services. A challenge with this targeted approach is to meet the diverse training needs of a more and more sparsely populated region.

Colleges traditionally have been educators and service providers. The challenge has been to adopt more of a competitive, business model within the administration and faculty of the colleges in order to be sustainable and deliver their mandate. As colleges are under only one collective agreement, they have unionized managers supervising union staff and faculty. It has been the case where these union managers receive less remuneration than the unionized faculty they supervise. This has created tensions between union and management in areas such as hours of work, temporary employee status and equal pay for equal work of equal value.

The capacity of technology has opened up access to training and education around the world. The regional colleges were created to deliver education and training from the credit granting institutions at a distance. With increased competition from all sources of educational providers, what is their role now? The research findings indicate this external competition has shifted some of the colleges to focusing more on the student support and services versus full-time program delivery. The potential to jointly deliver and benefit from technology enhanced learning opportunities and, for the most part, have not been seized by the colleges to this point.

Homogenization.

Levin (2001) describes the activity of homogenization as institutions reducing their operations and processes to the basic elements, routinizing work and standardizing practices such as educational delivery. Although the purpose is to generalize and standardize for efficiency of delivery, it has also opened the potential to develop and deliver diverse programs and services to a niche market. Friedman (2006) speaks of homogenization as the trend towards similarity or “Americanization” where the culture of

America including brands, clothing, entertainment and chains has the potential to wipe out all other cultural diversities. He suggests however with the flat-world platform, forces of particularization are strong where local cultures can be uploaded to the world (p. 506). The question here is whether regional colleges are becoming more homogeneous or more heterogeneous in their practices? In many ways the demographics of the regions has determined the direction. With the growing Aboriginal population and government policy direction of representative workforce and Aboriginal training, colleges are being required to meet a diversity of training and educational needs. Provincial training dollars are being channelled to Aboriginal institutions and regional colleges are being encouraged to deliver more training on First Nations Reserves. The requirement to increase labour participation rates in Saskatchewan are loosening up the federal/provincial jurisdiction of training with First Nations (Advanced Education and Employment, Budget Letter, 2007).

Technology enhanced learning and the on-line delivery of training are moving post-secondary education to a homogeneous state. Colleges' role in technology enhanced learning is to support all learners, Aboriginal learners being a priority. Greenwall and Loizides (2001) emphasize that "technology needs to support and enhance Aboriginal traditions, values and practices. Increased local control of education and training delivery can help to ensure that technology programs and educational standards are relevant to local learner needs and that they contribute to the achievement of local community digital opportunities" (p. i). Colleges do play a significant role in providing access to technology and support through training to their Aboriginal communities in their regions.

In discussing the behaviour of regional colleges in response to these globalization categories, there have been and continue to be significant challenges, obstacles and

tensions faced by senior administrators. This discussion will continue to explore those challenges and identify adaptation strategies employed by senior administrators.

Organizational Change Theory

In this research study, organizational change is premised on Levy and Merry's (1986) framework of four categories: paradigmatic change, mission and purpose change, cultural change and change in functional processes. Challenges facing senior administrators and change within the colleges in response to those challenges will be discussed in the context of these categories.

Paradigmatic Change.

Paradigmatic change refers to the change in assumptions held by the senior administrators and government officials in this study. It appeared at the beginning of the interviews that many of the respondents were unaware of globalization or that there was any significant impact or change within colleges as a result of global forces. Comments such as "we are ignorant of what's happening in the world" and "not impacted by forces due to isolation" supported this finding. However as interviews progressed and respondents had time to think and make connections, it was evident that the respondents were making more connections between challenges and resulting changes that had taken place over the past 10 years. One assumption centered on the traditional mandate of colleges as community based organizations serving the education and training needs of the population of a region. Status quo government funding to deliver on that mandate, emphasis on short-term labour market training at the expense of longer educational programs and the pressure to move from community development to economic development initiatives have moved colleges from being a truly community based

organization to being agents of public policy in meeting the economic needs of Saskatchewan. A Director of Finance claimed of her college, “ We have linked the value of the education system that we’re providing to the economic system...that through training and education, we are tied to economic growth....the role of the college is to promote economic growth.”

Access to programs and services is another assumption that has changed. Although colleges are doing more diverse programming with a variety of access points through the use of technology and distributed learning centers, access to education and training is even more difficult for learners in the region and colleges are challenged to gain enrolments to sustain their grant funding levels. Traditionally colleges organized a training course and learners applied with programs being filled. The decrease and diversity in the Saskatchewan population, low level of literacy and computer literacy and the draw of the youth to Alberta for better paying jobs has seriously impacted college enrolments. Creativity and innovation are now required to provide a wide variety of access opportunities to the dispersed and diverse population within the college regions.

A third assumption is the autonomous nature of colleges. Colleges were developed with autonomous Boards of Governors appointed by the Minister of the day to recruit a Principal to operate the college. Today that still holds true but with the complexity and competition created by economic, demographic and global forces, the Ministry is taking more and more autonomy out of the hands of individual colleges. In the last few years, public policy has changed wherein the Board Chairs are now appointed by the Minister not the collective Board members (*The Regional Colleges Regulations*, 1988). Accountability measures and resulting approvals by government

have increased through the preparation of corporate-like Business Plans. Negotiated collective agreements require the blessing of the Ministry even though salary compensation is not necessarily government funded as it was in the past. Colleges are being coerced more and more into a systems approach to training in Saskatchewan with less and less ability to control and manage their organization.

A fourth assumption that has dramatically changed is the role of technology in the organization. Traditionally colleges perceived their role as trainers in the applications and use of technology. This grew and changed when employees began to use technology for administrative purposes in accounting and support. In the last few years, with the increase in technology capability globally, colleges have been challenged to integrate technology throughout their institution for utilization by staff and students for a diversity of purposes – access, program and services development and support, communications, collaboration, responsiveness, service consistency, learner centeredness, credibility and marketing. A Director of Finance claimed, “The internet is in the middle of everything...It affects how you deliver your programs, how you market your programs and how you work every day.” This has challenged colleges both in initial outlay of resources and in the capability to maintain, upgrade and expand technology capability. According to Freidman (2006) the “world has been flattened” by the expansion in technology capability. It is interesting to note that this technology expansion has opened up the opportunity for colleges to deliver programs, recruit students and access new markets nationally and internationally but due to their regional boundaries, they are not able to perform that same role within their own province.

Mission and Purpose Change.

The mission and purpose of the colleges has changed due to the challenges of status quo fiscal resources and need for revenue generation, organizational image and identity and the changing demographics of the province of Saskatchewan. As government revenues and grants remained primarily static over the last few years, administrators have been challenged to be entrepreneurial and innovative in order to sustain the infrastructure and operations of their colleges. Given their role as “brokers,” colleges are independent of curriculum maintenance enabling an ability to seek out the training needs, adapt and modify programs to serve that need and provide additional supports to ensure success for the learner or individual business (Training System Review Panel, 2005). At the same time, the brokerage model limits the ability to grant credit for unique and niche training opportunities that would potentially garner revenue for the college. This requirement to gain revenue has added pressure to all areas of the organization and required expertise of staff in non-traditional skills of marketing and sales. To some it has created a major shift in the fundamental philosophy of learner centeredness due to the shift in program priorities and business practices. A positive and sustainable economic bottom-line has become as important as meeting the training needs of the region. A Director of Finance sums this up, “The funding we receive as regional colleges is pretty inadequate in terms of capital investments and long-term planning....that’s where the revenue generation comes in....if we are to be global.”

Organizational image and identity have been much more a focus than in the past. Most colleges have introduced a marketing and promotions capacity in its human resources component. Chief Executive Officers and Boards of Governors spend much

more time advocating externally and raising the profile and credibility of colleges in order to garner stakeholder support. They are members of the Association of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges (ASRC) whose sole purpose is to advocate on behalf of the system of colleges. All employees are expected to promote the college including instructional staff through student internship placements in the communities and non-instructional staff through their individual volunteer commitments. This enhanced marketing is a result of government status quo fiscal grants along with public policy direction to increase and support economic development within rural and northern Saskatchewan. It is also a result of colleges attempting to change the perception of their role in the training sector of the province. From being perceived as “second class” to the degree granting or credit-granting institutions of the universities and Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST), colleges are attempting to increase their credibility by providing information on the benefits of training close to home – lower costs, smaller classes, enhanced support and higher academic results.

The changing demographics of the province have influenced and created change within the colleges. With out-migration, an ageing population, increasing Aboriginal population and an emphasis on increasing immigration numbers, the colleges are being called on to meet a growing, diverse and “needy” adult learning cohort. This has created pressures on the student support units, development units and program delivery units in basic education, literacy and technical training. The increasing multicultural population of the colleges requires adaptation of hiring practices. These include a move towards a representative workforce, adaptation of the work environment to meet diverse needs and an increase in flexibility of staff to adapt to and meet these diverse individual training

needs. Pressures are created due to expectations of the Ministry with little accommodation to the increased cost of delivery.

Cultural Change.

Cultural changes refer to beliefs, norms and values of organizational members (Levin, 2001). Although most of the colleges operate from a structure organized around programs and services, there has traditionally been a belief that employees have a single purpose – that of delivery and support of life-long learning opportunities. That belief has shifted somewhat with the increasing emphasis on economic development and a policy shift to a more corporate, business environment. This shift to a business rather than service ethos is demonstrated where learners have become clients, facilities have become campuses and accountability and approval is in the form of Business Plans. These Business Plans have become more and more professional, business oriented and competitive looking over the last 10 years. They include: presentation of longer-term strategic plans, technology plans, capital plans and financial plans including deficit management plans; particularization in enrolment and graduate statistics; and, emphasis on labour market enhancement rather than the traditional educational components. The paradox here is that as colleges attempt to rely less and less on targeted government grants, they are becoming more and more driven by public policy.

As well norms have changed within the colleges as well particularly in looking at the workplace. As the demand for a diversity of programming and student supports increases, the demands on staff also increase. Staff is required to be specialists in a particular field as well as generalists as outlined in their job descriptions and as workloads have expanded. With the need for new functions such as registrars,

technicians, learning specialists and contract training specialists, the workload has shifted far more to administration and development. Fragmentation has developed among the various functions of the colleges due to the shift to a corporate management focus. The perception of faculty is that this shift takes away from the student focus of the college that has traditionally been the colleges' *raison d'être*.

The values of the workplace, claimed by many colleges within their strategic plans, center on accessibility, learner focused, responsiveness, collaborative, inclusive, high quality and ethical. Although superior in theory, these values are being questioned in the institutions given the increased level of competition for resources, policy direction towards economic development, necessity to meet the needs of a growing multicultural population and the growing levels of accountability. Efficiency and productivity, measures of corporate success, are continuing to impact the values and measures of institutional success.

Changes in Functional Processes.

The functional processes of colleges include structures, management and decision-making, technology and communications. Many of the administrators in the study indicated that the structure of colleges has become flatter and more horizontal through more participative management and decision-making. What they may not recognize or acknowledge are the expanded levels of non-instructional staff created through the adoption of the job classification plan (Collective Agreement, 2000-2003). In many ways this has created a more vertical, hierarchical organization where a position may report to more than one supervisor, decision-making needs to go through more levels of management and complex and varied committees are created to solve issues.

Management of the colleges must address two environments – external stakeholders and internal stakeholders. With the need to expand partnerships, accountability, fundraising and information systems and technology, management spends more and more time on the external affairs of the college. The internal challenges of access, innovative development, financial accountability, union/management agreements, human resource development and communications are being channelled more to middle management committees and personnel. “The change has been less control...more authority given to managers...you have to trust that you have people working that are in it for the good of the college and the good of the student,” related a Director of Finance. Finding the balance to these opposing directions is putting pressure on all parts of the organization, requiring changes and adaptations to workloads on a daily basis. Decision-making although reported as participatory and consultative, often takes a prolonged amount of time due to extensive channels of communication, and can be questioned as to validity. Due to the number and variety of structural units in the colleges, there is often not enough reflection on the impact of decisions on other units within the college.

Technology and the expansion of new information and communication systems impact the functional processes throughout the college. With instant, real-time communication capability, staff, students and the community expect state-of-the-art technology to be available at each college campus. Technology has compressed time so that instant responses, connectivity and broadband width and access to a variety of technology mediums are expected by internal and external stakeholders of the college. There is constant pressure within colleges to maintain, upgrade and provide technology

services at the same time as attempting to financially support and utilize it to expand student, staff and organizational horizons.

With the expansion and complexity of programs and services in the colleges, communications becomes even more vital. E-mail, voice over IP, videoconferencing, content management programs and on-line communications through chat rooms and programs such as Blackboard and Elluminate have expanded the communications options but also created complexity and need for technicians, developers and continuous training. The expectations, workloads and complexities of the workplace have increased the need for communications but may in reality have hampered the smooth flow of information. The increasing accountability requirements for reports and data collection have added on to the workloads with little time devoted to decisions on what can be taken off. Colleges are challenged with communications requirements at all levels - local, regional, provincial and federal. More and more resources are required to support this level of reporting and accountability.

Organizational Adaptation Theory

Approaches to organizational adaptation can be organized into four categories-- population ecology, life cycles, strategic choice and symbolic action--based on the importance of roles played by the external environment and by management in influencing organizational survival (Cameron, 1984). These approaches will be discussed in determining the extent to which the external environment versus the internal management has influenced the adaptation of regional colleges for their long-term survival. Population ecology approach assumes a prominent role for the environment but no role for management action (Cameron, 1984, p. 132). It is evident from the research

the external environment has had great impact on the colleges and their need to adapt and change to survive. The competitive global marketplace, expanding technology systems and communications, multicultural diversity occurring around the world and the tight level of political control have been the impetus for change in the landscape of colleges. The status quo government funding levels coupled with the public policy direction to increase labour market training and integrate technology enhanced learning through the organization has put pressure on colleges to change and adapt for long-term survival. However, management in the colleges has had some level of influence in directing change and adaptation through structural organization, strategic planning and funding allocations.

The life cycle approach assumes a prominent role for the environment but some discretion by the management. Cameron (1984) suggests in this approach “organizations encounter similar issues as they develop over time and adaptation occurs by acquiring characteristics of the next stage” (p. 126). This life cycle approach in many ways reflects the adaptation of colleges to the forces of globalization. The impact has been felt at a slower pace and the management of colleges have gradually over time adapted these organizations to the knowledge economy including the technology explosion, mode of revenue generation and multicultural student community. The high level of government influence and control ensures that colleges as public institutions will reflect and implement the public policy directions of the times.

The strategic choice approach is where organizational adaptation is shifted towards management rather than the environment (Cameron, 1984, p. 127). Though there is a need for a fit between environment and an organization’s structure, managers adopt a

variety of strategies that modify and determine the success or failure of adaptation. In most of the regional colleges in this study, it was evident that the Boards of Governors and CEOs have a high level of discretion in the structure and functional processes within the college. All colleges developed and implemented long-term strategic plans.

Management, with the discretion they had available, made strategic choices on priorities, values and vision of their college for the future. One or two colleges are well known for technology capabilities, another for connections to the resource based industries in their region and another for the work they do with Aboriginal partners. These strategic choices, however, in the end must be approved by the Ministry on a yearly basis even though government direction requires colleges to develop and adopt long-term strategic plans.

The symbolic action approach assumes a prominent role for management through the ability to manipulate symbols, stories and social definitions in structure and technology. Methods of adaptation by managers involve interpreting history and current events, using rituals or ceremonies, using time and measurement, redesigning physical space and introducing doubt (Cameron, 1984, p. 130). Adaptation occurs by changing definitions in response to the external environment. Although management in the colleges performs these actions at varying levels and times, it is usually as a result of external forces and requirements. College history is based on the support and provision of life-long learning close to home and the symbols attached to this are often celebrations of student success, employer and staff appreciation events, college anniversary celebrations and Board and staff in-service events.

The increase in knowledge through technology, which has created the knowledge-age, has resulted in a higher degree of complexity and turbulence within regional colleges and higher education. This greater degree of turbulence requires more rapid decision-making and action implementation. Thus, all four of the approaches to organizational adaptation as described by Cameron (1984) are required by administrators in the Saskatchewan Regional Colleges in order to continue to be adaptable in the 21st Century.

Other Key Forces

The impact of globalization on colleges has been studied in this research in terms of four key forces – economics, cultural, technological and political. Another global force identified as having an impact on the landscape of colleges is environmental forces. One senior administrator defined this force in these terms,

Globalization to me refers to the effects on different parts of the world of economics, social, environmental events that impact or interrelate with the lives in our region. To that extent whatever happens in Asia now is definitely going to affect us whether it be a hurricane, whether it be a coup, a change in government. There is a distinct and definite relationship to all parts of the world of each of these events.

He went on to describe the relationship of these events in his region,

Meadow Lake Tribal Council has gone more significantly into the forestry and oil sectors. They are looking at the supply to markets in China, so, they are starting relationships with China. One of the relationships is to look at, and ensure that, there's environmentally friendly harvesting of trees and of the oil. As they have

progressed, the college has helped do some training with them around what are good, sound environmental practices.

In response to these environmental forces, another administrator suggested that Regional Colleges could position themselves in applied research or become exemplars of colleges that are truly green.

Another form of globalization is human migration. Held et al. (1999) defines globalization as “movements of peoples across regions and between continents, be they labour migrations, diasporas or processes of conquest and colonization” (p. 284). With the opening up of the Eastern Block countries and shift to world economies, cultures around the world are becoming more and more mobile. This global migration is evident in the numbers of international students in Canadian colleges from all parts of the world, in particular, China. This global migration is felt in Saskatchewan and the Regional Colleges as the economy, jobs and attraction of Alberta draws the youth from Saskatchewan. This out-migration has resulted in increased marketing efforts by the colleges and competition for students. It has also resulted in public policy initiatives to keep young graduates in Saskatchewan; initiatives such as graduate tax incentives (Saskatchewan Provincial Budget, 2007-2008). In the future, global migration may also assist in attracting international students from developing countries to Regional Colleges because of their rural, agriculture based nature.

Regional Colleges and Janusian Thinking

The purpose of this research was to identify how global forces are changing and impacting the landscape of seven regional colleges in Saskatchewan. It is evident through this research that the administrators are leading these organizations in turbulent times of

increased information and technology, the new global marketplace and economy, increased cultural diversity and additional political control. It is also evident that not all the senior administrators and Board chairs are cognizant of what is causing this turbulence and what is required of leaders managing these organizations for their long-term survival. In 1984, Cameron gave this direction,

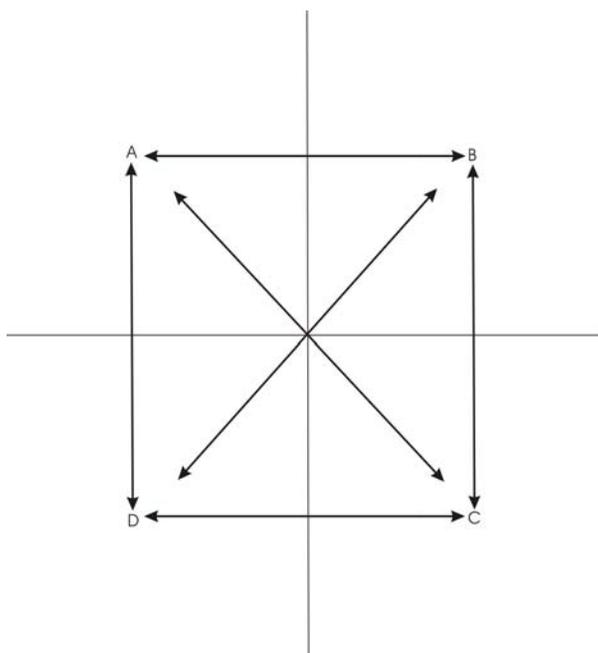
For administrators in higher education to assure capacity for survival, strength and soundness, adaptability to sudden change, and the ability to take advantage of new opportunities in a post-industrial environment with turbulence, information overload, rapid-fire events, and complexity all increasing at exponential rates, they will need to become Janusian thinkers and develop Janusian institutions (p. 135).

Janusian originates from the term “Janusian thinking” as introduced by Albert Rothenburg in 1971 as the characteristics of creative thinkers who have the ability to embrace two opposing ideas simultaneously. The symbol of Janus, the Roman God of change, is a head with two faces, each looking in the opposite direction. Janus was praised as the bringer of the New Year, as the forerunner of the seasons, and was praised at the start of a new phase of life. Janusian thinking is bringing two opposites together in the mind, holding them there together at the same time, considering their relationships, similarities, pros and cons, and interplay and then creating something new and useful (Read, 1998). Throughout this research on the changing landscape of regional colleges, a number of paradoxes or dichotomies have emerged which leads to the notion of colleges as Janusian institutions - holding contradictory phenomena that operate simultaneously within them. This requires senior administrators to take on characteristics of Janusian

thinkers, to think creatively rather than linear in response to complexity, for the long-term adaptability and survival of their institutions.

The basic Janusian model for thinking and acting is arranged in a four-square--A, B, C and D--the arrows depicting the struggles for dominance in one or more quadrants or the continuous, unrelenting struggle to balance paradoxical forces (Figure 7). It provides a complex, four-way interdependent, interactive model for thinking and acting in opposites; embracing a unity of opposites. This model represents a four-way, interdependent, interactive pattern of thinking and acting that suggests information processing is paradoxical and non-linear.

Figure 7: Janusian orientation



Source: Paparone and Crupi, 2002

Regional Colleges can be characterized as Janusian institutions in the 21st Century as can perhaps other post-secondary institutions that hold many of the same defining

characteristics. There are a large variety of contradictory characteristics present within regional colleges today which are engendering flexibility and creativity of thought by senior administrators towards effective decision-making and problem-solving. To begin, colleges are both loosely coupled and tightly coupled systems. For example, processes such as program modification and customization are loosely monitored in deference to employer requirements whereas the structure of program and service delivery is tightly controlled and coordinated. This dichotomy allows colleges to be innovative and adaptive yet well structured to implement and deliver the mandated programs and services.

Colleges demonstrate stability as well as flexibility to establish equilibrium between the institution and its environment. A strong identity and sense of purpose is balanced with the pressures of “letting go” of older practises to make way for the new. An example has been the development of contract training units connecting to businesses as opposed to the earlier general interest program units that connected to community groups. The college still has ties to their local communities but has become much more flexible in how and what training they deliver.

The increase in accessible knowledge through the technology explosion opposed to the need to manage that knowledge creates a paradox and motive for creativity and adaptability in the colleges. Senior administrators in colleges have developed technology or e-learning units with managers, technicians and content management specialists to gather, synthesize, reduce and select required information for decision-making and adaptation by the colleges.

As colleges continually adapt to their complex environment, their decision making processes must be matched with equal complexity for equilibrium to occur. They

need to demonstrate decision-making by consensus and at the same time be more heterogeneity. The balance is imperative as consensus may lead to quicker action whereas heterogeneity inputs multiple viewpoints and diversity. Colleges demonstrate this adaptability through the processes of strategic planning, negotiating collective agreements and their organizational structures.

High specialization as well as high generality of roles is another Janusian characteristic of regional colleges. Most of their staff and management positions include a degree of both in order to meet the demands of the environment they work in. An example of this contradiction is the role of the learning specialist in the colleges. This position requires the specialized skills of testing, interpreting and diagnosing student learning difficulties and at the same time requires general knowledgeable of adult learning principles, counselling techniques and program and service delivery.

Colleges are masters at balancing the paradox of proactive versus reactive decisions. Proactive decisions are demonstrated in their entrepreneurial processes of needs identification with business and industry. Reactive decisions are a product of implementing public policy on demand involving such projects as technology enhanced learning, English as a Second Language training and the JobStart/FutureSkills program.

Colleges continually adapt to competing methods of processing – amplifying versus reducing. Searching for new revenue sources, identifying new niche markets, and adapting the workload of staff competes with the need to streamline the workload and reduce “re-inventing the wheel.” Seeking the balance of these forces contributes to the fact that current Janusian thinking is required by regional college administrators.

The paradox of autonomous institutions versus a system of regional colleges continually spurs the adaptation of colleges. According to *The Regional Colleges Act* (1988) each college is autonomous with its own governing Board of Directors; however, the Ministry often develops public policy to be implemented through a system of regional colleges. This dichotomy also extends to the mandate of colleges to provide training and education to their regional population while at the same time to collaborate with the other colleges on the delivery of training in response to provincial needs. This has set up the need for colleges to balance a protectionist approach with a sharing approach by colleges. The colleges fluctuate on balancing these conflicting requirements: it depends on their ownership of the direction and willingness to cooperate. A CEO spoke to this issue within the colleges,

We have a tendency to be protectionist. If we don't have a vision that takes into account the learner and the benefits that accrue to the learner, we are not really learner-centered. In a global context, we should understand how it works in a rural community in Alabama or in a rural community in Sweden. We don't do a good job of that.

There are a number of other apparent contradictions that require senior administrators to become "Janusian thinkers" in managing and adapting their colleges, as Janusian institutions, to change due to the global forces. The traditional agrarian resource based economy of Saskatchewan balanced with the new knowledge based economy requires a change in training requirements for the labour market. The large Aboriginal population of Saskatchewan sets up an opposing dichotomy between public policy directing colleges to train Aboriginal communities to meet the provinces labour market

shortages versus the direction of Aboriginal communities for self-government and self-determination. Colleges try to seek a balance between providing training and services for the future of the Saskatchewan economy with the treaty entitlements and land claim settlements of Aboriginal communities.

Freidman (2006) in his book *The World is Flat* describes the world as being both “smaller and larger” due to the continual growth, emergence and investment in technology capability. This paradox can be felt and has an impact on the current and the future role of small, rural and northern colleges in Saskatchewan. With the expansion in technology infrastructure, even a small organization can find a niche market and upload it to the world. At the same time, through technology capabilities, small colleges can now access students, training and markets from around the world. Freidman (2006) expresses this as the “globalization of the local” where the forces of “particularization” are as strong as the forces of “homogenization” (p. 507).

The impact of global forces on the landscape of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges has created a paradox of its own. Where do the small colleges fit into the larger global competition and opportunities of the day? How do they continue to serve the training needs of their region and adapt to the forces of globalization? The Janusian thinkers will consider the paradox - the larger the impact of globalization, the more power the smaller player, or smaller college holds. Colleges have the opportunity to provide individualized services in response to a diversity of needs across the globe. There is no longer a uniformity that is the only accepted standard. The smaller player can find a niche in services such as technology enhanced learning, career services and sector industry partnerships; discover the diverse needs of actors and take it out to the world. Through

the new force of “anti-homogenizing,” Friedman (2006) suggests that the “flat-world platform” provides the ability to take the local culture or product and “upload it to the world” (p. 506).

The impact of globalization on Regional Colleges has given them the opportunity to shift and adapt their institution to a truly learner-centeredness approach. This can be accomplished by shifting the power to the individual learner or individual business so they can take ownership of their learning. The colleges’ role then is to act as the connector and supporter – a true “honest broker” role in service to the learner. The colleges can work with one at a time – be it a person, industry or organization - to understand global forces, attempt to increase their knowledge and skills to be competitive and support that development where needed. Friedman (2006) refers to this phenomenon as the “self-directed consumer” who has the ability through technology to have his or her specific needs and desires tailored by a company or college that has created a “digital buffet” for them to serve themselves (p. 437). At the same time colleges can take that individual approach and develop a niche market in a huge globalizing world market. There are many specialized industries in Saskatchewan with specific training needs. These needs could be developed and potentially become a specialty program or service to be delivered around the world. Senior administrators of colleges will need to continue to adapt and develop further as “Janusian thinkers” in order to assure the long-term survival of their institutions in this turbulent global world.

Chapter 7

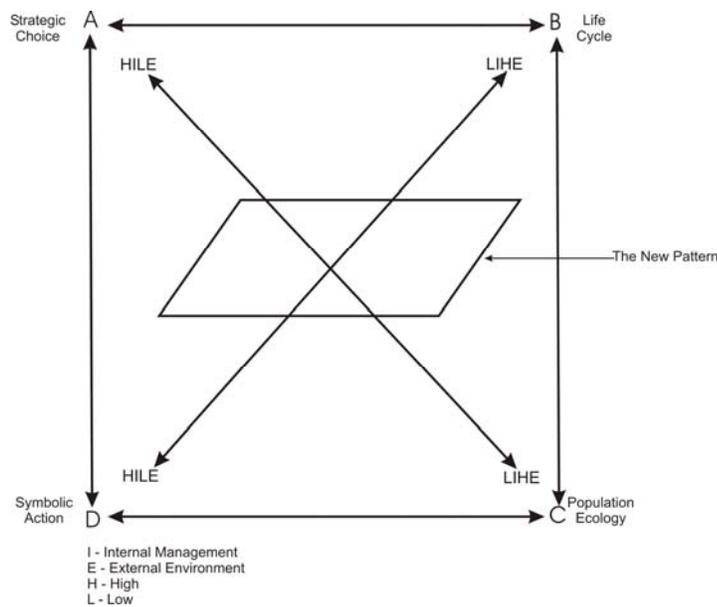
Conclusion

This research study has demonstrated that the global forces – economics, cultural, technological and political - have impacted the landscape of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges through an increase in complexity. As institutes of higher education, the role of these small colleges has been influenced and expanded by complex environmental or extrinsic forces as well as complex internal or intrinsic forces of management. Although these colleges are at different stages in their adaptation to these forces, there is little doubt that their roles have become much more diverse due to the turbulence caused by globalization. Colleges maintain their traditional role of community development within their regions while at the same time expanding to a much stronger role in economic development for the benefit of their region, province and country. This role continues to evolve through many competing values and paradoxical forces. Figure 8 illustrates a framework with a new pattern of Janusian orientation, of understanding and leadership required by senior administrators of all post-secondary institutions, including Saskatchewan Regional Colleges, for their long-term sustainability in the 21st Century.

The new pattern of the Janusian orientation framework (see Figure 8) was adapted by the researcher from the work of Cameron (1984) and Paparone and Crupi (2002). This framework combines the four approaches to organizational adaptation (Cameron, 1984) with the Janusian paradoxical way of thinking (Paparone & Crupi, 2002). This Janusian orientation portrays all four quadrants, A, B, C and D embracing a unity of opposites in adopting models for organizational adaptation. Quadrant A, the strategic choice approach, assumes a high level of influence by internal management and little to no

influence from the external environment and is in direct opposition to Quadrant C, the population ecology approach which assumes little to no influence by management and a high level of influence from the external environment. Quadrant D, the symbolic action approach, assumes a high level of influence by internal management and low level of influence from the external environment and is in direct opposition to Quadrant B, the life cycle approach that assumes a low level of influence by management and a high level of influence from the external environment. The new pattern indicates that all four quadrants and their paradoxical forces are critical to the creative leadership required for the sustainability of higher educational institutions in the 21st Century.

Figure 8: Janusian orientation – New pattern



Source: Cameron (1984) and Paproni and Crupi (2002)

This new framework is a nonlinear thinking model that enables the discovery of a positive zone between competing, multiple values. Understanding the “paradoxical events that are occurring in space and time” must be considered in the “context of patterned rather than linear relationships” (Paparone & Crupi, 2002, p. 44). College

senior administrators and managers must embrace the new leadership paradigm of role complexity in order to be successful and adapt their organizations. Leaders who sense and feel shifting organization and environmental patterns and adapt accordingly will lead the most effective organizations. Globalization is requiring colleges and their leadership to recognize these shifting patterns, define the paradoxical forces, understand the impact to individuals, businesses and organizations and serve the training and educational needs of their students, communities and population of the global world.

Levin (2002) is adamant that the character of colleges has changed, “globalization has altered the community college as an institution, refashioning a local institution - to be more responsive to its proximate communities and providing comprehensive education and training – to an institution that is more entrepreneurial and corporate on the one hand and more conscious of its connections to a global community on the other” (p. 123). This is true for Saskatchewan Regional Colleges to the extent that their mandate is to serve a broader economic need, their organizational structure is more fluid and responsive, their professional management is more business oriented, their curricula and services are more customized to the need of various constituents and they have a greater reliance on technology. He also believes, “the historical mission of the community college that provided broad access, a comprehensive curriculum, student development, and general education is at risk” (Levin, 2005, p. 24). The fundamental principles that the Saskatchewan community colleges were built on, still hold true today – community-based, needs identification, access to adult education close to home and support of the learner. The challenge for colleges as an organizational system is how to remain stable, at the same time, flexible and nimble with their work in the changing global environment.

The words of Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1996) describe healthy human systems, which colleges are, as organizations, “people support one another with information and nurture one another with trust. With access to our systems we, like all life, can anticipate what is required of us, connect with those we need, and respond intelligently.” The self-determination, imagination and industry that has so long characterized prairie society is not likely to change and Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan, as living systems, will continue to be innovators within Canadian post-secondary education.

Implications for Practice

Evidence suggests Saskatchewan Regional Colleges serve an integral role in the economic development and sustainability of rural Saskatchewan that is essential in the knowledge and skills development agenda for the province and for Canada. In 1988 when their mandate and role changed from one of serving the community to one of serving the economy, they met the challenge, shifted their organization and structure to meet the new training demands and continued to be strategic adult educators in their region and the province. The role of colleges has shifted from one oriented to improving the quality of life in rural Saskatchewan to one that is oriented to skill development and labour market needs. Regional Colleges are still very much a key partner in their regions and the communities they serve with their future focus continuing to be access, responsiveness and flexibility to skills training and educational needs close to home. The evidence suggests colleges are meeting this mission through delivery of a comprehensive array of programs and services, embracing technology, forming strong partnerships and being fiscally responsible.

There are many future opportunities open to regional colleges in Saskatchewan:

customized, niche training; additional university options including advanced degrees; individualized options through e-learning technology; international education and exchanges in partnership with other Canadian colleges; close partnership and development of the Aboriginal workforce; entering more into the entrepreneurial marketplace; and, responding to student and community needs for more options to accessing education and training. O'Banion (1997) believes, "the college that places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners anyway, anyplace, anytime has great potential for fulfilling the dream of creating an educational enterprise that will help students make passionate connections to learning, one whose accomplishments will be worth great celebration in the institution and throughout the society" (p. 249). Regional Colleges have always been learner focused due to their mandate as brokers of training. This has given them the flexibility to put many of their resources into support of the learner. The future of regional colleges will depend on their ability to serve the needs of the individual learner or employer wherever they may be located. This is evidenced in the vision statement of the *Saskatchewan Regional Colleges Network of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Services Strategy* (2005),

The Regional Colleges Network of Tel Services will provide learners, employees and communities in rural and northern Saskatchewan with access to services that enhance their participation and success in post-secondary education and training opportunities using information and communication technologies (p. 7).

The Network of TEL Services will promote the development of local "communities of learning" within a larger world of learning. Using the Network, participants can connect

to, communicate with and collaborate with educators, educational institutions and other learners. (p. 7)

Levin (2001), in his detailed analysis of the future of community colleges suggests they will “act as conduits of the globalization process” and will “respond to a broader base of constituents” (p. 180). Evidence supports this as regional colleges are exploring international education opportunities, putting their focus on advocacy to enhance their credibility and image in the province, exploring new ways to work together on projects to meet the training need of provincial and national employers and continuing to access and broker curricula from a variety of sources to meet a variety of constituent needs.

In 1995, Gallagher proposed five key elements in a future-oriented renewal agenda for colleges: “development of nation wide network or system; moving beyond access to success; developing learner independence and personal responsibility; planned and comprehensive approach to personnel development; and, developing new forms of institutional leadership to restore a sense of trust and shared community” (p. 272). Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan have made progress on that agenda by concentrating resources on individual learner supports such as tutoring, counselling and technology support, supporting and encouraging personal development and in-service activities and adopting a team approach to leadership and decision-making.

Recommendations for College Senior Administrators

College senior administrators participating in this study will no doubt identify many of their own ideas from reading and reflecting on this research. However, there are a number of recommendations from the researcher to be considered for future college

leadership practice as a result of the interaction among globalization theory, organizational change theory, organizational adaptation theory and the comments of senior college administrators. First, in the past there was a Regional College Forum implemented with resolutions brought forward from college administrators, Board members and staff for future direction and policy. With the population loss, educational challenges, growing Aboriginal youth population and many other topics including global forces impacting economic, political, social and cultural environments, the Forum should be re-enacted to collaborate in forecasting needs, to unify in addressing system challenges, to articulate the future and forge new pathways for the training sector of Saskatchewan.

Second, college administrators need to strengthen and build more innovative partnerships with a diversity of people, organizations, business and government. First and foremost, is the need to build strong partnerships within, between and among colleges and higher education institutions of Saskatchewan on a more collaborative rather than competitive basis. Freidman (2006) contends, “Good management will also be about nurturing synthesis and collaboration within your company – at a much deeper level” (p. 440). Strong, future oriented networks need to be developed with Aboriginal leaders and Councils, K-12 systems, Health Boards, economic development agencies, community leaders and government departments and agencies to work together on social and commercial endeavours. Regional Colleges, to date, do some of that work but there is much more to be done and colleges can provide the leadership. The linkages need to be expanded with unions to expand language in collective agreements dealing with diversity and contracts, with K-12 system to collaborate more on technical and vocational training,

with province-wide businesses to consolidate on delivery of their training needs and with the Ministry to collaborate on English as a Second Language training and settlement activities for immigrants.

Third, college senior administrators need to take a broader view of community education and student needs and how to support, implement and deliver training and education. With the world becoming smaller through the increase in technology communications, students need to be connected to the complex world and be prepared as citizens for successful engagement in an increasingly global society. Technology enhanced learning, virtual classrooms, e-learning communications and new innovative communications systems need to continue to be high on the agenda of regional colleges in order to meet the diverse needs of the individual student or business. College administrators need to collaborate and seek out pilot projects and research opportunities to stay current and build capacity for future technology innovations. They need to further pursue and enhance international education opportunities, both for staff and students, to become more globally connected.

Fourth, college leaders need to continue to support the unique role of regional colleges as “brokers” of training while at the same time lobbying for the ability to credit training where there is a potential for recognition of credit in a niche market. The brokerage role provides advantages to the colleges and learners through lower overhead costs, flexible, customized training to meet the identified needs, a focus on support and services to learners as opposed to quality of credit, access to training close to home and a quick response to identified training and educational needs. However, there needs to be

the opportunity for regional colleges to accredit unique programs they have designed and delivered to meet an identified need within niche markets.

Finally, college boards of trustees need to be informed of the challenges and obstacles that arose in this research and be prepared to support a collaborative, planned approach to the future actions of college leaders. As these trustees are appointed by the Minister, they have political ties which need to be mobilized for the future survival of regional colleges. Trustees need to be informed and involved in discussions with the Ministry on grant funding. They need to be participants in developing the future mandate, role and scope of colleges, in developing public policy of educational endeavours of the province in areas such as immigration and in developing their future role as advocates of adult education in rural and northern Saskatchewan.

Recommendations for the Ministry

Public policy makers in the Ministry of Advanced Education and Employment need to take on a stronger leadership role in working with regional colleges. From the interviews, it is evident that they support the work of the regional colleges but in public practice, they do not demonstrate that support through their actions. The Ministry needs to provide leadership and opportunities for regional colleges rather than placing constraints on their actions in the form of accountability and ownership. This leadership role could be demonstrated by the Ministry through actions such as leading discussion forums on globalization and how it may affect the future of higher education in Saskatchewan, advocating on behalf of the system of regional colleges to other government departments and businesses who work in rural and northern Saskatchewan

and providing a means for regional colleges to be more engaged in economic development plans and initiatives of the province.

The Ministry officials need to become more aware of global issues and how they impact higher education in Saskatchewan. They need to provide opportunities and funding capacity to colleges for expansion of technology and communications infrastructure, Aboriginal and immigrant training and international education initiatives. This could be accomplished with the removal of targeting funding envelopes, additional connection to federal government funding agencies and a focus on supporting college linkages to global businesses operating in Saskatchewan.

Regional Colleges, as noted earlier in this study, are constrained by legislation to a brokerage role of program delivery rather than a role as developer of credit programs. The Ministry needs to review and revise that legislation to allow regional colleges the option to grant credit given the “flat-world platform of globalization that gives a newfound power to individuals and organizations to collaborate and compete globally” (Freidman, 2006, p. 10). The customized training colleges currently provide to local business and industry could develop into revenue-generating niche markets across national and international borders if there was an attachment of credits.

Finally, the Ministry, in collaboration with regional colleges, needs to advocate, market and promote the benefits of “learning close to home” in order to sustain and build the labour force and employment opportunities in rural and northern Saskatchewan. Many of the young people leaving Saskatchewan are from the rural and northern areas. They are opting to work for large wages rather than invest in post-secondary training in Saskatchewan. The Ministry must take a leadership role in promoting the benefits of

training to the youth in Saskatchewan in order to build and maintain knowledge workers required to compete in the global economy of today and the future.

Future Research

This research study on the impact of global forces on the landscape of Saskatchewan Regional Colleges is bounded by: the number, type and role of the participants; number, type and mandate of regional colleges; and, the context of the province of Saskatchewan. Much has been researched and written about the concept of globalization on which this study is based. There is still much to be learned about best practices within higher education institutions and community colleges, in particular, as organizations operating in a complex, turbulent, globalizing world. Janusian leaders of these organizations will need to embody a paradoxical mix of personal humility and professional will, attributes that have endured regardless of the times (Collins, 2001). Wheatley (2006) believes that we have only begun discovering the new organizational forms that will be operating in the 21st Century,

To be responsible inventors and discoverers, we need the courage to let go of the old world, to relinquish most of what we have cherished, to abandon our interpretations about what does and doesn't work....we must learn to see the world anew....there are many places to search for new answers in a time of paradigm shifts (p. 7).

New answers can be found through further research studies in higher education leadership practices, faculty and staff perceptions of the impact of globalization on their organizations, impact of globalization on labour relations and the workforce or through in-depth case studies on one or two higher educational institutions. Further studies in

areas such as the knowledge based economy, technology capabilities and impact on organizations, cultural mobility and political ideologies on globalization would provide new information and answers in the field of adult education around the world. Whatever field of endeavour, Freidman (2006) insists,

In the future, globalization is going to be increasingly driven by the individual who understands the flat world, adapts themselves quickly to its processes and technologies and starts to march forward....they will be every color of the rainbow and from every corner of the world (p. 215).

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APPENDIX A: Letter of Request



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Graduate Division of Educational Research

Letter of Request

(Date)

Dear (Title, Last Name):

I am currently working on a research project in connection with my doctoral studies entitled Organizational Adaptation in Saskatchewan Regional Colleges: Context of Globalization. This study is designed to consider, through semi-structured interviews and analysis of institutional and government documents, the impact of globalization on higher education in Saskatchewan, in particular, Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. The significance of this study is rooted in the assumption that the landscape, the internal and external environment, of Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan has been impacted by global forces.

This study will identify, review and interpret organizational changes in Saskatchewan Regional Colleges over the last 10 years in response to the economic, cultural, technological and political forces of globalization. The study will include the determination of how these forces of globalization have impacted the role and mission of the regional colleges, what strategies and actions the senior administrators and policy makers of these colleges use to overcome the challenges and obstacles due to these forces and how these institutions have changed and adapted as a result of these global forces.

This is a request to consider having your organization participate in this study through one hour individual interviews with yourself and your senior administrators and policy makers. For Regional Colleges this would involve individual interviews with the CEO, Director of Programs, Director of Finance and Administration, Director of Human Resources and Chairperson of Board of Directors. For Saskatchewan Learning this would involve the Minister of Learning, Deputy Minister of Learning and the Executive Director of Institutions Branch. I request your agreement to include your organization in this study for these additional reasons:

1. Such a study of Regional Colleges has never been conducted. The researcher, therefore, expects the findings from this research may be practically utilized by researchers and practitioners within and beyond our provincial and professional boundaries.

2. The findings from this study will, we hope, provide the regional colleges and provincial government with research on globalization to assist and complement future strategic planning for the training sector in Saskatchewan.
3. This study will further define the changing education and training role of Regional Colleges as they continue to be catalysts for economic and social development in rural Saskatchewan.

If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact or email me or my supervisor (see contact information below). I will be calling in a few days to receive an indication of your choice with respect to participation. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Thank you.

Fay Myers, M. ED
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APPENDIX B: Letter of Introduction to Interviewees



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Graduate Division of Educational Research

Letter of Introduction

(Date)

Dear (Title, Last Name):

I am a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary, AB. As many of you are aware, I am also the Chief Executive Officer of Parkland Regional College in Melville, SK. My doctoral research in higher education administration focuses on the impact of globalization on Saskatchewan Regional Colleges. The title is “Organizational Adaptation in Saskatchewan Regional Colleges: Context of Globalization.

Please read the attached consent form carefully and indicate whether you would be willing to take part in my doctoral research. The CEO of your regional college and the Minister of Learning has agreed to include their organization as part of this study. Your participation in this study is important as a leader in your organization and will require taking part in a one-hour taped interview followed by a review of your interview transcript for accuracy. This interview will take place in your organization at an agreed upon time. You will be asked to select a pseudonym so that participation remains anonymous. All measures will be taken in order to ensure confidentiality and privacy of all research participants as required by established University of Calgary ethical standards.

It is my belief that globalization forces have had an impact on the role and mission of Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan. This study will identify and interpret organizational changes in response to these global forces and identify strategies and actions senior administrators in these colleges use to overcome challenges due to these global forces for the long-term sustainability of the college. As a senior administrator, you might enjoy reflecting upon and sharing some of your thoughts on these changes – your role, tensions and responses.

I thank you in advance for seriously considering participating in this very important study. If you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact or email first me and then my supervisor (see contact information below).

Thank you.

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APPENDIX C: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

1. Personal Information

- a. Gender?
- b. Age?
- c. Educational level?

2. Professional Background

- a. What is your exact title?
- b. How would you define your role and area of responsibility?
- c. How long have you been in your present position?
- d. How long have you been in the Regional College/Department system?
- e. What professional background and experience do you bring to this position?

3. Globalization context

When I use the term globalization and higher education what comes to mind?

How do you see globalization affecting the role and mission of regional colleges?

The literature defines globalization as having 4 key forces – economic, political, cultural and technological. I would like your response as to how you think these forces have had an impact on:

- a. your role and responsibilities
- b. purpose and direction of your department
- c. the type of training and education regional colleges deliver and the methods of delivery
- d. the types of partnerships that colleges develop and maintain
- e. college/Ministry relationship
- f. the role colleges play regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally
- g. the make-up and needs of the student population of the college
- h. the teaching/learning process

4. Organizational change context

Several assumptions about regional colleges have been made over the thirty years of their history such as “they only deliver macrame classes.” What other assumptions about regional colleges come to mind? Would you suggest these assumptions have been altered in the last few years? How?

Regional Colleges are part of the Saskatchewan post-secondary system, but the environment and culture within is quite different than the traditional educational institutions. How would you describe the environment and culture of the college(s)? What is an example of a norm, value or belief in a college(s) and how has it changed in the past few years?

As we continue this dialogue and reflection, it is evident that globalization has had an impact on regional colleges and many of the functional processes of the colleges have changed. How would you describe changes as a result of global forces on Regional Colleges in the following functional processes?

- a. strategic planning
- b. program and project planning
- c. financial and facility planning
- d. information technology requirements
- e. communication pattern
- f. management style of leaders
- g. organizational structure
- h. decision-making pattern
- i. policy development
- j. human resource planning and recruitment practises
- k. marketing and information systems
- l. What other processes can you suggest that have changed and why?

5. Organizational adaptation context

As senior administrators, we are responsible for the long-term sustainability of our organizations. We set the vision and direction for the future and act to implement that vision. There are also external influences or actions that determine how we implement the vision for long-term sustainability.

- a. What challenges and obstacles have you faced in your role recently as a result of changes due to global forces?
- b. Tell me what strategies or actions you have employed in the following areas to shape the regional college(s) for long-term sustainability?
 - new initiatives
 - systems updates
 - succession planning
 - Other key action or strategy implemented?
- c. Can you describe to me the external influences on the regional college(s)? Who would you attribute those actions to? How would you describe the level or strength of that influence?

6. What do you see as other key forces impacting the future and long-term survival of Regional Colleges in Saskatchewan?

APPENDIX D: Transcript Review Letter



FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Graduate Division of Educational Research

Letter for Review of Transcript

(Date)

Dear (Title, Last Name):

I am sending you a copy of the transcript of our interview on _____. I enjoyed the interview very much and appreciate you taking the time to meet with me. I have conducted a number of interviews with senior administrators and leaders in Saskatchewan higher education and a number of common themes have emerged.

I have transcribed the interview as faithfully as possible, touching up the word order and eliminating repetition where it improved the understanding and did not interfere with the meaning. Please review the transcript and respond to me by email (fjmyers@ucalgary.ca) if it does not meet with your approval by _____. I assume that I have your approval to quote from the transcript, using your self-chosen pseudonym, in my doctoral dissertation and other published work related to this study. Your name or any other information that would specifically identify you will not be released in the dissertation or other published work on the study. This data will be handled under the conditions of the University of Calgary Ethics Review guidelines.

I very much appreciate the time from your busy schedule that you gave my project and the thoughtful responses provided. I am targeting late Spring/ Summer 2007 to complete the research and defend my dissertation.

I am enclosing a copy of the common interview themes that I have noted on first glance after transcribing and reading all interviews.

Sincerely,

Fay J. Myers, M. Ed
Doctoral candidate
Faculty of Education
University of Calgary
(306) 728-6588
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APPENDIX E: Ethics Approval



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

CERTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW

This is to certify that the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board at the University of Calgary has examined the following research proposal and found the proposed research involving human subjects to be in accordance with University of Calgary Guidelines and the Tri-Council Policy Statement on "*Ethical Conduct in Research Using Human Subjects*". This form and accompanying letter constitute the Certification of Institutional Ethics Review.

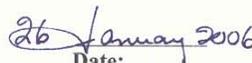
File no: **4655**
 Applicant(s): **Fay J. Myers**
 Department: **Education, Faculty of**
 Project Title: **Organizational Adaptation in Saskatchewan Regional Colleges:
 Context of Globalization**
 Sponsor (if applicable):

Restrictions:

This Certification is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is granted only for the project and purposes described in the application.
2. Any modifications to the authorized protocol must be submitted to the Chair, Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board for approval.
3. A progress report must be submitted 12 months from the date of this Certification, and should provide the expected completion date for the project.
4. Written notification must be sent to the Board when the project is complete or terminated.


 Janice Dickin, Ph.D, DLB,
 Chair
 Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board


 Date:

Distribution: (1) Applicant, (2) Supervisor (if applicable), (3) Chair, Department/Faculty Research Ethics Committee, (4) Sponsor, (5) Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (6) Research Services.