

Attachment to Place: Deconstructing the Career Motivations of Young Farmers in Ireland

Roisin Murphy

Abstract

Agricultural place attachment research can help us understand the relationship farmers have with their land and how this attachment can influence their career decisions. Exactly how farmers develop this attachment is unknown as many farmers are unaware of their attachment and the love they have for their land. Based on a number of Biographic – Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) interviews, we examined to what extent attachment to land has an influence on the career decisions of young farmers in Ireland. We also looked at the factors that contribute to attachment and a sense of place in young farmers. This research considers young farmers place attachment and the impact it has on their career choices. We wanted to develop an understanding of the career motivations of the young farmers interviewed which will give us a better insight into their farming intentions. The findings highlight the influence of land attachment and a sense of place on young farmers career decisions and the continuation of farming in Ireland. Our findings suggest that emotions, childhood memories, feelings of belonging, daily experiences and length of residency are important factors that can influence young farmers land attachment. These factors have a bearing on the career motivations of young farmers in Ireland today.