INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, MULTICULTURALISM[1], DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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In an attempt to integrate into Canadian society, Indigenous people have chosen to operate in a new economy that encompasses both subsistence and capitalism in which to operate. This new *moditional* economy has allowed Indigenous people to retain their identity as well as become involved in the mainstream labour force. In addition, Indigenous people are looking to have the "calls to action" by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission acted upon by non-Indigenous Canadians to bring about reconciliation, social inclusion, and recognition of the trauma forced upon Indigenous people over the past century.

Indigenous people of Canada have always reflected a diversity in culture, language and political and economic structure. Moreover, historical events have impacted Indigenous groups differently and at different times. Eastern and West Coast Indigenous peoples had contact with settlers long before Indigenous groups in the prairies and the arctic carried out interrelations. Each cultural group has a detailed history and culture[2] that reveals similarities as well as differences from other Indigenous groups. Moreover, each community has individuals who have made or who are contributing to their own people or to Canadian society (Waldman 2006). Indigenous people reside in all parts of Canada with nearly two thirds in the Western provinces. One quarter live in Ontario and the remainder reside in Quebec and other provinces and territories. In addition, about three quarters of Inuit reside in Nunangat. These different Indigenous groups represent over 70 different Indigenous languages although many of the languages are near extinction. Diversity among Indigenous groups also includes legal status, language, residence and socio-economic status. For example, while over five percent of the Canadian population are identified as "Indigenous", there are several sub-categories: Registered Indians (treaty and non-treaty), Inuit, Métis, and non-Status Indians (Frideres and Gadacz 2011). For instance, there are two distinct groups of Métis: those of Red River origins (real or authentic) and others (Andersen 2014). For Inuit, many different languages and cultural differences exist among the different groups residing in the north. In addition, each of these groups represent different regional profiles with different political and economic agendas.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

The demographic profiles of each of these groups have

1 See also Table 1: Views of Canada's Multiculturalism Policy in Attachment A.

2 See also Table 2: Important to Learn History and Culture of Indigenous Peoples in Canada in Attachment A.

changed substantially over the past three decades. For example, during this time there has been a 43% increase in the total Indigenous population in Canada. During this same time-period, there was a 51% increase in Métis, a 19% increase in registered Indians and a 29% increase in Inuit. Many of these increases were a result of legal changes or subjective changes in the minds of individuals filling out their census. When looking at language ability, we find that nearly two thirds of Inuit can carry out a conversation in an Indigenous language as of 2016 while only 45% of Indians residing on a reserve were able to do so. For Indians living off the reserve, only nine percent were able to converse in an Indigenous language and only three percent of Métis were able to do so.

In summary, there are vast differences among the various Indigenous groups that reside in Canada. However, at the same time, Indigenous groups share some distinct similarities: poverty, low educational attainment, culturally resilience, and the maintenance of a high level of Indigenous identity. They also share the effects of colonization as settlers actively attempted to destroy their culture, imposed heavy sanctions on those who continued to express their Indigeneity, and impressed the importance of assimilation onto Indigenous peoples (Fixico 2012).

THE OLD AND THE NEW

Traditional culture for Indigenous peoples involved both internal and external governance and was based on values such as community, inter-relations and balance or well-being. These cultural traits were supported by the community structure, elders, teachers and community mentors who used both experiential as well as oral transmission as the mode of teaching – observing and listening. All this meant that the community and home was a place of security, comfort and peace.

Over time, the impact of the settler's view of the world became more and more a part of the world of Indigenous people. The creation of the *Indian Act*, the implementation of Tort law, the imposition of residential schools and the lack of support for Indigenous community governance slowly began to change the way of life of Indigenous peoples. To facilitate this transition from "traditional" to "modern", settlers began to formally impose their ethos onto Indigenous communities in both direct and indirect ways. In some cases, legislation was passed to infringe upon the rights and responsibilities of Indigenous peoples. In other cases, the creation of formal educational structures would ensure that Indigenous languages would be lost and Western ways of knowing would supplant Indigenous ways of knowing. In addition, the introduction of new diseases brought about the demise of Elders and the traditional ways of teaching. The loss of land brought about changes in economic structure in Indigenous communities and thrust them into the new capitalist system. Discrimination against Indigenous people also meant that they would never be able to fully participate in the new economic system. In most cases, Indigenous people never had the legal right to oppose these new settler values and Western ways of Knowing that would be integrated into every aspect of Indigenous lives. As the new Western ways of Knowing was implemented, the power imbalance between Indigenous people and settlers grew which allowed settlers to dominate and lead to the dispossession and subordination of Aboriginal people.

In the early colonial days, labour was the core of how settlers, and later Canadians valued themselves. As the Reformation spread its influence, an individual's value was linked to their willingness to participate in agricultural work; long hours, minimal leisure time, and the accumulation of wealth beyond their basic material needs. For early settlers, labour was the source of all value for people and it provided the right to ownership (Lutz 2008). Moreover, from a settler perspective, activities such as hunting and fishing were not considered appropriate labour. In short, these traditional activities did not move Indigenous people from a "primitive" to "civilized" state of nature.

As such, early settlers and later Canadians began to impose "peaceful subordination" – a strategy that allowed settlers to control Indigenous people and occupy their land while at the same time not engage in overt violence. Moreover, in the early development of Canada, Indigenous people would not be subject to the principles of a liberal philosophy – that only was applicable to settlers. However, settlers argued that in time, Indigenous people would be extended the principles of liberalism but not until they became more "civilized." Indigenous peoples also would have to assimilate before they would benefit from the principles of liberalism. Through this process, it was argued, Indigenous people would be brought into a state of civilization through the actions of the State and its supporting institutions, e.g., church, education, economy.

INDIGENOUS RESPONSE

Indigenous people began to assess the benefits of the new economic, legal and social structure imposed by settlers. They knew that over the long run, such participation would alter their terms of engagement and ultimately their cultural frame. Indigenous people knew that accepting the capitalist economic system would bring them into a social system that demanded subordination, individualization and a belief in private property – all foreign values to their culture. In the end, Indigenous people tried to incorporate both traditional life styles with those reflected in the current mainstream society. Indigenous people found that a partial incorporation into the modern economy did not result in the destruction of their culture. As a result, what emerged, to the benefit of the private sector and to most Canadians, was the development of paral-

lel economies: a primary (highly educated, highly skilled) and secondary (low education, low skills) labour resource pool, of which Indigenous people contribute disproportionately to the secondary pool.

Indigenous people have chosen to operate in a new economy that encompasses both subsistence and capitalism. This new economy – *moditional* – allows Indigenous people to retain their identity while at the same time become involved with the capitalist system (Lutz 2008). However, Canadians today do not acknowledge this new hybrid economy and argue that the current economy of Indigenous communities is the beginning of a long linear transitional process from a subsistence to a capitalist economy. It should be noted that while capitalism overwhelms some traditional elements of Indigenous culture, other elements of their traditional society are reinforced. In the end, Indigenous people have been subordinated but not subjugated. This involvement in the *moditional* economy has produced a resiliency for Indigenous people that few other groups have shown.

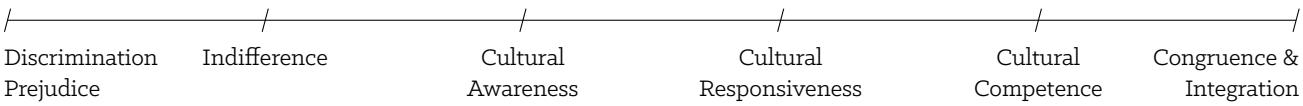
Indigenous people have been subjected to many forms of historical trauma, e.g., single, episode, repetitive, intergenerational. As a result, a continuing gap of "trust" between Indigenous people and government officials remains a major impediment in developing new, modern strategies for incorporating Indigenous people into Canadian society. At the same time, government refuses to support Indigenous educational objectives, as well as an educational system based on the needs of Indigenous people. There is a lack of government support of economic development on Indigenous homelands as well in newly established urban areas. Current federal legislation impedes any forward-looking development projects on lands set aside for Indigenous people. As a result, the Supreme Court of Canada has been thrust into the decision-making process and has produced a new vision for Indigenous people that has taken precedence over parliamentary action. However, government still refuses to accept the principle that land/place is one of the most important components of Indigenous culture (Elsey 2013), a principle endorsed by the Supreme Court.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

An inclusive environment is one in which diversity is respected and valued with no stereotyping. It is an environment where all people are treated equally and with equity. While social inclusion is a stated objective of the current Liberal government, little attention has been given to how this might happen. However, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has identified the 94 calls to action that would bring about Indigenous inclusion. These recommendations involve a diversity of issues, e.g., health, education, language, equity, sports. The Commission also recommends that the establishment of trust can only take place through action on the part of government that supports the goals and objectives of Indigenous people and their communities. As such, the Commission recommends that government support the restorative justice movement, support reconciliation through the components of respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility.

Social inclusion reflects a continuum as depicted in Figure 1. At present we are at the level between indifference and cultural awareness, but have yet to move fully into the category of cultural responsiveness.

FIGURE 1: LEVELS OF SOCIAL INCLUSION



Government needs to develop programs that consider community needs (including self-government), cultural preservation and the development of community and regional infrastructure. This also requires that government recognize the differences among Indigenous communities when supporting programs. Only in this way will it provide a means of empowering Indigenous people, improve self-management as well as community and economic skills (Watt-Cloutier 2015). By making ongoing changes and reforms, with necessary political commitment, leadership and determination, Indigenous people will begin to empower themselves and regain control over their lives and communities within the context of Canadian society.

ATTACHMENT A

In a November 2017 survey, the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) found that the majority of Canadian's surveyed have a positive view of Canada's multiculturalism policy (62%), but this percentage is somewhat lower amongst Aboriginal / First Nations respondents (55%) and for respondents living in Quebec (47%). English-speaking Quebecers, on the other hand, are endorsors of Canada's multiculturalism policy with 70% having positive views. Persons living on Canada's coasts are also more likely to endorse Canada's multiculuralism policy, with 72% in BC and the Terrorities having positive views and 73% in the Atlantic region.

TABLE 1: VIEWS OF CANADA'S MULTICULTURALISM POLICY

	Total (2,344)	Aboriginal / First Nations (310)	FR ROC (264)	EN QC (289)	BC+Terr. (198)	Prairies (381)	ON (839)	QC (714)	ATL (212)
TOTAL POSITIVE	62%	55%	61%	70%	72%	58%	68%	47%	73%
Very positive	26%	21%	27%	28%	30%	27%	30%	13%	38%
Somewhat positive	36%	34%	34%	42%	42%	31%	38%	34%	34%
TOTAL NEGATIVE	25%	27%	27%	20%	19%	32%	21%	33%	12%
Somewhat negative	17%	19%	20%	15%	13%	20%	15%	22%	9%
Very negative	8%	8%	7%	6%	6%	12%	6%	11%	4%
I don't know	10%	16%	10%	8%	8%	7%	8%	17%	11%
I prefer not to answer	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	4%

In Table 2 we see that 85% of Canadians agree with the following statement: "When teaching Canada's history, it is most important that we learn the history and culture of Indigenous Peoples in Canada." Aboriginal / First Nations respondents are more likely to agree with this statement at 94% (3 in 4 'strongly agree'). Among Canadian provinces/regions, Quebec (89%) and the Atlantic region (88%) are the most likely to agree with the above statement, as are official language minority communities (88% of English-speaking Quebecers and 87% of French-speakers in the ROC).

TABLE 2: IMPORTANT TO LEARN HISTORY AND CULTURE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA

	Total (2,344)	Aboriginal / First Nations (310)	FR ROC (264)	EN QC (289)	BC+Terr. (198)	Prairies (381)	ON (839)	QC (714)	ATL (212)
NET AGREE	85%	94%	87%	88%	84%	82%	83%	89%	88%
Strongly agree	46%	75%	45%	52%	45%	43%	49%	45%	45%
Somewhat agree	39%	19%	43%	36%	39%	39%	34%	44%	44%
NET DISAGREE	10%	3%	11%	7%	11%	14%	11%	5%	8%
Somewhat disagree	7%	2%	8%	5%	5%	11%	8%	5%	5%
Strongly disagree	3%	1%	3%	2%	5%	4%	2%	1%	3%
I don't know	4%	2%	2%	4%	4%	2%	5%	4%	2%
I prefer not to answer	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%

Notes: EN QC = English-speakers from Quebec; FR ROC = French-speakers from the Rest of Canada.

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