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Abstract

This study examines the First Nations community in Lillooet, B.C., particularly the effect of residential schools on contemporary elders' spiritual leadership and on high school students' academic performance. The research uses a phenomenological study and action research. The relationship mapping method and the salvage ethnography method were employed in gathering data. The psychodynamic perspective theory, identity-based approach, and face-saving theory were used for the data analysis process. The main finding is that by removing the children from their households and placing them in residential schools where their identity was threatened, children construed a new identity that replaced their First Nations culture. This paper recommends using third-party conflict facilitators and soft systems methodology.

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Chapter One: Introduction

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Pacific salmon is a symbol in both the prehistoric and modern Pacific

Northwest Coast culture. However, the historic expansion of Western culture in the

Pacific Northwest has been associated with a considerable loss in Pacific salmon numbers

(Nehlsen et al., 1991; Slaney et al., 1996; Gustafson et al., 2007).

Salmon are a naturally resilient species and, when given reasonable access to good-quality habitat and protection from destructive overfishing, they are capable of rapid recovery and high, sustained productivity. Unfortunately, this resiliency has been undermined in British Columbia by the government's focal point on maximizing yield and on economic efficiency (Healey, 2009).

The First Nations in British Columbia and across Canada have a historical and contemporary trajectory similar to the Pacific salmon: both are a symbol of the prehistoric and modern Northwest Coast culture, and both have been affected by the expansion of Western European culture. According to Wesley et al., an estimated ninety to ninety-five per cent of the Indigenous population died within two generations of contact, stimulating the cumulative waves of trauma and grief that have still not been resolved in the First Nations culture (Wesley, 2004). Entire indigenous societies have been dramatically affected by devastating diseases, removal from their homeland, colonialism, starvation, economic disorganization, assimilation tactics and incarceration in residential schools (Kehoe, 1989; Sullivan, 1989; Ross, 1992 cited by Historic Trauma AHF).

Though First Nations have a long history of oppression and colonization phases, the focus of this research is to analyze the residential-school experience and how its effects linger, modifying elders' spiritual leadership. The thesis will then discuss how these changes affect First Nations students' academic performance.

This paper is divided into five chapters. In the introduction, I present the research topic's scope and relevance, give a personal account of where the reader may evaluate my background as a researcher, and describe the limitations of the study. In the Literature Review (Chapter Two), I present literature related to the five divisions of this study:

- a. Residential school;
- b. Residential school and its effects;
- c. Traditional education;
- d. Elders yesterday and today; and
- e. First Nations students.

In the Methodology section (Chapter Three), I explain the research approaches employed, as well as the data gathering and analysis methods used in this study. The Findings and Data Analysis, Chapter Four, depicts the data analysis process and the usage of the different research tools. Finally, in Conclusion and Recommendations (Chapter Five), I attempt to summarize this study's findings and analysis together with some suggestions for future action.

1.1 Personal account

I have lived in Canada for ten years and in the last five years I have experienced life as a foster parent. This experience has been the trigger that led me to this research topic. Some of my foster kids have been First Nations teenagers who, while in care,

manifested some unusual behavioural patterns. Mainly, they seemed to be apathetic about school learning, personal improvement and life enhancement in general. What underlying issues lay beneath these apathetic attitudes? Why did they have this indifference toward learning or, in some of them, even abhorrence of the school system. Without being consciously aware, I began to think about my research topic.

I am also the pastor of a small church in the community in which I live and being passionate about spirituality, I cannot avoid theoretically connecting this research topic to some harmful events that have wounded and altered First Nations' spirituality. As history shows, the last few centuries have been radical for the First Nations people: Colonialism, Indian Acts and residential schools have severely damaged the culture, language and identity of these communities. Indians across North America have had similar experiences, but First Nations in Canada have experienced something additional in terms of residential schools. For most Aboriginal people, this experience has been a crucial and painful one with outcomes that I believe are still lingering and permeating from generation to generation. This paper examines the impact of these historical events and the residential school experience through an exploration of current literature and the data analysis gathered from interviews and relationship mapping.

1.2 Limitations

Although the experience of residential school has affected communities across

Canada, this study is intentionally focused on the First Nations community of Lillooet BC

and, more specifically, on contemporary elders and First Nations high school students of
this community. This research does not study the worldview of non-First Nations

community members on this topic and it is limited to female elders only, due to the unwillingness of male elders to contribute to this study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

I began this literature review in my exploration of the dynamics between residential schools' effects, and the "bullying" phenomenon of First Nations students. Through my writings in the Master of Arts and Conflict Analysis (MACAM) program, this research narrowed to the question for this major paper's topic: "How residential-school experiences and effects have shaped, and keep influencing, elders' spiritual leadership over First Nations' communities; in turn, how is this phenomenon affecting Aboriginal high school students' academic performance in Lillooet?"

From these research questions, five main divisions have emerged and are analyzed in the paper:

- a. Residential school;
- b. Residential school and its effects;
- c. Traditional education;
- d. Elders yesterday and today; and
- e. First Nations students.

These divisions have also become the boundaries of the literature review. By keeping the literature review within these boundaries, it prevents wandering into other areas that may be quite interesting, but have little input or relevance to this study's analysis (Ormord & Leedy, 2005).

The sections on residential schools and their effects give a general account of how residential schools emerged, the experience and stories of some former residential school students, and the effects of this experience on elders and students. The traditional education part provides a glimpse of the history and accounts of the ways in which

traditional education was carried out before residential schools. Exploration of elders yesterday and today indicates some of the general roles of an elder, the definition of an elder, and identification of the specific roles they play as leaders of the community. In the segment on First Nations students, I analyze the academic performance of First Nations students in the light of the clashing worldviews on Western and First Nations cultures and how this clashing fuels the academic deficiency, accentuated by the experience of residential schools. This section examines the effects of two of the residential schools in altering students' academic performance: racism and dropout rates.

In an effort to generate multi-sided responses for this literature review, I consulted academic articles, research reports, indigenous and non-indigenous research, government reports, and even some reports done on other countries, regarding the outcome of colonization and its effect on Aboriginal people. The general criterion used in the selection of literature was that it needed to give either knowledge of one or more of the topics or analyze the dynamics of these topics.

2.1 Residential schools

Aboriginal attended the residential school system in Canada as a matter of course. They included industrial schools, boarding schools, and homes for students, hostels, billets, residential schools, and residential schools with a majority of day students, as well as combinations of the above (Castellano, 2006).

Though residential schools for Indians officially began in 1892, their origins go as far back as the 1600s, to the time when Christian missionaries came into Canada. The trigger for their origin was mainly the covetousness of Europeans for land. Canadian land was predominantly inhabited by Indians whose worldview differed widely from that of

the new European settlers. This clashing of worldviews created the so-called "Indian problem." Indians were seen as an impediment to the spread of Western progress. Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932, voiced the government's desire to "get rid of the Indian problem:"

Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the politic body and there is no Indian Question and no Indian Department. (Castellano, 2006, p. 414)

Various commissions and Acts followed this statement, all with the purpose of eliminating the Indians' dominion over the land. The main channel of pursuing this objective was through re-educating young Indians in farm-based boarding schools away from their parents. The agenda of this new education paradigm was to change the young Indians' worldviews on economy, skills, social and spiritual beliefs. To achieve this, the church was employed by the federal government, mainly to provide Christian direction to the First Nations community through the residential schools.

Due to student overpopulation, diseases and the underfunding of residential schools, fatalities among the children ranged between 15-24% and up to 42% in the children's homes, where many times students were sent to die. Some argue that at the end of the century up to 50% of the children did not survive (Kirkness & Canadian Education Association, 1992). Physical, emotional and intellectual abuse was constant and intense, fostered by the isolation of the establishments and the lack of social and official accountability. Some of these abuses included kidnapping, sexual abuse, beatings, needles pushed through the tongue as punishment for speaking Aboriginal languages, immersion in iced water, enforced consumption of rotten food, and employment of

electric shocks, etc. These abuses not only affected the students' situation then, but also created a wave of generational trauma that continues to reverberate among contemporary First Nations students. Some of these effects are examined in the next section.

2.2 Residential school effects

Residential schools have had devastating consequences on the First Nations in Canada. By removing the children from their family, community, culture, and spirituality, later in their life the students experienced a cultural interruption that resulted in poor self-esteem, alienation, lack of identity, and abuse of all sorts (Kirkness, 1992).

For more than two decades, child therapists have focused their attention on trauma induced by abuse. Wolf and colleagues, in a report prepared for the Law Commission, summarized some of the consequences of child abuse:

Depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and physical problems. They also may exhibit self-destructive or suicidal behaviour ... poor impulse control, difficulties regulating their emotions, difficulties understanding others' perspectives, lack of empathy, and more willing to use physical punishment. Adult survivors of childhood abuse display similar symptoms of depression and anxiety Adult survivors of sexual abuse often are plagued by feelings of guilt, self-blame, helplessness, anger and may perceive life as dangerous or hopeless. (Wolf, 2002, p. 9)

Wolf and colleagues also made some comparisons between children abused in public schools and children abused at home, finding that there are tight similarities such as

shame, guilt and humiliation. In addition, children who witnessed the abuse of other children experienced consequences similar to those who were abused (Wolf, 2002).

The effect of residential schools, however, has been more damaging at a personal level. Most former residential school students declare that one of the greatest difficulties of this experience was the sudden separation from their parents, family and way of life, finding themselves in a new culture, speaking a new language and with harsh expectations from the teachers. This was only the first step in the colonisers' purpose to detach children from their culture and history. Students were made to feel ashamed of their customs and spirituality, while teachers and residential school authorities sought ways to assert the superiority of their culture. These new teachings changed two facets of the Aboriginal children's culture: the separation from parents and customs, and being forbidden to speak their native tongue. Any attempt to disregard these rules led to a variety of castigations, ranging from beatings to shaving their head, being confined in closets, or made to kneel with arms outstretched (Claes & Clifton, 1998).

Considering these punishments and the fact that residential schools had high mortality rates because of tuberculosis, it is understandable that trauma was generated among former students and they rated their school years less joyful than those who did not attend residential schools (Claes & Clifton, 1998).

The trauma generated by the residential-school experience ranged from post-traumatic stress disorder, nightmares, blackouts and apathy, to depression. Others found themselves unworthy of love or had feelings of alienation from their parents and community, were consumed by anger and guilt, and ashamed of their native heritage.

Further studies found high incidence of sexual problems including sexual abuse and incest (Claes & Clifton, 1998).

Further, Knockwood described the destructive patterns some survivors had adopted such as compulsive gambling, and alcohol and substance abuse (Knockwood, 1992). However, the most destructive outcome is the frequency of early death among former students including a high incidence of suicide and deaths due to violence or alcohol (Claes & Clifton, 1998).

Residential schools did not affect only survivors, but also manifested in parents, spouses, children and friends. Parents were devastated when the children were removed from home, particularly when knowing that their children were going to experience abuse from the teachers and school officials. More suffering was inflicted because of the lack of contact with their children. Sometimes the children would return sick and die at home (Claes & Clifton, 1998). After the residential-school experience, many former students indicated their inability as parents to raise their kids with dignity. Raised in an institutional setting with severe discipline, tyranny and absence of emotional support, survivors manifested difficulty in expressing affection to their children, and instead employed ruthless authority. Former students who have become parents realize their deficiencies in the family unit by allowing their children to acquire unhealthy parenting skills (Haig-Brown, 1998).

Residential-school effects are not only evident at a personal or family level, but also in the community. Although the federal government's goal in assimilating the Indians into Western culture was not successful, First Nations communities still deal with the effect of what today is called "cultural genocide" (Claes & Clifton, 1998). One of the

most apparent effects at a community level is the loss of Aboriginal languages and traditions. After several generations of children who had experienced the belittling of their Aboriginality, it is no surprise that their culture and languages have become almost extinct. According to Mark Davis and Robert Zannis, in *Aboriginal People, Resilience and the Residential School Legacy*:

If people lose their "prime symbol" their lives lose meaning; they become disoriented, with no hope A social disorganization often follows such a loss, and they are often unable to ensure their own survival ... the loss and human suffering of those whose culture has been healthy and is suddenly attacked and disintegrated are incalculable. (As cited in Stout et al., 2003, p. 35)

Another report on a study involving ten First Nations participants regarding intergenerational residential-school effects showed that the effects reached even to the fourth generation. The manifestations showed as denial of First Nations' identity, shame, poor self-esteem, family silence, communication difficulties, and expectations to be judged negatively, etc. This report described about the participants' ways of healing, saying that education about First Nations' history and culture as well as spirituality and "sweats" were some of the main healing avenues that led them to be aware of their situation (Ing, 2001).

Another way the residential-schools effect is reverberating through the First Nations communities is through the legacy of sexual and physical abuse. This legacy, in conjunction with other outcomes, has contributed to lack of initiative, dependency on others, and high rates of alcoholism (Furniss, 1995). Nevertheless, some First Nations communities have obtained great results through healing initiatives and the strength of

communal agreement. Some communities have even found strength through friendships and alliances with survivors, communities, nations and people that have become the basis for a contemporary political agenda (Claes & Clifton, 1998).

Awareness of the residential-school effect has only occurred in the last few years among Canadians and even among the Aboriginal people. Beginning in the 1980s, thousands of stories were told, disclosing accounts of the many students who had passed away while in the residential schools and of the diseases, malnourishment, and abuse of all kinds. Now the silence has been broken and the residential-school effect has been acknowledged in public discourse, there are better possibilities to manage the outcomes of these effects and intergenerational impact (Castellano, Archibald, Kishk Anaquit Health Research, & Aboriginal Healing Foundation Canada, 2006).

2.3 Traditional education

Aboriginal people have always had their own educational system, where the community and nature were the learning centres and members of the community were the teachers. All teachings gravitated on one central belief: the Great Spirit (Kirkness, 1992).

The main avenue for educating and building character in a child was through storytelling. Each community had its own stories and heroes that were the means of transmitting culture, knowledge and wisdom (Archibald, 1990). Part of this traditional educational system was the discipline of maintaining silence when adults were speaking. Silence was a keystone in character building. The fruits of silence were self-control, courage, endurance, patience, dignity and reverence (Seaton, 1963).

Economics was also an important subject. Boys and girls were taught how to manage their environment through hunting, trapping, fishing, food gathering and preparation, child rearing, farming and building shelters (Kirkness, 1992).

There was no formal structure in the teaching process but rather an informal sequential method with specific objectives to learn the skills, attitudes and knowledge that they needed on a daily basis. Regardless of their physical environment, Aboriginal people held a belief in the unity of all aspects of life. For this reason, there was no distinction between the secular and the sacred. Each family had their own chores in each community and these were highly treasured; so was raising all children in the community in a holistic way. This approach helped children to acquire the knowledge and character to assume responsibility in an atmosphere of warmth and affection. Traditional education was based on learning values that would teach respect for all living things, sharing, self-reliance, individual responsibility and proper conduct. Connected to all teachings were the spiritual realm and the life cycle from birth to death, celebrated through ceremonies that had the goal of connecting the individual to the spiritual and the sacred (Barman, Haebert, & McCaskill, 1986).

2.4 *Elders yesterday and today*

Elders are members of the First Nations communities who are recognized for their wisdom and their life experience. One of their roles is to pass on life experience through teachings, ceremonies and lifestyle. Teachings establish the difference between right and wrong, how to act or perform, how to understand, etc. These teachings are mainly transmitted in family settings and as the family extends through marriage and social ties, the teachings extend as well. The teachings were based on real -ife examples or stories or

legends. Currently, teachings include aspects of how to be successful in response to the demands of Western culture. Elders have the responsibility of carrying the core message of the knowledge they hold and on many occasions, they could not even change the words. Sometimes they expressed this by saying "These are not my words" (Cooke-Dalling, Rosborough, & Underwood, 2000). In the words of the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto:

Elders are the people who are the cornerstone of our culture, as they are the keepers and teachers of traditional teachings. They are the link with our past, our present and our future. They are spiritual leaders and teachers but also have the wisdom and the experience to provide very pragmatic guidance and advice on how best to improve and ensure the physical, mental and spiritual health of our community. (Minutes from the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, 1986)

Elders are not born nor are they appointed; they grow into this role as they collect life experience along with culture, knowledge and wisdom. Out of these attributes, elders educate the members of the community so that one day this education will turn into knowledge and wisdom, which will be transmitted to subsequent generations, thus replicating their culture. If culture is lost so is identity. To keep the culture passing from generation to generation it is necessary to have the involvement of strong teaching elders, as well as the members of the community needing to ask and participate (Stiegelbauer, 1996).

Elders convey their teachings in different venues. Among these are:

- a. At home in the informality of daily living;
- b. At home in formal family gatherings;

c. At ceremonies, cultural events, weddings, funerals, or other events; and

d. At the big house, which is the main formal traditional avenue to share teachings.

One of the elders' characteristics is to be willing and approachable and it is only when elders practise this role that they become recognized and trusted. Their behaviour must be consistent with their teachings of conduct and attitude. It is expected of elders to practise humility, honesty, integrity, sensitivity to others, politeness, and respect for cultural traditions. The Innu delegation statement regarding elders reads:

Elders should be role models for everyone else. Elders should be teachers to the grandchildren and all young people because of their wisdom. Elders should be advisors, lawgivers, dispensers of justice. Elders should be open to everyone. Elders should be knowledgeable in all aspects of Innu culture. Elders should be teachers for everyone of the past history of Innu people. Elders should be recorders of history, not only orally but to be preserved in print. Elders should be teachers of values important to Innu to be passed on from generation to generation. Elders should be teachers of language and oral history. Elders should be teachers of Innu medicine. (Statement by the Innu delegation from Sheshatshiu Native Canadian Centre in Toronto, April 27, 1989)

Elders have a big responsibility in young people's education, since they continually strengthen youths' goals and efforts with a communal purpose, seeing the learning process as continual and intrinsic. Teachings are connected to the seen and unseen world, and most of these teachings are transmitted orally. This traditional teaching

method has been an effective way to recall and revisit accounts of generations through hundreds of years.

Oral tradition contains both educational and social content, and its traditional teaching method occurs mainly in group settings. Anyone could do the teaching, but because age is considered an element of wisdom and understanding in First Nations communities, it is the role of elders to transmit these teachings. This teaching method is consistent with the tradition of oral history and with contemporary practices in First Nations communities. It is common for elders to be called upon to help communities with decision-making, regarding everything from health issues to community development, and from governmental negotiations to social activities. The roles of the elders, along with others that stress social informality in everyday affairs, have often clashed with Western administrative styles which use specialization, standardization, compartmentalization and systematization (Kawagley, Barnhardt, & Alaska University, 1998).

Western education is more structured and discrete; therefore it has been slow to accept the values of traditional oral teaching. It is only recently that the traditional style has been recognized. Recognition and acceptance has regained value in the elders' teachings, and this has been culturally relevant because it has given identity back to the students, practitioners and communities.

Some internal problems occur in First Nations communities that have to be resolved. Elders comment that today children do not listen to their elders anymore and that this has become a threat to the traditional system of learning. In the old learning system respect is the axis of tradition, which in turn branches into permission, recognition

and accountability. The way these three branches unfold depends on the region and communal traditions, but this foundational method based on respect is evident in all regions (Lertzman, 1996).

2.5 First Nations Students

The inherited legacy of clashing worldviews is noticeable among First Nations students. Kawagley and Barnhardt (1998) in *Education Indigenous to Place: Western Science Meets Native Reality* assert that reconciling Western practices and structures to First Nations cultural forms represent a formidable challenge. Using the relative framework of Knudtson and Suzuki (1992), Kawagley and Barnhardt identified distinguishing characteristics from beliefs and practices of both worldviews.

First Nations Worldview	Western Worldview	
- Spirituality is embedded in all elements of	- Spirituality is centred in a single	
the cosmos	Supreme Being	
– Humans have responsibility for	- Humans exercise dominion over nature	
maintaining a harmonious relationship with	to use it for personal and economic gain	
the natural world	- Natural resources are available for	
- Need for reciprocity between human and	unilateral human exploitation	
natural worlds	- Spiritual practices are intermittent and	
Resources are viewed as gifts	set apart from daily life	
- Nature is honoured routinely through daily	- Human reason transcends the natural	
spiritual practice	world and can produce insights	
- Wisdom and ethics are derived from direct	independently	
experience with the natural world	- Universe is made up of an array of static	
- Universe is made up of dynamic, ever-	physical objects	
changing natural forces	- Universe is compartmentalized in	
- Universe is viewed as a holistic,	dualistic forms and reduced to	
integrative system with a unifying life force	progressively smaller conceptual parts	
- Time is circular with natural cycles that	- Time is a linear chronology of "human	
sustain all life	progress"	
- Nature will always possess unfathomable	- Nature is completely decipherable to the	

mysteries

 Human thought, feelings and words are inextricably bound to all other aspects of the universe

- Human role is to participate in the orderly designs of nature
- Respect for elders is based on their
 compassion and reconciliation of outer and
 inner-directed knowledge
- Sense of empathy and kinship with other forms of life
- View proper human relationship with
 nature as a continuous two-way transactional
 dialogue

rational human mind

- Human thought, feeling and words are
 formed apart from the surrounding world
- Human role is to dissect, analyze and manipulate nature for own ends
- Respect for others is based on material
 achievement and chronological old age
- Sense of separateness from and superiority over other forms of life
- View relationship of humans to nature
 as a one-way, hierarchical imperative

Each worldview mistrusts the other. The First Nations perspective of the Western view is that they desire to understand and control the universe, while the Western perspective on the First Nations view is that it is subjective and circular (Aikenhead, 2001). While Battiste (2002) suggested that the First Nations learning principle is experiential knowledge, Hampton (1995) observed that spirituality is the standard of education. Further, Ross (2006) explained that through ceremonies, stories and the clan system, the children learn the ways which did not concentrate on teaching each person

what to say or do, but which rather taught life as a matter of responsibility born to all people.

In a dominant Western culture, First Nations students struggle to find the identity and self-esteem needed for successful academic performance. The protracted colonialist journey of First Nations people has created a sense of inferiority and unworthiness in them (Battiste, 2002). Reyhner (2001) suggested that long cultural oppression leads to student absenteeism, anger, hopelessness, aggressive behaviours, low self-esteem, and self-destruction.

The need of First Nations cultural knowledge and worldview in the curriculum has been identified as key cause for the poor academic performance of First Nations students (Kanu, 2005). Unless educational systems validate and incorporate First Nations knowledge and education in current classrooms, mediocrity will be the standard among First Nations students.

Kanu and others declared that children's ways of learning are rooted in their culture, and when children are in a different cultural learning setting, their struggle to study and interact in class is to be expected. If classrooms are to be effective, then everyone's history needs to be considered (Kanu, 2005; Sillin & Leija, 2006; Barnhardt, 2005).

In addition to the clash of worldviews and the historic and cultural curriculum imbalance, First Nations students wrestle with the residential school legacy. Ing, in her research *Dealing With Shame and Unresolved Trauma: Residential Schools and Its Impact on the 2nd and 3rd Generation Adults*, identified some intergenerational impact categories related to residential schools' outcomes. The categories included denial of the

First Nations identity, belief in lies about First Nations people, shame, poor self-esteem, family silence about the past, communication difficulties, an expectation to be judged negatively, controlling fathers, experiences of racism, violence and physical abuse in the family, sexual abuse, and alcoholism, among others (Ing, 2001, as cited in Castellano, 2006). Although each of these outcomes occurs for most contemporary students and each one is worthy of study, I have included in this section two residential-school outcomes in order to analyze the dynamics of the outcomes and their current effects on students. These two outcomes to be analyzed are racism and student dropout rates.

2.5.1 *Racism*

Canada's policy on multiculturalism and retention of ethnic identity establishes regulations against racism. Although most Canadians believe that racism in Canada is less active than in other countries (Pauls, 1996, p. 24), others believe the predicament of First Nations communities is one of the most serious problems in Canada (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 1993).

It is the belief of many, and especially of the First Nations people, that the Government of Canada has established racism against First Nations individuals. This belief is grounded upon the fact that First Nations people face the most serious social disadvantages: high rates of unemployment, disease, suicide, incarceration, substance abuse and low academic achievement, when compared with non-First Nations students (Pauls, 1996).

The most effective way of institutionalizing the racism of First Nations peoples and especially of First Nations students has been through educational establishments, beginning with the establishment of the residential schools. According to Henderson and

Hoagwood (2003), the racist attitudes of teachers and staff while in residential schools directly affected the students' low academic performance. When teachers have racist attitudes and low academic expectations, students' academic performance is more likely to be influenced by the teachers' expectations (Wolfe & Spencer, 1996). Students who believe in themselves are more motivated and successful in their studies (Steinberg, 1999), whereas students who are in a racist environment are more prone to devalue academic achievements and disengage from school (Schmader et al., 2001). Racism has a detrimental effect on students' identity and academic ability (Berry, 1999). Students with a positive ethnic identity exhibit higher self-esteem, stronger self-efficacy, higher school grades, and a greater sense of social competence (Steinberg, 1999). Although many First Nations students have a positive sense of ethnic identity, the majority struggles with the effects of weak ethnic identity, which is caused mainly by racism (Barsh, 1999).

2.5.2 Dropout

According to Human Resources Development in Canada, the definition of dropouts is "People in a specified age group who have left high school without graduating at a given point in time" (HRDC, 2000, p. 11). Though First Nations people account for only 3.8% of the total Canadian population (statscan.ca, 2006), First Nations students experience the highest dropout rates (Mackay & Myles, 1995). Makokis (2000) in her study, *An Insider's Perspective: The Dropout Challenge for Canada's First Nations*, identified five common themes as to why First Nations students drop out of provincial high schools, which all are connected to the residential-school experience. The commonalities included racism or cultural conflict, poor student-staff relationships, marginalization, alienation, and systemic labelling. The Ministry of Canadian Heritage

and Official Languages website displays the statistics that the dropout rate among non-First Nations female students in public schools grades 7-12 has declined from 2.4% in 1994 to 1.9% in 2005. For this same year, boys' dropout is 2.4%; for the First Nations students dropout rate attending public schools, the percentage is not given but only acknowledged as a "higher rate" (http://www.pch.gc.ca/ddp-hrd/docs/cedaw-cedef7/nb-eng.cfm).

According to Battiste (2002), the legacy of residential schools has been devastating for First Nations students who have not only the highest dropout rate at public high schools, but also the highest unemployment rates, suicide rates, incarceration rates and all types of abuse.

Finally, Schmidt (2005) suggested that developing an academic approach to engage First Nation students by integrating First Nations culture and knowledge into teaching curriculum and pedagogy might diminish students' poor literacy development and high dropout rates.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This research is exploratory and uses a qualitative approach with a combination of two research designs: phenomenological study and action research. It also uses the relationship mapping method and the salvage ethnography method. In this chapter these research designs and methods are briefly described as well as employed through the three main sections: data gathering and its methods, the data gathering process and data analysis, methods and conceptual tools. This chapter includes a final section dealing with the validity of the research.

3.1 Phenomenological Study

The term *phenomenology* refers to a person's perceptions, views and understanding of the meaning of an event; therefore, a phenomenological study is a study of the perceptions, views and understanding of people concerning a particular event. In other words, this study tries to answer the question, "What is it like to experience this event?" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The study will analyze the perceptions, views and understanding of elders and current students on how the residential schools have affected current elders' spiritual leadership as well as current students' academic performance.

Phenomenological studies are mainly conducted through lengthy unstructured interviews and their point is to "arrive at the heart of the matter." Through the interviewing process, the interviewer suspends any subjective opinion or personal experience s/he may have on the subject in order to gain a deep understanding of the different views and perceptions the participant may have (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005).

3.2 Action Research

Action research in itself is not a research methodology but rather consists of a group of research methodologies that practise action and research at the same time. Action research is done mainly through using a spiral process that alternates between action and critical reflection, and as this unfolds in later cycles, methods and data are modified as new light sheds new understanding (Dick, 1999). In my study, the research question was shaped as I took this action-research approach, even while doing the literature review. The research question changed from "How are the residential schools' effects affecting elders and in turn, how is this affecting students?" to "How are residential-school effects modifying elders' leadership and, in turn, how is this affecting First Nations students?" and finally to, "How residential schools' experience and effects have shaped, and keep influencing, elders' spiritual leadership over First Nations communities and how is this phenomenon affecting Aboriginal high school students' academic performance in Lillooet?"

Action research is a type of research that involves members of an organization or community as the main part of the research process. The members are involved in the various research steps such as analysis, planning, evaluations, etc. This approach concerns continuous improvement, or *kaizen*, as the Japanese say (Handy, 1993).

Action research does not have a structured method of data collection; rather, it is more of a research philosophy founded on members' participation and collaborative understanding. In this study, four elders from different First Nations bands, and four First Nations high school students, were engaged to participate. As the participants became more involved in the analysis of this study, their understanding increased and they were able to contribute more efficiently and with much excitement in the study.

Action research may use many of the traditional research data collection techniques such as questionnaires, interviews, observations and examinations of documents (F. Oster, personal communication, February 2006)

3.3 Relationship mapping

Radford and Nike (2000) created the tool of relationship mapping while mediating a protracted conflict in South Africa. This analytical tool is participant-centred, user-friendly and can be used by anyone from any culture or background. It was designed to highlight the viewpoints, perceptions, and feelings of those participants in a deeply-rooted complex conflict situation (Radford, 2000).

Relationship mapping uses blocks of various shapes, sizes and colours that represent two criteria: size and distance. Size expresses the magnitude of the dynamics or elements expressed in the map, while distance gives a sense of space between the parts of the map. The shapes, sizes and colours represent themes, perceptions, feelings, people or groups of people; this methodology allows its participants to map their own perceptions in a visible, three-dimensional format. The main role of the facilitator is to ask questions whose answers will disclose and confirm the user's perceptions (Radford, 2000).

Relationship mapping is founded on the theoretical foundation of cognitive mapping. Cognitive mapping is a representation of an individual's personal knowledge and experience (Wick, 1986). There are various cognitive mapping techniques that use different methods to elicit concepts and relationship variables. The purpose of all these techniques is to reveal perceptions and the dynamics that individuals hold to be important.

In this research, relationship mapping was extremely helpful. Since two of the intergenerational residential school effects among First Nations are: silence about the past, and communication difficulties (Ing, 2001), I found that through this method, the participants were able to bypass these intergenerational residential schools' effects and depict their views, feelings, and perceptions effectively. Through this method, tacit knowledge, which is invisible and intangible by nature (Buchannan et al., 1983), became visible and objective, enabling us to reveal themes that were hiding through the initial interview and questionnaire process.

3.4 Data gathering and methods

The data was gathered through three venues: consultation with elders, interviewing students, and using the relationship mapping method with elders and students.

1. Consultations with elders

The method I used for these consultations is called salvage ethnography. Salvage ethnography is a branch of ethnography concerned with the practice of salvaging a record of what was "left of a culture before it disappeared." The questions asked of elders were:

- a. Memories and stories of the Elders' role as leaders and teachers before residential schools, as well as impressions, feelings, thoughts and views on these memories and stories; and
- b. Their residential schools' experience and the knowledge, perceptions, feelings and thoughts of how residential schools' outcomes are affecting elders' spiritual leadership and how these outcomes are affecting current students.

Salvage ethnography is a strong method because it allows a researcher to:

- a. Present correct and objective details of a different way of life;
- b. Gather a firsthand experience of another language and culture, so as to have an insider's point of view; and
- c. Develop a holistic approach by understanding language, folklores, myths, religious and social life, family and kinship, economy and politics of the culture, as they related to a subject to study (Amity, 2000; Lowie, 1959).
- 2. In-person Depth Interviews to First Nation High School Students.

In this stage, I asked First Nations students some personal questions on:

- a. Thoughts and views on current elders' spiritual leadership over the communities as well as their teaching role;
- Questions related to students' knowledge of traditional education and traditional leadership before residential schools; and
- c. Residential schools and their effects on them as students.
- 3. I employed the relationship mapping method to elders and students in order to reveal the themes identified in the interviewing phase.

From the pool of data collected from the interviews and relationship mapping, I identified common themes, and later classified or coded the statements that related to each of the identified themes or nodes. Next, I grouped segments into categories that reflected the various aspects or "meanings" of the phenomenon as it was experienced (Ormond & Leedy, 2005).

3.4.1 *Data gathering process*

The data collection process took place in three phases: introductory telephone interviews, full participants' interview, and a mapping relationship session. Four elders

from different Indian bands and four students from the Lillooet Secondary School were the participants in this research.

Lillooet Secondary School, the sponsor of the research, is engaged in a First
Nations students' academic enhancement project that involves local educational
stakeholders including teachers and principals, St'at'at'imc elders, and resource people.
The principal of LSS handed me a list of all the St'at'at'imc elders involved in this
project, and out of the fourteen elder candidates, eight were women and six were men.
All the women that I spoke to over the phone agreed to have a second interview;
conversely, all the men I was able to contact declined my invitation over the phone.
Because of weather conditions and illness, two of the female participants who had
initially agreed to the second interview were not able to participate, leaving me with only
three candidates out of the initial fourteen. The fourth elder is a personally known to me
and is not involved in the above-mentioned project, but she kindly accepted my invitation
to participate in this study.

Students were chosen randomly with the purpose of employing half male and half female, but despite this intention I ended up with three female and one male student (all invitations and consent letters utilized are attached in Appendix B).

After the initial phone call, I met with the participants, either at their home or at a local church facility, and proceeded to carry out the extensive interview and relationship-mapping workshop. The interview and relationship-mapping workshop time for each participant lasted an average of one to two hours. Participants' names were changed to achieve confidentiality.

The extensive interview for elders was based on open questions that aimed at each of the five divisions that comprised the research questions: traditional education, traditional elders, residential schools' experience, residential schools' effects currently influencing elders' leadership, and residential-school effects lingering in First Nations students. Extensive interviews for students were aimed at their knowledge and feelings on the above divisions (questions for elders and students are attached in Appendix A).

The relationship-mapping workshop was used to validate key themes emerging from the interview and to identify new themes. After giving a short introduction to the relationship-mapping method, I proceeded to display on the table various blocks of different sizes, shapes and colours that through location, size and distance between the blocks were meant to represent participants' viewpoints, perceptions and feelings (Radford, 2000). As the relationship mapping facilitator, my main role was:

- a. To guide the participant through the five research main divisions;
- b. To make sure that all areas of the research divisions were dealt with; and
- c. To confirm with the participants that the relationship mapping was accurate to their expressions.

At the end of each workshop, pictures were taken from each of the relationship mappings represented; they are attached below.

3.4.2 Data analysis, methods and conceptual tools

From the research question, "How residential schools' experience and effects have shaped, and keep influencing, elders' spiritual leadership over First Nations communities, and in turn, how is this phenomenon affecting Aboriginal high school students' academic performance in Lillooet?" I created five nodes that represented each

of the five main project divisions. These nodes were used to gather the data collected from interviews and relationship mapping respectively. As data increased and new insights and themes arose, some other nodes were created (all nodes with their contents are listed below).

Two terms that play an important role in this analysis method (nodes and coding), as well as a piece of software employed in this study (Nvivo), need to be defined.

According to the QSR International, when speaking of data analysis:

Your project needs places not just for its data sources but for the ideas that you bring to it and themes you generate from the data. As you work with your sources, you will gather and explore existing and new categories for thinking about them. Nodes are the containers for these ideas within your project and contain the evidence within your sources supporting them. Creating and exploring nodes is a way to think 'up' from the data and arrive at higher-level explanations and accounts. (http://download.qsrinternational.com/Document/NVivo8/NVivo8-Help-Working-With-Your-Data.pdf p. 15)

In regard to coding definition, QSR International explains that:

Before qualitative research software, if you wanted to code your information, your tools of choice were likely a photocopier, highlighter pens and lots of notes scribbled into the margins of your research documents.

Now with the use of Nvivo software:

Coding involves identifying ideas, concepts, themes or categories within your data, and linking these thoughts and supporting evidence to relevant containers called nodes.

(http://www.qsrinternational.com/FileResourceHandler.ashx/RelatedDocuments/DocumentFile/7/NVivo7 Coding.pdf)

For this study, I employed qualitative research software named Nvivo7, and later its update Nvivo8, to manage and analyze the data collected from interviews and mapping relationships. OSR International describes Nvivo as a piece of software that:

Helps people to manage, shape and make sense of unstructured information. It doesn't do the thinking for you; it provides a sophisticated workspace that enables you to work through your information. With purposely-built tools for classifying, sorting and arranging information, qualitative research software gives you more time to analyze your materials and discover patterns, identify themes, glean insight and develop meaningful conclusions.

(http://www.qsrinternational.com/what-is-qualitative-research.aspx)

Initially, data was identified (coded) into one or more nodes that represented one of the five research divisions. Later, I separated certain phrases or sentences that contributed meaning to the study and out of these meaningful phrases or sentences, I was able to get some interpretation of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Once the data was coded, I created memos for each node where I wrote my impressions, ideas, and questions as they emerged from the analysis process and the use of the conceptual tools (memos for all nodes are listed to each node accordingly). After this, I analyzed different combinations of nodes and memos' content in search of grounds, themes and validity.

3.4.3 *Conceptual tools*

The conceptual tools listed in this section are theories, methods, and concepts I learned in the MACAM program and which I have used to analyze the data resulting

from interviews and relationship mapping. These conceptual tools are important in conflict analysis because they assist the researcher in giving an explanation of the relationship between elements or variables as well as in clarifying the social phenomenon under investigation; the outcomes of the theories and approaches are connected to the researchers' perspectives. A perspective is a sum of chosen assumptions and established premises, which together create the lens through which conflict is analyzed. Simply put, "a perspective is an umbrella of premises and assumptions under which a theory operates" (Folger, 2005, p. 42). The conceptual tools applied for this study are: the psychodynamic perspective theory; identity-based approach; face-saving theory; and systems thinking.

3.4.3.1 *The psychodynamic perspective theory*

The psychodynamic perspective theory was founded by Freud and his followers about a century ago. The theory portrays the human mind as a reservoir of psychic energy that consciously or unconsciously can be directed to different behaviours that might be considered positive such as working harder, or could be construed as negative such as vandalism or any type of attack. However it is directed, it has to be released. If this energy is not released, then its repression builds enough pressure that it is eventually released in a different way. When suppressing this energy and if no way to vent this pressure is found, frustration can fester and erupt more violently later in some form of aggression or anxiety. According to this theory, aggressive energy comes from feelings of guilt, lack of self-worth, or unfulfilled desires (Folger, 2001).

Some conflict scholars argue that patterns of cultural displacement such as in this paper have been at the core of some protracted ethnic and international conflicts. Volkan

(1994) and Gaylin (2003) suggested that the result of groups of people dealing with the difficulties of their own demeaning existence could lead to wars and acts of genocide (Volkan, 1994; Gaylin, 2003, as cited by Folger, 2001).

Psychodynamic perspective gives interesting insights into conflict dynamics, such as the explanation of the role of impulses, aggressions, and anxieties. Knowing that these roles could be transformed into other activities is relevant to conflict practitioners.

3.4.3.2 *Identity-based approach*

What is Identity? According to Northrup:

Identity is defined as an abiding sense of the self and of the relationship of the self to the world; it is a system of beliefs or a way of constructing the world that makes life predictable rather than random. (Northrup, 1989, p. 55)

The relationship between the world's behaviour and this system of beliefs must be harmonious and predictable, otherwise threat and fear could stop any functioning. Identity is a sense that psychologically, socially and spiritually extends to individuals or groups at many levels, including communal, organizational, cultural and even international. The dynamics of identity "establish, maintain, and protect a sense of self-meaning, predictability, and purpose" (Northrup, 1989, p. 63).

3.4.3.3 *Face-saving theory*

Face-saving theory is widely used to describe theoretical concepts in many fields. In face-saving theory, face communicates personality and the values of persons. A positive face is one that communicates the desire for approval of others, and a negative face communicates the desire to be autonomous and not controlled by others. The daily challenges and conflicts with other people can threaten personalities, identities and values

that could lead to losing-face. Face-saving behaviour represents attempts to save or restore face: the common way to save-face is by face-giving, which occurs when parties in conflict support other people's face claims and work with them. Some of the motions in face-giving are: apologies, excuses, justification, disclaimers, and counterclaims (Folger, 2001).

3.4.3.4 Systems thinking

What is a system? According to O'Connor, "a system is something that maintains its existence and functions as a whole through the interaction of its parts" (1996, p. xiii). Examples of systems are a human body, a family, a business, a set of beliefs, or the environment. Life is a system in a world of systems and to make sense of it we need systems thinking. "Systems thinking looks at the whole and the parts and the connection between the parts, studying the whole in order to understand the parts" (O'Connor, 1997, p. 2).

Systems thinking has become a form of conflict analysis in which process is more concerned with the dynamics generated by the conflict's parts rather than the details of them, and its analysis is focused on the interrelationship of these parts from a crossfunctional-perspective (G. Cran, personal communication, August 2005).

The epistemology of social interaction is one of the approaches based on systems thinking. This theory studies the interrelationship between four different components in a conflict system: self, others, culture and environment. These interrelationship dynamics seek for meanings rather than facts or truths, language and its narratives, metaphors that may provide clarity to concepts or identify cultural influences, worldviews that show belief systems, social interactions that show the conflict's health, cultural influences,

environment: all these components must be studied as a whole, otherwise the view will be restricted (G. Cran, personal communication, August 2005).

3.5 Project's validity

In most forms of qualitative research, the purpose and value of the study is accepted if the research is socially significant and it advances knowledge. To meet these principles, the standards of reasonableness, redundancy and generalizability should be considered. *Reasonableness* aims to pursue social significance without consuming excessive resources and informing present or future action. *Redundancy* makes a contribution to a body of knowledge in an unprecedented way. *Generalizability* is the measure of a study that values the transferability of insights gained from a study into other settings, so that when these general and well-supported insights are applied in other settings, similar results and patterns should be replicated (F. Oster, personal communication, January 2006).

This research examines the lingering residential-school effects on elders' spiritual leadership. These effects are destructive and pervasive; hence, analyzing the ways to reverse these affects has a strong social significance among First Nations communities and non-First Nations.

According to the *Aboriginal Healing Foundation Final Report*, the most effective healing activity among residential-school survivors and the affected generations is elders' counselling (Castellano, 2006). If elders' counselling is the most effective healing practice, then exploring ways to enhance this healing activity meets the standard of redundancy.

Results from the interviews and questionnaires align with those of the relationship mapping as well as with those of the literature review. The insights and patterns gained from this study are transferable to other similar settings and there is sufficient information that reveals the insights and patterns gained through this study.

Chapter Four: Findings and Data Analysis

In this chapter I will document and discuss my findings and the analysis of these findings, or data. Reports of these accounts are described through the next two main sections: findings and data analysis methods.

4.1 Findings

The different findings in this study are reported next; first those found in the course of the interviewing method and enriched by the relationship mapping, and second, those from the relationship mapping alone.

4.1.1 From the interviews

Through this interviewing phase, I encountered masses of data that did not belong to the research scope and others data whose boundaries were difficult to delineate. After much analysis, coding, writing, removing and editing, these are the final findings of this interviewing method, as follows:

1. Lack of ownership of leadership

As depicted in the "elders yesterday and today" section of the literature review chapter, elders are recognized by their wisdom and life experience, to pass on life experience through teachings, ceremonies and lifestyle (Cooke-Dalling, Rosborough, & Underwood, 2000). Elders are the cornerstone of First Nations culture and they are keepers and teachers of traditional teachings (minutes from the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, 1986). Though elders are traditionally seen by the community as those in which leadership is vested, I found that no elder I interviewed sees themselves in these roles and having the characteristics mentioned in the literature review. Three out of four interviewed elders do not see themselves as elders, but rather they feel that is for other

elders to carry this leadership responsibility. This finding may be the reason why, when I was recruiting elders over the phone for my interviews, all male elders declined my invitation. It may be that men elders' lack of ownership in leadership is greater than that reflected by the female elders. McPhee in *Follow the Leaders* comments that in the latter years, more women have been stepping into leadership roles and "Women today have a greater influence on ... what's happening in their own communities both as politicians, as leaders (and) as elected representatives" (http://www.tacc.ca/February-2007/Viewissue.html). The Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Center states that First Nations women are taking larger roles in leadership (http://www.sicc.sk.ca/saskindian/a98sum13.htm).

These statements do not indicate that male elders are stepping down from leadership but rather that women are more willing to participate in initiatives that would improve First Nations communities' well-being; hence, validating my finding.

For further validation, in Angela's relationship mapping, she used the smallest block to depict herself as "feeling small, not worthy because [of] what happened to me when I was young," but as an elder she portrays herself as strong. Yet when it comes to vested leadership, she detaches herself from this role and looks up to other elders for this leadership responsibility (see Angela's relationship mapping picture, and nodes below). Barb described herself as a mother, elder, and individual in a defragmented form (see Barb's picture below). Jan portrayed herself with one big block, stating that though sometimes she feels small, she mainly feels "tall, strong and standing for my people" because of the healing that has taken place, but as we read the nodes' content, she also detaches herself from the elders' leadership role (see Jan's picture and nodes below).

2. Deep contrasting views between traditional elders and current elders

All comments on views, thoughts, and feelings regarding traditional elders' leadership before the residential schools era, are loving, respectful and approached with deep nostalgia. Conversely, almost every comment on the current elders' ways of leading and teaching has a negative connotation. Perhaps it is the longing for that traditional educational scope that was based on learning values that taught respect for all living things—sharing, self-reliance, individual responsibility and proper conduct that stimulated the deep nostalgia among the interviewed elders (Barman, Haebert, & McCaskill, 1986).

Three of the four students have no knowledge of or impressions about traditional elders: only Al had some sense of them, describing them while in the relationship-mapping workshop with a rainbow because "it has a strong meaning" for him. Students illustrated current elders with small blocks and comments such as "They are there but I don't think about them," or "They are old and far away," and "They are close, but not too close."

3. Lack of knowledge of traditional education and traditional elders' ways

Knowledge of traditional education and traditional elders before the residential-schools era is almost non-existent for students and elders, who feel a noticeable apathy about learning more about this legacy. Out of the four students only Al had a slight idea of traditional education and traditional elders; the other students not only lacked knowledge, but also showed no desire to learn about the legacy. Two of the three elders did not know about the traditional education and elders' ways of leadership at all, and of the remaining elders, only one had firsthand experience of the traditional ways of learning and elders' leadership.

4. Authority

Current elders do not see themselves in a place of authority nor does the First Nations community. Students in particular have a sense of pity explained in comments such as "They do what they can" and "What else can they do" (other than teaching pineneedle basketry, cedar-root basketry, making tools with bones, etc.).

5. Spirituality

A strange dichotomy exists with elders "hating God" yet "there is no other commonality among elders other than believing in a creator." Are God and the Creator, before elders' perceptions, two different beings? I think this is the most outstanding finding. If I were to follow up on this research I would do it on this finding. The finding could reflect what Northrup calls the "construing process," which is a process of construction and reconstruction based on differentiation and integration—a process that may include feelings, values and behaviours (Northrup, 1989). Perhaps the current elders' feelings and values about a God experienced in the residential schools differ widely from the notion of a Creator construed by traditional elder's leadership before residential schools.

4.1.2 Findings from the Relationship Mapping

1. Residential schools' heritage is consciously and unconsciously very active

Despite the fact that few participants went to residential schools, most of them expressed their views or impressions of the residential schools' experience with one or more of the largest blocks available. Two of the three students' maps depicted residential schools as far away but real, and Al used five out of the nine blocks in his mapping to illustrate residential schools. Angela, who did not attend residential school, illustrated

them with a big block because of the direct influence she felt through her cousins, who did attend. Two of the participants who attended residential schools and did the relationship mapping expressed their impressions on residential schools as something active and huge. Jan used 20 out of 33 pieces to express residential schools, with anger and pain.

2. Some current students are culturally gaining strength and motivating other students to do similarly.

Four out of the six mappings depicted high school native students as culturally getting stronger. None of the interviewed students considered themselves as culturally strong, but they identified some who are and whom other students admire.

3. All traditional elders were represented by big blocks and close to the participants' block representation.

Though few elders or students know much about traditional elders' ways, all their mappings' representations had a strong sense of presence and demonstrated a fond relationship.

4.2 *Nodes with contents and respective memos*

This section includes seven nodes. Five contain the data content of the five research divisions, while the other nodes contain the data content of themes or topics that emerged from the data analysis. This section also includes nine memos, seven of which are directly attached to the seven nodes, and two independent ones. Each memo depicts the way I stored and retrieved ideas, insights, interpretations, growing understanding or recognition of puzzles that had to be understood within the nodes' data and the project as a whole.

Each node contains data extracted mainly from the interview questions and the relationship-mapping workshop. The interview questions that are related to the node are included, with their respective answers.

The main purpose of this section is to give accountability to my findings and conclusions, i.e., the process used to explore and question the data, how the different conceptual tools were employed, and how I arrived at my findings and conclusions (Richards, 2005).

4.2.1 *Node #1. Affected elders' views on native students*. This node holds the data related to impressions, thoughts and feelings of current elders, who directly or indirectly experienced residential schools, in relation to the current situation of First Nations students' academic performance.

Question: How do current elders see high school student academic performance in the light of the elders' residential schools' experience?

Jan. I believe (healing) has to come from the student's parents because of the residential schools still is stuck in there, stuck in their ways and they cannot teach their children to move on, to have a different outlook in life, so their children are still carrying the "same old junk;" the only way it is gonna (sic) really break is when parents and their grandparents go somewhere to heal themselves, and I know there are some quite stubborn and don't wanna (sic) change their ways but if they go and get rid of all that junk then they'll fly like an eagle without all that junk. If students want to get heal they should pay attention on deeper issues, not just alcohol and drugs.

Barb. Lots of stuff. I mean if this feeling of "not belonging" is still there among the students, if this unsafe feeling was not there, then they'll have a better chance to do better, but I think that a lot has to do with the family and what is going on with them and abuse, alcohol etc, so is not just the student but the whole family. Carmen. They need to put their mind into what they are doing, never mind what is out there.

Angela. I think parents should read more to their kids when they are young.

Angela. Most natives learn by watching and I think that's what they need. There is the adult learning education, which could be helpful.

Jan. To this day I think most of the elders don't respect the younger generations, but is very important to respect this younger generation. The elders want their way and not other way.

Carmen. Pre-residential school elders used to teach to be hard workers and do it for the sake of the community and family, but now kids want money for everything they do.

Jan. Today most kids want to get paid for anything they are asked to do, whereas in the old times we always did whatever was asked.

Question: What do you think should be done to mend these residential schools' effects concerning elders' spiritual leadership?

Jan. The only way an elder can mend stuff like that is by working on them, because you cannot love anybody unless you love yourself.

Barb. Perhaps if a group of people would sit with elders and talk about how to bring that leadership back into families or even the communities, ceremonies,

rituals, and how to recognize strength in people, and these people will have to be willing and with a big purpose.

Angela. Listen to them [elders].

4.2.2 Memo #1: Affected elder's views on students

I see two main themes, one from Jan and Barb, who said that healing should come from elders and from families as a whole. A second theme arises in that students should take responsibility by "putting their minds into what they are doing" or by focusing on education. Both approaches include frustration and detachment from responsibility, i.e., though elders are traditionally vested with the role of leadership, they disconnect themselves from this responsibility.

In using the theories of psychodynamic perspective and face-saving, the frustration of these approaches has been fuelled by lack of self-worth and feelings of guilt and shame—feelings formed while in the residential school. Jan and Barb suggest that to amend these residential schools' outcomes is for parents and elders to give-face by acknowledging the needs of students and seek healing.

Carmen and Angela have a "here and now approach" that perhaps shows the absence of the residential-school experience for Angela and the strict discipline acquired while under her Grandma's guidance for Carmen. This "here and now" approach under the epistemology of social interaction theory does not take into consideration historical and cultural influences such as the residential schools' effects on students or First Nations' cultural displacement; hence restricting the holistic view and understanding of the currents students' academic performance.

Carmen's answers depict the discipline acquired while under her Grandma's stern upbringing, and how she values this discipline as a foundation to step out of this situation, but on the other hand youth nowadays are not willing to pay any price—instead they "want money for everything they do." So, I do not think this approach of "never mind what is out there, just put your mind into what you are doing" would be welcome among youth. In the light of the face-saving theory I could argue that these students' attitudes are face-saving actions from the residential school heritage.

4.2.3 *Node #2: Effects of affected elders on high school students.*

This node deals with data on how and what sort of residential schools' effects are generationally passing down to students.

Jan. I believe that those students are having problems learning at school mainly because we had a hard time with our schooling, so there is no good communication on how to do the homework and stuff like that. Kids just get pushed by if they don't know. I had a hard time with my children to motivate them and helping read things I didn't understand because I got called "dumb and stupid" and all that when I was in the residential schools, but I 'm so glad that my children are where they are today.

Barb. For some students school means nothing to them and there are times and places, there are more students moving on to university than in my generation. I think there has to be more education, counselling and listening before any good changes.

Jan. To this day I think most of the elders don't respect the younger generations, but it is very important to respect this younger generation--the elders want their way and not any other way.

Jan. The elders are carrying around too much, but if they let it go then they could do stuff.

Barb. Residential schools took the essence out of the elders, leaving blackness, sexual abuse, a fear of God which hadn't been there, a fear of being judged or not being good, so what do you teach after that where all there is, is pain.

Angela. A lot of elders don't know how to raise kids; seems like there is no other way than drinking.

Question to students: How do you evaluate the difference between the traditional education before residential schools and today's education?

Al. It is hard to do things now, to go into classes, because the teachers don't know much about our culture. In the old days they learned all day, whereas now we only learn part time from 7 to 3, then we learn nothing. It is also difficult to learn nowadays, because we are learning computers and our culture at the same time. I long to learn to hunt, skin a deer and give it away; this is a tradition to give away your first catch. Nowadays, I don't like the learning style at all, I long to go back to our original ways.

Shannon. It's okay the way we learn nowadays.

Anne. There is more for us nowadays, where in the old days there was only fire. I think I like better the days of today.

4.2.4 *Memo* #2: *Effects of affected elders on high school students.*

There is a general agreement among elders about the deficient academic achievement among First Nations students, and how this deficiency is connected to residential schools' outcomes. Conversely, there is an apparent student detachment from the residential schools' outcomes and its effects on them, and they seem to be content with current academic settings, despite the fact that First Nations students have the lowest academic achievements and the highest student dropout levels among Canadian ethnic groups.

Jan's comment on having been called "dumb and stupid" gives us a good sample of a residential schools' effect affecting current students. By Jan having been called dumb and stupid, I believe this affected not only her learning process but also her children's learning process as well. How is this possible? Northrup, in the *Dynamics of Identity*, suggested that intractable conflicts begin with an identity threat. In a relationship when an event occurs that is perceived as invalidating the core sense of identity, the party perceiving invalidation experiences threat. Identity gives to a person, or a group of persons, a sense of safety physically, socially and spiritually. Hence, when a person or persons experiences invalidation of the core sense of identity, then safety is shattered and dread is experienced. This leads to a new identity assessment and, based on the interpretation of the new reality, the person or party adjusts his inner and outer worlds (Northrup, 1989).

Kirkness argued that by removing the children from their family, community, culture, and spirituality, the students in their adulthood experienced a cultural interruption that resulted in poor self-esteem, alienation, a lack of identity, unworthiness, and abuse of all sorts (Kirkness, 1992). From these statements it would be fair to deduce that by

removing the children from their family and placing them in an educational setting where their core sense of identity would be invalidated, these threatened children would construe a new identity that adjusted their inner and outer worlds, and would believe that they were unworthy, useless, dumb and stupid. This new identity, as Barb put it, took the essence out of the elders and left blackness, abuse, fear and pain. What do you teach out of this new identity?

Three of the four students seem to be satisfied with today's way of learning, but I wonder if they would feel the same if they had experienced the traditional ways.

4.2.5 Node #3: Knowledge of elders before residential schools

Question: How much do current elders and students know about elders' leadership
before residential schools?

Jan. I just know they went to Catholic Church.

Barb. Things I heard like before residential schools there was respect for what elders had to say; they had a place and they knew what they had to do and how to help their people. I think they were also not just for their family but to help, guide and support the community.

Carmen. Elders were hard workers and tough: from dawn to dusk was work and that's what my granny taught me.

Angela. Though I lived next door to my grandparents, I never asked about their lives before residential schools—we didn't talk about this. I only did a couple of sweats through my life and that was it.

Question: What was important for the elders' spiritual role?

Jan. Everyone got along and everyone shared with each household's needs.

Barb. Remember ceremonies, to keep the ceremonies going from acknowledging birth, puberty etc. because the survival of the community depends on how well you teach your child.

Angela. I don't know.

Question: How were elders thought and seen back then?

Jan. They just had love into giving for each and every one of us in the reserve.

When they went to another house they had something to give, but today is a different story.

Angela. I don't know.

Question: How do you feel about these memories?

Jan. I just wish it would still be that way.

Barb. I wish we had more recorded memories.

4.2.6 Memo #3: Knowledge of elders before residential schools

I see there is a strong detachment from the knowledge about elders and their role as leaders before the residential-school era. Carmen seems to be the only one who has firsthand experience from her granny who taught her the old ways. Angela has no knowledge of traditional ways and Jan's knowledge is minimal.

One possible lead answer to the research question could be deduced from Angela's answer: "Though I lived next door to my grandparents, I never asked about their lives before residential schools—we didn't talk about this." Angela did not attend residential schools and though she had the source of knowledge through her grandparents next door, she had no desire to find out about this legacy. This statement echoes what

most students feel about elders and traditional knowledge: they lack knowledge or the desire to learn about it.

Thoughts and feelings on elders before residential schools in general are all positive and with a great loving connotation, but thoughts and feelings on current elders' leadership are almost all negative and unpleasant.

4.2.7 Node #4: Knowledge of traditional education before residential schools

Question: What do elders and students know about traditional education before
residential schools?

Jan. I guess they taught how to go hunt, catch fish and put away all our food.

Barb. It was important to show them when they were young and with them. Show them about the role each one has in the community by helping each other, since birth parents knew what the baby was to become (warrior, hunter, healer etc.), so from that time on they were nurtured into that call.

Angela. I don't know.

Barb. Back then traditional education was part of everyday activities: it was part of everybody's lifestyle. Back then nobody was looked down until the white man came and brought shame and comparison, and perhaps then evaluation could take place. But before that there was no evaluation since traditional education was the only way known.

Angela. I don't know.

Jan. Today most kids want to get paid for anything they are asked to do, whereas in the old times we always did whatever was asked. Something good about today's education is that there is more for them to do, more options.

Barb. Before, everything was a necessity, everybody moved naturally and nobody put you in a place you couldn't handle; today's education is about grading you and pushing you where you can't go, there is no guidance. The school system is to move the kid through high school with not much direction in fulfilling life or expectations, or purposes.

Question to students: What do you know about traditional education before residential schools?

Al. I don't really know much about it and my grandma is losing her memory. I only know a little bit about how they hunt, communicate. I don't like to ask other elders because I feel I offend them, because when I do I can see their expressions of sadness or anger when they talk about it.

Shannon. Nothing really.

Anna. I heard they were taught by their grandparents or parents.

Fay. Not much, I don't really know much about St'at'at'imc language or culture.

Question to students: How do you evaluate the difference between the traditional

education before residential schools and today's education?

Al. It is hard to do things now, to go into classes because the teachers don't know much about our culture. In the old days they learned all day whereas now we only learn part time from 7 to 3 then we learn nothing. It is also difficult to learn nowadays because we are learning computers and our culture at the same time. I long to learn to hunt, skin a deer and give it away; this is a tradition to give away your first catch. Nowadays, I don't like the learning style at all, I long to go back to our original ways

Shannon. It is okay the way we learn nowadays.

Anne. There are more for us nowadays, where in the old days there was only fire, I think I like better the days of today.

4.2.8 Memo #4: Knowledge of traditional education before residential schools

Like knowledge from elders before residential schools, the point of this topic is practically absent regarding elders today, with the exception of Barb who seems to have a good grasp of this area; the other three elders have almost no knowledge, or no knowledge at all like Angela, and this lack of traditional knowledge raises a question about how this affects their leadership. If they would like to have those leadership times and do not know, and seems like they do not want to spend time and effort in learning those ways, how is this leadership resiliency ever going to happen? This could refer to what Northrup calls the "rigidification" process in an intractable conflict, where the threatened individuals create new identities and put distance between them and the threat. Perhaps this distance has been perceived through generations in the form of pain, shame and guilt, hence nullifying the desire to learn more about traditional ways.

Another theme here is the memories of the old ways when the elders played their leadership role, everybody moved naturally, and traditional education was part of everyday activities, versus today's education, which is about grading and pushing students where they cannot go. Though for current elders it is clear that the old ways were much better, for current students it seems that today's ways of learning are better than the old ways. This too could be the effect of elders' silence about the past derived from the residential school experience, affecting current students' perceptions on traditional ways.

4.2.9 *Node #5: Residential schools' effects on elders.*

Question: What are the main outcomes from the residential school experience of which elders are aware?

Jan. Fear from the experience, the wrong discipline we got, the language taken away from us, taken away from our family.

Barb. I feel I wish it never happened because of what it did to me, it got me into different patterns that wouldn't happened if I hadn't gone into residential schools. Like how I feel toward God, authority, myself, how I communicate, how I am with my kids and grandkids, what I know about my own culture; all this is combined with how I feel about myself, no sense of belonging and not knowing where I belong, no sense of safety, no encouragement, no nurturing myself, pretty well you are on your own. The one good thing about this experience is all the good friends I made in the residential schools, I was there for 5 years and it seems like every year I had a new good friend.

Angela. I never went to residential schools but my parents did and because of that I feel that they didn't know how to be parents. They drunk lots and left us, the older ones, to look after the younger ones. When I was about 12 years my parents told me that I had to go dancing (rock band dancing) and though I was scared I went. We were 15 kids but 8 of them passed away from polio and other diseases. I left my first husband who went to residential schools because it was hard to deal with his drinking; my second husband didn't go to residential schools and we are still together.

Jan. To this day I think most of the elders do not respect the younger generations, but it is very important to respect this younger generation: the elders want their way and not another way.

Jan. Elders are carrying around too much but if they let it go then they could do stuff.

Barb. Residential schools took the essence out of the elders, leaving blackness, sexual abuse, fear of God which wasn't there, fear of being judged or not being good, so what do you teach after that where there is all pain.

Angela. A lot of elders do not know how to raise kids, seems like there is no other way than drinking.

4.2.10 Memo #5: Residential schools' outcomes

I believe that the effects mentioned in this node are strong enough to destroy any culture. Barb's comment" "Residential schools took the essence out of the elders leaving blackness, sexual abuse, fear of God which wasn't there, fear of being judged or not being good, so what do you teach after that where there is all pain" could summarize the outcome of the residential schools' experience on elders. Fear, however, seems to be the most notorious and destructive outcome.

4.2.11 *Node #6: Residential schools' effects affecting elders*

Question: How are these outcomes affecting current elders' spiritual leadership?

Jan. To this day I think most of the elders do not respect the younger generations, but it is very important to respect this younger generation; the elders want their way and not another way.

Question: What do you think and how do you feel about these unresolved effects influencing elders' leadership?

Jan. Makes me feel sad because the elders are the leaders and in order for us to carry on, the elders need to change, but they do not want to listen to anyone, they hate God and that's where I think they cannot carry on until they go and work on themselves.

Barb. I think most elders do not know what to do and it seems there is no place for elders anymore, not like it used to be, so there is no leadership or there is a negative one. Some of the elders are only called old people who have nothing to offer other than negative leadership. Also, people are not asking for wisdom or guidance anymore; they do not know what to do with the elders. When I look at the elders I see that there is nothing there, big loss.

Question: What do you think and how do you measure today's elders' spiritual leadership with those before residential schools?

Jan. The elders today--they have no spiritual leadership, no love for each other, there is only arguments and fights all the time, they do not want to listen to the other generations; they only want them to be respected. But how can the younger generation respect them if the elders do not respect the younger generation in the first place.

Barb. I do not think there is a comparison, everything is so broken as to what people believe, there is no commonality other than believing in a Creator, and since all is broken, what do you carry on, what do you pass down, seems like

everybody has to find their own way, like no one knows their place, except in their own family.

Carmen. Pre-residential school elders used to teach to be hard workers and do it for the sake of the community or family, but now kids want money for everything they do.

Question to students: What do you know about residential schools and their effects upon elders?

Al. I understand they were really strict, and disciplined you with a whip or other punishment when you did anything cultural. I do not know anything good from that place. I also do not like to think about this because it hurts me.

Shannon. I know that they were too strict, but I think that is a good thing.

Anna. I know that kids were taken away from school and they were disciplined for speaking their language with a rule or whip, that they were forced to speak

English. I also know that some elders still fear about speaking their own language.

Fay. I know the children were taken away from their families and when they tried to speak their languages were punished with a strap. I do not have any knowledge about something good happening there.

Anna. I see them with respect; I think they are teaching how to make things, and not to be mean, but what else can they do besides that. Other than my grandma, there is nobody else whom I talk to about these things.

4.2.12 Memo #6: Residential schools' effects affecting elders

There are some interesting themes in this node. First, the elders' loss of leadership is noticeable. Barb's comment: "I think most elders do not know what to do and it seems

there is no place for elders anymore, not like used to be, so there is no leadership or there is negative one. Some of the elders are only called 'old people' who have nothing to offer other than negative leadership," confirms student Anna's' comment on elders "not to be mean, but what else can they do." In other words, current elders do not see themselves in leadership and nor does the community.

Second, there is no comparison between traditional leadership and current leadership. Elders' traditional leadership recollections are filled with loving and nostalgic memories whereas current leadership is the opposite.

Third, a dichotomy occurs between Jan's comments, "They (elders) hate God," and Barb's remark, "There is no commonality other than believing in a Creator."

How can this be unless the Creator and God represent two different beings before elders' perceptions? Perhaps through the constructing of the new identity, as analyzed above, current elders' feelings and values unconsciously evolved from pain (the main residential schools' outcome explored in node #5) to hate and consequently, hating the God introduced by Western culture but cherishing the fond memories of the Creator experienced in traditional times before residential school.

4.2.13 *Node #7: Students' views and feelings on elders*. How do students perceive, think, view, feel, and what do they know regarding elders' leadership, traditional education, and traditional elders' leadership?

Question to students: What do you think and how do you feel about this? (Residential schools and their effects on elders)

Al. It hurts and is kind of depressive not being able to know my culture because I do not have elders to talk to. I only have one elder and she is in the hospital.

Shannon. It doesn't matter that I know nothing, though I would like to learn something.

Anna. I wonder how they learned sciences, math besides one fish two fish etc. how they learned English.

Fay. I feel clueless; I feel kind of bad not knowing much and knowing that elders are getting older and dying.

Question to students: What do you think and feel about this phenomenon?

Anna. I wonder why they forced natives to learn about the white ways instead of allowing them to keep doing their own ways, and I dislike this.

Fay. I feel sorry they had to go through all of this, no anger though -- I just feel sorry.

Question to students: What do you think and feel about today's elders' spiritual leadership?

Al. Is depressive but I think they are still strong.

Shannon. I think they are okay, but the younger generations are not interested in learning about them. I am somewhat interested. I talk to my grandma.

Anna. I see them with respect; I think they are teaching how to make things, and not to be mean but what else can they do besides that. Other than my grandma there is nobody else whom I talk to about these things.

Fay. I believe that elders should teach us tradition, language, drums and traditional stuff; though this is more like my mom's opinion ... but I also feel the same.

Question to students: What do you think elders should be doing more or less in order to meet your academic performance?

Al. Some elders are silent and do not talk about our ways, so is hard for us to learn our ways, they would rather be drinking and stuff.

Shannon. I think they are already doing what they can.

Anna. They should do more family gatherings and tell stories and make stuff with us.

Fay. I think they should do more so that we can learn more, the more we learn is better, the less we know we lose our language. When I want to talk about culture the only person I talk to is my grandma, there is no other person.

Question to students: Do you think elders should be more involved in your learning process? In what ways?

Al. It is great to see elders sharing their knowledge at school, but I think that they need to learn as well ... but is their choice what they want to be in life.

Shannon. They already are.

Anna. They already are.

Fay. I really enjoy what I am learning through their passing of knowledge, it feels great, but they should probably do more.

4.2.14 *Memo #7: Students' views and feelings about elders*

While interviewing the students, I noticed that there was considerable indifference toward the elders' leadership issue. As Barb said, it seems like there is no place for elders any more, with the students or the community. Only Al expressed some respect for elders.

I also noticed in these students that it was hard to understand residential schools' effects on elders. They had an idea about residential schools but not the effects and how these were affecting elders' leadership, much less how these effects are affecting them in their academic performance and social activities.

The most relevant theme is how they feel indifferent toward the residential schools' effects affecting them. Perhaps this is an unaware giving-face way in order to protect each self from this heritage passing down through the generations.

Another relevant point from this node is the loss of students' sense of traditional core values and how most of the students value their culture in light of the current situation where abuse, blackness, shame and fear domain, hence creating a sense of cultural denigration.

These students do not seem to want to approach elders to request traditional information other than their close relatives, mainly grandmas and females, being more accessible than males. Also, I can see two face-saving attitudes in this theme: one from the elders' silence about the past, and the other from the students' lack of desire in seeking for traditional knowledge as a result of their inherited identity.

There is furthermore a general feeling of disbelief about the elders' capacity to help students with their learning process. There is some respect but it is minimal.

4.2.15 *Memo #8: Findings on coding query*

Since I have the data compiled on Nvivo computer software, there are a number of things Nvivo can do with this data. One of these features is to run a text query on a specific word or phrase, and though I did not use most of the Nvivo software features, I tried this text query on the word "elder" and found out that:

1. Almost every comment on current elders had a negative connotation; when I found positive connotations I also found that these comments were not said with much enthusiasm.

- 2. Current elders other than close family are distant from most students.
- 3. Students do not know about elders before the residential-school era but there is a general good feeling toward them. Neither do current elders know much about traditional elders and their ways before residential schools.
- 4. The elders I interviewed do not see themselves as elders. It seems as though the responsibility belongs to someone else. Angela said that she sees herself small as an elder because what of happened to her when she was young. Jan also said that elders "are small and do not want to be seen" and that is how Angela sees herself as an elder.
- 5. Another way residential schools still affect students is stated by two of the interviewed elders, Jan and Carmen, that nowadays youth want to be paid for the work they do, whereas in the old times it was done in the name of caring for each other.

4.2.16 Memo #9: Potential research answers

This memo was created with the intention of giving an account of how potential research answers came to be. The content of this memo does not depict the final research answers; rather, it shows the evolution of thoughts, senses and impressions of these answers.

a. When Jan comments, "I believe that those students that are having problems learning at school mainly because we had a hard time with our schooling, so there is no good communication on how to do the homework and stuff like that, kids just get pushed by if they do not know. I had a hard time with my children to motivate them and help

them read things I didn't understand because I got called 'dumb and stupid' and all that when I was in the residential schools, but I 'm so glad that my children are where they are today." I think that the way former residential school students were treated and specially named, has directly affected the academic development of current students. This root problem could also have affected current elders by having their identity stripped away from them and replaced with names such as "dumb and stupid."

Building on this potential answer, I can see through the lens of Northrup's theory that this new identity was constructed in the face of the threat children experienced after being removed from home and placed in a new learning setting that denigrated their culture and beliefs. This new identity stripped the essence of the children and replaced it with fear, shame, blackness and pain.

b. In Jan's remark, "Elders are the leaders and in order for us to carry on, the elders need to change, but they do not want to listen to anyone, they hate God and that's where I think they cannot carry on until they go and work on themselves." As mentioned above, this dichotomy finding on "they (elders) hate God" and "there is no other commonality (among elders) other than believing in the Creator" is a major one.

Researching, studying, and analyzing the elements and dynamics that create this dichotomy in order to discover what is causing the dichotomy could be another potential research answer.

Using Northrup's theory, it is conceivable that through the new identity elders constructed out of fear, a negative image and feelings of God introduced by the residential-school instructors, they retained their original caring and loving image and feelings about the traditional Creator's icon.

c. Another good answer to the research question could be Angela's answer: "Though I lived next door to my grandparents, I never asked about their lives before residential schools—we didn't talk about this." This statement is a reflection on what most students feel about elders and cultural heritage: they are not really interested in traditions, culture, or traditional education. Though Angela did not go to residential schools and she is an elder, there is no apparent desire to learn about the First Nations heritage, even when she had the knowledge source next door. I wonder if this lack of desire to learn more about cultural heritage is tied up with elders' lack of responsibility regarding leadership: "Why learn more about something I do not like or respect?" Is this a way to protect self?

d. Barb's comment: "I think most elders do not know what to do and it seems there is no place for elders anymore, not like there used to be, so there is no leadership, or there is negative one. Some of the elders are only called 'old people' who have nothing to offer other than negative leadership. Also, people are not asking for wisdom or guidance any more as they do not know what to do with the elders. When I look at the elders I see that there is nothing there, which is a big loss," resembles Anna's comment on elders "not to be mean, but what else can they do." It seems that the way most elders feel and see themselves is the same way students perceive them. There seems to be a big chasm between elders' leadership and the community's perception of this leadership, which is rooted in the identity construed after the residential schools' experience, as analyzed before. If attempts were made to change this negative identity, perhaps transformation might occur in this unconstructive identity, and healthy and trustworthy relationships would be built between elders and community.

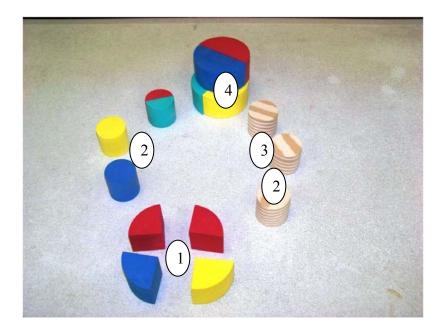
e. Barb's remark: "Residential schools took the essence out of the elders leaving blackness, sexual abuse, fear of God which wasn't there, fear of being judged or not being good, so what do you teach after that where there is all pain" contains the answer to this project's question.

4.2.17 *Memo #10: Relationship mapping comments*

This memo holds data analysis thoughts and impressions acquired while working on the participants' mapping-relationship workshops. Each of the six relationship mapping pictures (below) have two explanations: through numbers, the first one depicts the relevance of each of the pictures' pieces; the second one, my thoughts and impressions on each of these relationship mappings.

There are two main general values on all the relationship mappings—size and distance. The size of the block depicts the magnitude of the views, feelings or impressions represented by the block. The distance between the blocks represents the participant's sense of closeness to or detachment from the represented components. Colour, with a few exceptions, did not have a significant value; however, it is explained whenever it is relevant.

Barb's mapping:



- 1. Barb sees herself disconnected physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. This disconnection applies also to students and most native elders and people. She sees the whole picture as a circle, and within all the elements and dynamics like life, elders, herself, students, past, and pain. Some people are more disconnected than others, and this unity or disconnection is based on how much fear, anger, or pain they feel, as well as their knowledge of and identity in Indian culture.
- 2. Elders are represented in the past, as well as in the future, where there would again be strength, health and unity. The unhealthy disconnect in which First Nations live is the most outstanding sense Barb reveals in her mapping.
- 3. Generations of native people come from residential schools into disconnection.

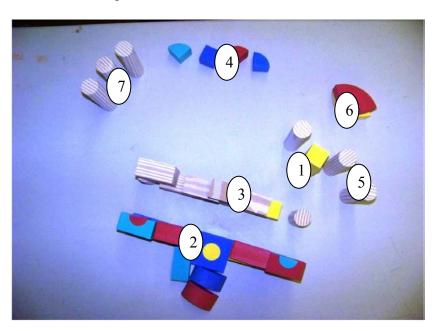
 There is no colour because of the outcome of the residential schools.
- 4. These are the generations that lead towards healing and unity, in colour unity, purpose and life.

During the time with Barb I noticed the relationship mapping gave a deeper perspective on the way she was portraying the topic; having the physical pieces in

different shapes and colours expanded the issues in a way that brought new revelations to her. As we kept on talking, the mapping evolved but without affecting the initial view and sense. Barb's mapping was one of the few where colours had much relevance.

Though Barb is a knowledgeable person, she does not feel she has the authority to counsel people, which resembles the aspect of weakness of elders' leadership, and this is perahps one of the big effects of residential schools on elders, i.e., residential schools took away leadership from elders.

Jan's map:

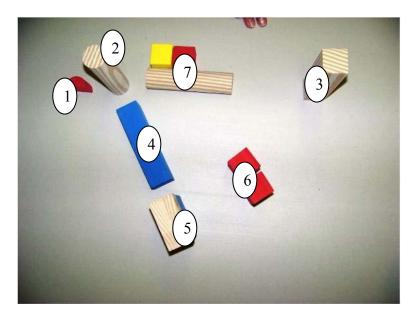


- 1. Jan feels nice and tall now, standing for her people.
- 2. Residential schools are big and active.
- 3. Pain and anger are massive in the map; though Jan has been through major healing she expresses what still is huge within her and in the community.
 - 4. Current elders: they are small, far away and do not want to be seen.
 - 5. Native students stand along with Jan.

- 6. Native students who do not want to be seen.
- 7. Elders before residential schools stand strong, happy, caring and loving.

The most outstanding observation in this workshop was the difficulty for Jan to express feelings such as pain and anger on the map. Furthermore, her impression of native students echoed what other students expressed: the increasing strength in some and the weakness and reluctance to learn of others. Perhaps this too is a reflection of feelings and views of the elders themselves, since they too feel standing, and others feel small or hiding.

Angela's map:



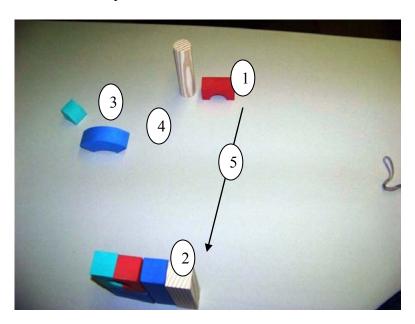
- 1. Angela feels small, unworthy, because of what happened to her when she was young.
 - 2. Angela feels strong as an elder.
- 3. Angela did not attend residential schools, yet it stands big and strong because the effects of it on her cousins.
 - 4. Angela's strong desire to connect with other elders.

5. Current elders who are getting stronger and who are talking. Angela doesn't feel too close to them; she just listens to them and this is because of her feeling small.

- 6. Current native students who are affected by the closeness with the residential schools' effects but yet there is hope by listening to the elders.
- 7. Angela's relatives are bonded with shame because of what happened to them at residential schools, and what they did to her.

In Angela's mapping, and perhaps because she did not go to residential school, alcohol and drugs did not affect her and her impression of residential schools was not bad; she did not seem to be hurt by what had happened there.

Al's map:

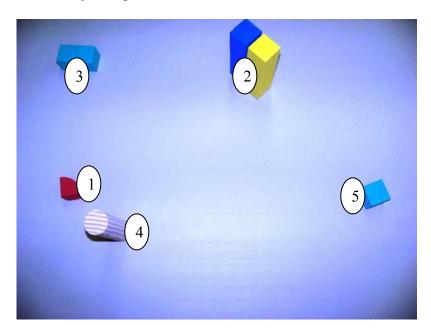


- 1. Al feels strong and depressed, but mainly strong.
- 2. Residential schools and pain are somewhat big and distant.
- 3. Current elders are there but not too big: "I do not really think about them."
- 4. Elders before residential schools are strong and he chose a rainbow shape-like because it has a strong spiritual meaning that inspires hope for him.

5. Though the residential schools' representation is distant, Al used five out of the nine blocks to depict the deep impression he has about the residential schools' legacy.

Al's mapping was expressed mainly in his feelings and spirituality rather than as thoughts on the different aspects of the workshop, which was not apparent in the interview. Also, as with all the other students, Al did not know much about residential-school experiences or their effects, yet, the representation of residential schools was by far the largest.

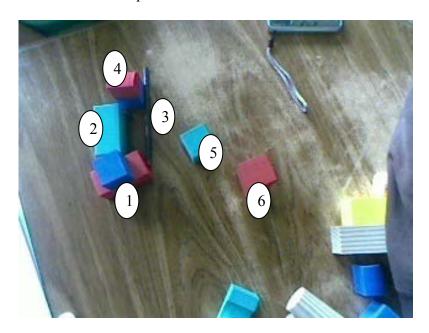
Fay's map:



- 1. This is Faith feeling small.
- 2. Current elders who are old and far away.
- 3. Residential schools are there, but not really a big deal.
- 4. Other students seem to be strong.
- 5. Elders before residential schools seem almost non-existent: "Do not know much about them."

Fay's main observation is her detachment from First Nations' culture: elders, residential schools, elders before residential schools, etc. Also, the distance between the different elements of the picture is greater than most of the other pictures.

Anne's map:



- 1. Anne feels big and small. Her strength comes from her relationship with culturally strong friends.
- 2. Relationship ties with friends are solid because of her friends being culturally strong.
 - 3. Some relationships with friends are weak.
 - 4. Friends who stand both strong and weak
 - 5. Current elders who "are there but not really; they are close but not too close."
 - 6. Residential schools are real but "not really affecting me."

Anne's mapping depicted a couple of points: first, her strength and reliance on her friends who are culturally strong, and secondly, like Al, the lack of awareness of residential schools' effects.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

Through this study I have presented the research topic's scope and relevance, given a personal account, and described the limitations of this study (Chapter One). In the Literature Review (Chapter Two), I have introduced relevant literature related to the five divisions of this study. In the Methodology section, Chapter Three, I explained the research approaches employed, as well as the data gathering and analysis methods used in this study. The Findings and Data Analysis, Chapter Four, depicted the data analysis process and the use of the different research tools. Finally, in Chapter Five, I attempt to summarize this study's findings and analysis in the first part, Conclusions, and propose some suggestions for future action in the second part, Recommendations.

5.1 Conclusions

According to the Ministry of Education in British Columbia, there has been a continuous increase in the percentage of Aboriginal students meeting and exceeding expectations (http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/perf2006.pdf). However the average completion rate for Aboriginals from grade 8 to 12 is 47% versus 82% for non-Aboriginal students (http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/perf2004_hilites.htm). Why is this academic resiliency taking so long despite the numerous programs, incentives, and initiatives to enhance First Nations academic performance? No doubt this is a difficult problem and will take effort, dedication, and resources to alleviate the problem; but I believe that there are approaches that could speed up the resiliency process. One of these approaches could lie in the theory of this study, that residential schools' effects are at the core of First Nations students wellbeing and their academic performance, and that if or

when these programs, incentives, and initiatives counteract these effects, through the intervention of restored elders' leadership, resiliency will return.

In the pre-contact era, First Nations people were affected by disease, removal from their homeland, colonialism, assimilation tactics, and residential schools, I chose the residential schools effects on elders' leadership as the heart of this study—mainly because of simplicity and relevance. I chose *simplicity* because it would be difficult to analyze all the events in a paper of this size, and *relevance* because of the depth and influence of its wounds on individuals and communities. I recognize that as a researcher I cannot separate the other effects on elders' leadership.

Another element of this theory is its spiritually embedded connotation. At the root of this theory lies the belief that the spiritual realm is greater than the physical, psychic and social one; hence, if the spiritual condition of people is unhealthy, or if the spirituality of people is threatened and belittled, as is described in this study, the physical, psychological or social condition is unwholesome as well. How does this spiritual element affect current elders' leadership, or in the research's perspective words, "How are the residential schools' effects affecting elders' spiritual leadership and in turn how is this affecting first nations students' academic performance?"

To answer this question, we need to analyze the events that occurred to elders as children when they were suddenly removed from their family, community, culture and spirituality; and how once placed in a new culture, speaking a new language and enduring harsh expectations without support, these elders as children were made to feel ashamed of their customs and spirituality. Teachers and residential school authorities sought ways to inflict the superiority of their ways over the children by forbidding them to speak their

native tongue, and any attempt to breach these new rules and expectations led to punishments ranging from beatings to shaving their head, being confined in closets, or kneeling with arms stretched out (Claes & Clifton, 1998).

According to Kirkness, by removing the children from their family, community, culture, and spirituality, the students in their adulthood experienced a cultural interruption that resulted in poor self-esteem, alienation, lack of identity, and abuse of all sorts (Kirkness, 1992). Child therapists who have concentrated their attention on trauma induced by abuse, such as Wolf and colleagues, argue that some of the consequences from child abuse are:

Depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and physical problems, self-destructiveness or suicidal behaviour, poor impulse control, difficulties regulating their emotions, difficulties understanding others' perspectives, lack of empathy, and more willing to use physical punishment. Adult survivors of childhood abuse display similar symptoms of depression and anxiety... Adult survivors of sexual abuse often are plagued by feelings of guilt, self-blame, helplessness, anger and may perceive life as dangerous or hopeless. (Wolf, 2002, p. 9)

First Nations students have inherited these outcomes and they too have a sense of inferiority and unworthiness (Battiste, 2002). Reyhner suggested that this inherited legacy has led to student absenteeism, anger, hopelessness, aggressive behaviours, low self-esteem, and self-destruction (Reyhner, 2001).

It is important for this analysis to consider the conditions of the First Nations before residential schools, and how traditional education and leadership were executed.

According to Barman et al., traditional educational was based on learning values that

would teach respect for all living things, sharing, self-reliance, individual responsibility and proper conduct. Connected to all teachings were the spiritual realm and the lifecycle from birth to death, celebrated through ceremonies that connected the individual to the spiritual and the sacred (Barman, Haebert, & McCaskill, 1986).

In traditional leadership, elders were members of the First Nations communities who were recognized by their wisdom and their life experience. One of their roles was to pass on life experience through teachings, ceremonies and lifestyle. Teachings established differences between what was right and wrong, how to act, perform, and understand. These teachings were mainly transmitted in the family setting, and as the family extended through marriage and social ties, the teachings extended as well. The teachings were based on real-life examples or through stories or legends. Elders had the responsibility of carrying the core message of the knowledge they hold and in many occasions they could not even change the words of a story. Sometimes they expressed this by saying, "These are not my words" (Cookaye-Dalling, Rosborough, & Underwood, 2000). Further, Ross explained that through ceremonies, stories and the clan system, the children learned the ways which did not teach each person what to say or do, but rather taught life as a matter of responsibility for all people (Ross, 2006).

What happened to elders as children while in the residential schools that so transformed First Nations' traditional education and leadership? To answer this question I will use Northrup's identity-based approach. According to Northrup:

Identity is defined as an abiding sense of the self and of the relationship of the self to the world; it is a system of beliefs or a way of constructing the world that makes life predictable rather than random. (1989, p. 55)

The relationship between the world and this system of beliefs must be in harmony and predictable, otherwise threat and fear would stop functionality. Identity is a sense that extends psychologically, socially and spiritually to individuals or groups at many levels—communal, organizational, cultural and even international. The dynamics of identity "establish, maintain, and protect a sense of self-meaning, predictability, and purpose" (Northrup, 1989, p. 63). Northrup further suggested that intractable conflicts begin with an identity threat. In a relationship when an event occurs that is perceived as invalidating the core sense of identity, the party perceiving the invalidation experiences threat. Identity gives to a person a sense of safety physically, socially and spiritually. Hence, when a person experiences invalidation to the core sense of identity, safety is shattered and dread is experienced. This leads to a new identity assessment and, based on the interpretation of the new reality, the person adjusts his or her inner and outer worlds (Northrup, 1989).

Kirkness argued that by removing the children from their family, community, culture, and spirituality, the students in their adulthood experienced a cultural interruption that resulted in poor self-esteem, alienation, lack of identity, unworthiness, and abuse of all sorts (Kirkness, 1992). From these statements it would be fair to deduce that by removing the children from their family and placing them in an educational setting where their core sense of identity would be invalidated, these threatened children construed a new identity that adjusted their inner and outer worlds, and believed that they were unworthy, useless, and/or dumb and stupid, as stated by Jan. The elements and dynamics of the constructing of this new identity is expressed by Barb when she said that "residential schools took the essence out of the elders, leaving blackness, sexual abuse,

fear of God which wasn't there, fear of being judged or not being good, so what do you teach after that where there is all pain?"

The research question examines how residential schools influenced elders' spiritual leadership. Again, while in the "construing identity process" which is a process of construction and reconstruction based on differentiation and integration, a process which may include feelings, values and behaviours (Northrup, 1989), it is conceivable that current elders' feelings and values over a God experienced as vulnerable children while in the residential schools, differs considerably from the Creator's feelings and values construed by traditional elders' leadership before residential schools. This difference created a clash of two opposite images and perceptions between God and the Creator values and perceptions, and this clash may explain why elders "hate" God, yet "there is no other commonality among elders other than believing in a Creator."

The last part of the research questions examines how First Nations students' academic performance is affected by this phenomenon. Summarizing the data gathered in previous chapters, one can conclude that the residential-school effects are reverberating in the First Nations' communities through the legacy of sexual and physical abuse. This legacy has contributed to lack of initiative, dependency on others, and high rates of alcoholism (Furniss, 1995).

First Nations students have inherited these outcomes and they too have a sense of inferiority and unworthiness (Battiste, 2002). Reyhner suggested that this legacy has led to student absenteeism, anger, hopelessness, aggressive behaviour, low self-esteem, and self-destruction (Reyhner, 2001).

In a dominant Western culture, First Nations students struggle to find the identity and self-esteem needed for successful academic performance. The protracted colonialist journey of First Nations people has created a sense of inferiority and unworthiness in them (Battiste, 2002).

According to Mark Davis and Robert Zannis, in *Aboriginal People, Resilience* and the Residential School Legacy:

If people lose their "prime symbol" their lives lose meaning; they become disoriented, with no hope A social disorganization often follows such a loss, and they are often unable to ensure their own survival ... the loss and human suffering of those whose culture has been healthy and is suddenly attacked and disintegrated are incalculable. (As cited in Stout et al., 2003, p. 35)

Using Northrup's "rigidification" process where individuals create new identities and put distance between them and the threat, it seems as if First Nations students have construed a new identity from the inherited elders' identity. Students choose to detach from the residential-school legacy and from all traditional core values, given the abuse, shame and cultural denigration; hence, the lack of students' interest in approaching elders in order to learn traditional ways or education.

Though students appear to be indifferent toward the residential-school effect, the relationship mapping showed otherwise. All students used the largest block in their mapping to depict residential schools and Al, for instance, used five out of the nine in the whole mapping to portray residential schools. Perhaps this is an unaware giving-face way to protect each person from the negative inheritance passing down through the generations.

5.2 *Recommendations*

According to Northrup, intractable conflicts that are based on threatened identities, such as in this study, are not willingly changed from within. Parties in intractable conflicts of this type are not likely to move towards resolution. However, transformation from intractable to tractable conflict may occur in the presence of a third-party facilitator leveraging on one of the three identity levels. "These are 'levels' in the sense that they signify the proximity of the change of the core identity constructors" (Northrup, 1989, p. 77). *Level one* contemplates changes to the identity's peripheral world. *Level two* is less peripheral, but does not aim at the core of the identity construct; this level aims at the dynamics of the parties' relationship. *Level three* examines the core identity of the parties.

Regarding the importance of a third-party facilitator in the conflict resolution process, Fisher (2004), in his article, *Third Party Consultation*, stated that because the nature of conflictive settings where there are symptoms of dysfunction in communication, threats, hostility, coercion and little motivation to improve the relationship between people, an impartial and skilled third-party conflict facilitator may be very constructive in helping people to analyze the sources and dynamics of their conflict, and identifying behaviours and solutions that will help them resolve the problem to their mutual satisfaction (p. 1). Even one of the interviewed elders perceived the need of this third-party approach when she commented that:

Perhaps if a group of people would sit with elders and talk about how to bring that leadership back into families or even the communities, ceremonies, rituals and

how to recognize strength in people, and these people will have to be willing and with a big purpose. (March, 2009)

Based on Northrup and Fisher's suggestions, my recommendation for future action on this study is that through a third-party facilitator and the soft systems methodology, parties in conflict could change by working on identity level two. Northrup's suggestion is that in long-standing, identity-based conflict, such as this study, change on level one may lead to settlement but will not transform the conflict, and change on level three is probably impossible since the core construct of their identity affects the entire system. Change can occur at level two if the new information is powerful enough to allow transformation at the identity's core construct (Northrup, 1989) p. 79). One possible point of leverage in level two is what Barb suggested in "recognizing strength in people." This leverage point could influence the identity core construct in a positive way. Another point of leverage for further study could be the analysis of one of the main findings described above, such as the dichotomy of elders "hating God" yet "there is no other commonality among elders other than believing on a Creator." I believe that the findings of this analysis could release sources of healing and resiliency among First Nations.

Further recommended studies could also study elders' fear of residential schools and how this affects their leadership and undermines their longing to speak their own language.

Soft-systems methodology (SSM), which is part of my first suggestion mentioned above, is an approach to solving complex unstructured human problem situations based on holistic analysis and systems thinking. SSM is a participatory methodology that helps

different stakeholders to understand each other's perspectives. It creates the human activity systems and human relationships needed for an organization or group to achieve a common purpose.

The SSM premise is that if people participate in the process of finding out about the problem situation and learning about ways to improve it, they are more likely to understand the improvements being suggested, to feel ownership of them, and be committed to change.

The methodology is based on a seven-stage process that moves from clarifying an unstructured problem situation through designing ideal or conceptual human activity systems to improve the situation. These conceptual models are compared with the problem situation in order to identify desirable and feasible change. The methodology integrates thinking about the logic of how to improve a situation with what is socially and politically feasible. SSM involves switching between the "real world" and the "conceptual thinking world" (Travis & Venable, 1998, p. 1276).

As mentioned in the introduction, salmon are a naturally resilient species, and when given reasonable access to good-quality habitat and protection from destructive overfishing, salmon species are capable of rapid recovery and high, sustained productivity (Healey, 2009). I believe that First Nations' resiliency, like the salmons', is capable of rapid recovery—if given access to good-quality habitat. Just as water is the natural habitat of salmon, so spirituality is to First Nations. Aiming at the healing of the core construct of the elders' identity could be the good-quality habitat required for recovery.

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Appendix A Questionnaire for Elders

Research Question	Interview Question
How residential schools'	a. Overall, what do you think and feel about the
experience and effects have	residential schools' experience?
shaped and keep influencing	b. What do you think the Aboriginal high school
Elders' spiritual leadership over	students need to do to boost their performance at
First Nations communities, and	school?
in turn how is this phenomenon	c. How do you feel about the present students'
affecting Aboriginal high school	academic performance level?
students' academic performance	d.What do you believe elders should do to boost
in Lillooet?	students' performance?
How was Elders' spiritual	a. What do you know about Elders' spiritual
guidance thought about in the	leadership before residential schools?
Aboriginal communities prior to	b. What was important then for the elders' spiritual
residential schools?	role?
	c. How were elders thought and seen back then?
	d. How do you feel about these memories?
	e. What do you think and how do you measure
	today's elders' spiritual leadership with those
	before residential schools?

How was traditional education How was traditional education done and what was handled by Elders before important to teach before residential schools? Residential schools? b. How was traditional education before residential schools seen and evaluated by the Aboriginal community? c. In your opinion, what are the pros and cons between the traditional education and today's education? d. How do you feel and what do you think about this difference between the traditional and today's education? Are unresolved effects from the Have residential schools' effects affected elders' residential school experiences spiritual leadership? In what ways? affecting Aboriginal elders' b. What do you think and how do you feel about this spiritual leadership and unresolved effects influencing elders' leadership? influence over high school First c. How do you see residential schools' effects Nations students? In what through the elders' leadership are influencing ways? Aboriginal high school students' performance? d. What do you think should be done to mend these residential schools' effects concerning elders' spiritual leadership?

Questionnaire for Students

What are the Aboriginal high schools students' perspectives on elders' spiritual guidance?
And how do they sense these perspectives are influencing their academic performance?

- a. What do you know about traditional education before residential schools?
- b. What do you think and how do you feel about this?
- c. What do you know about residential schools and its effects on elders?
- d. What do you think and feel about this phenomenon?
- e. How do you evaluate the difference between the traditional education before residential schools and today's education?
- f. What do you think and feel about today's elders' spiritual leadership?
- g. What do you like or dislike about today's educational system? Is something missing?
- h. What do you think elders should be doing, more or less, in order to improve your academic performance?
- i. Do you think elders should be more involved in your learning process? In what ways?

Appendix B

Participation Request Letter

Dear

My name is Juan Jimenez and I am a graduate student at Royal Roads University completing a Master of Arts in Conflict Analysis and Management. In order to accomplish my degree, I must complete a major research project which I have chosen to do it on the residential schools outcomes and its effects on elders' spiritual leadership within the district of Lillooet, and for this I require your voluntary participation in this study. For verification purposes, you can contact Royal Roads University MACAM"S Program head Fred Oster Ph. D. Tel: (250) 391-2600, Ext 4358.

This research will examine the question, "How Residential schools experience and effects have shaped and keep influencing Elder's spiritual leadership over First Nations communities, and in turn how is this phenomenon affecting Aboriginal high school students' academic performance in Lillooet?" The operating hypothesis in this study is based on the idea that unresolved residential school effects have decayed Aboriginal elders' spiritual leadership, and this detriment affects their guidance over Aboriginal high school students. The purpose of this study is to hopefully identify some of the elements and dynamics which have caused the elders' leadership to shift and the influence of this shift on high schools students' academic performance.

The nature and expected duration of your participation is comprised in two phases: a. open questions with an estimated time of 2-4 hrs, and b. employment of the relationship mapping tool with an approximated time of 1-2 hrs. You are free not to participate and you have the right to withdraw at any time without prejudice. The

information gathered will be transcribed and presented to you to ensure that comments were captured accurately. A copy of the final report of this research will be housed at Royal Roads University and will be publicly accessible. The attached Consent Letter can be signed and returned to me at the time of our meeting.

I deeply thank you for considering my invitation to participate in this research.

Sincerely,

Juan Jimenez

Elders' Consent Lett

I,	, have read the attached
Participation Letter, and agree to take part in a	research project on "Residential schools
Outcomes and its Effects on Elders' Spiritual L	eadership", that is being conducted by Mr
Juan Jimenez, for the purpose of completing hi	s Master of Arts degree in Conflict
Analysis and Management.	

As a participant in this study, I am aware that I will be asked questions relating to my viewpoints, opinions and experiences as they relate to residential schools and elders' leadership, as well as the application of this information on the relationship mapping tool. I also understand that I may withdraw from this research project at any time and that I am in no way obligated to participate in this project.

As a participant in this project, I am aware that my name will be kept in strict confidence by the researcher and will not appear in any report that may be published as part of this project. Furthermore, my answers to questions and comments made during the interview process and the relationship mapping exercise will be confidentially voice recorded and will only be accessed by Mr. Juan Jimenez and his Project Supervisor.

Finally, I have been made aware that the information provided by myself and others as well as the outcome of the relationship mapping exercise, may be used to hopefully identify some of the elements and dynamics which have caused the elders' leadership to alter and how this alteration is influencing high schools students' academic performance. I also understand that a transcript of my comments will be made available to me for review for correctness prior to final analysis by the researcher.

Signature Date

Students' Parent Consent Letter

As an authorized third party consent giver for this study, I am aware that my son/daughter will be asked questions relating to his/her viewpoints, opinions and experiences related to residential schools' effects on elders' leadership and how this affects high school students' academic performance, as well as the application of this information on the relationship mapping tool. I also understand that he/she may withdraw from this research project at any time and that he/she is in no way obligated to participate in this project.

As participant in this project, I am aware that my son/daughter's name will be kept in strict confidence by the researcher and will not appear in any report that may be published as part of this project. Furthermore, his/her answers to questions and comments made during the interview process will be confidential and will only be accessed by Mr. Juan Jimenez and his Project Supervisor.

Finally, I have been made aware that the information provided by my son/daughter and others, as well as the outcome of the relationship mapping exercise, may be used to hopefully identify some of the elements and dynamics which have caused the elders' leadership to alter and how this alteration is influencing high school students' academic performance. I also understand that a transcript of my son/daughter's comments

Juan Jimenez

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will be made available to him/her for review for correctness prior to final analysis by the researcher.

Date

Signature

Student's Consent Letter

I,	have read the attached
Participation Letter, and agree	that I can take part in the research project on "Residential
schools Outcomes and its Effe	cts on Elders' Spiritual Leadership", that is being
conducted by Mr. Juan Jimene	ez, for the purpose of completing his Master of Arts degree
in Conflict Analysis and Mana	igement.

As a consent giver for this study, I am aware that I will be asked questions relating to my viewpoints, opinions and experiences related to residential schools' effects on elders' leadership and how this affects high school students' academic performance, as well as the application of this information on the relationship mapping tool. I also understand that I may withdraw from this research project at any time and that I am in no way obligated to participate in this project.

As participant in this project, I am aware that my name will be kept in strict confidence by the researcher and will not appear in any report that may be published as part of this project. Furthermore, my answers to questions and comments made during the interview process will be confidential and will only be accessed by Mr. Juan Jimenez and his Project Supervisor.

Finally, I have been made aware that the information provided, as well as the outcome of the relationship mapping exercise, may be used to hopefully identify some of the elements and dynamics which have caused the elders' leadership to alter and how this alteration is influencing high school students' academic performance. I also understand

that a transcript of my comments will be made available for my review for correctness
prior to final analysis by the researcher.
Signature