Knowing Our Worth:

An exploration of how Indigenous Knowledge is perceived and valued in a colonized world

By:

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Abstract

Societal and policy changes have begun to address the need to build better relationships with Indigenous people in Canada. The desire to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is critical for Indigenous organizations and of growing importance for non-Indigenous intuitions and entities. With the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action* (2015), reconciliatory efforts are being made and advocacy for decolonizing Canadian systems, policies, and processes has increased. Part of this reconciliation process has been to create spaces and opportunities to amplify and include IK, voices, understandings and perspectives. The central purpose of this study was to examine how IK is perceived and valued in the Western world and whether Knowledge Holders are financially remunerated for their time and sharing their expertise. The study involved qualitative interviews in a case study with seven Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders and three directors working for Mi'kmaw organizations in Nova Scotia. Using the theoretical lenses of critical sensemaking and the Mi'kmaw framework of Etuaptmumk, this study explored the foundational understandings of knowledge, and how experts are remunerated for their knowledge and expertise in Indigenous and Western worlds. Based upon experiences within the Mi'kmaw Nation, findings demonstrated that there are gaps in understandings and perspectives that impact the shared understanding of value of IK, which impacts how Knowledge Holders are remunerated. The culturally rooted desire of Mi'kmaq to share their knowledge and understandings has been misunderstood as an opportunity to get these teachings for free, which is not necessarily always the desire of Knowledge Holders. This study found that for reconciliatory efforts in Canada to be successful, there first needs to be a reconciliation of perspectives and understandings.

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my late father, Dwight. His own pursuit of education and his life-long advocacy of Indigenous issues showed me that anything is possible.

Wela'lioq. Msit No'kmaq.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Appendices

Chapter One: Introduction

Since the beginning of early days of colonization, Indigenous people have been depicted in media, movies and history books as wild, mysterious and uncivilized. When reflecting on the portrayal of Indigenous people in print and television, some may also conjure up images of wise Elders, inspiring Chiefs, colourful dancers and passionate environmentalists. While some of these latter perceptions can have elements of truth, it has also limited the understandings of who Indigenous people are.

In the Western world, meaning present-day Eurocentric society, we are taught from a very young age that attending school and obtaining a good education is foundational for a successful future. As a result, the value and merit of knowledge is attached to degrees and diplomas that hang on one's wall. In the Indigenous world, experiential learning, building understandings about the environment, and learning how our ancestors governed and lived, are where they find their own value and merit of knowledge. This does not necessarily mean that one way of thinking and building knowledge is better than another; rather they are just culturally different.

Our life experiences help us to make sense of the world in which we live and influence how we interact with others, our thoughts and opinions. For Indigenous people there have been examples throughout history of how their knowledge has been dominated by 'White' standpoints or dismissed entirely (Go, 2017). That can be seen in textbooks, research, on monuments and place names, for example. As Canada strives to take steps towards decolonization and reconciliation with the First People of this country, it is critical to look at how perception of Indigenous peoples and their knowledge is impacting decisions today. In my research, I discovered how and why Western perspectives have continued to impact the perception and value of IK.

When beginning this research topic, my goal was to fill a gap in current academic literature on how IK is valued in a post-colonial world. Through a case study with Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders and Mi'kmaw organization executives, I wanted to examine how they observe, and experience IK being valued in present-day, both in and outside of Mi'kmaw communities. Through the research process, I came to understand that, for centuries, there have been a myriad of challenges and obstacles to influence perceptions of IK, and despite efforts to change the narrative, some of these factors continue to have tremendous impacts.

Researcher's positionality

It is important that I first position myself in this research. I am a Mi'kmaw woman, from the Millbrook Mi'kmaw community in Nova Scotia. I acknowledge the ancestral territory of my people, where my interviews were conducted and this paper created. Acknowledging and paying respects to my ancestors and the place which they have lived since time immemorial is important to me and my work. While I am Indigenous by ancestry, I am also an individual who has been formally educated in Western institutions, with Western frames of thought. As an undergrad, I elected to obtain my degree in both Native Studies and English, balancing both worlds and enriching my own body of knowledge and perspectives. My interests, both personally and professionally, have always focused on Indigenous issues. This has also remained true throughout the pursuit for this Master of Arts degree.

In the spirit of Etuaptmumk, which is described in greater detail in chapter four, I take my understandings from the Mi'kmaw world, as well as from the Western world, and endeavour to bring both ways of knowing together. Through this combination of perspectives, I aim to bring awareness to an issue impacting Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders and Mi'kmaw organizations, through the insight they have offered.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

After decades of colonialism, the culture and heritage of Indigenous peoples has remained. Stories and information continue to be passed down through the generations, and many Indigenous people still conduct their traditional practices. These activities and traditions are part of what has supported the maintenance of these rich and vibrant cultures. Hands-on experience from conducting traditional activities, partnered with the wisdom shared by the generations who proceeded us and amongst the communities today, are the foundation of what IK is.

In the past decade, societal changes have begun to occur to address the need to build better relationships with Canada's first peoples. With this, the desire to hear and incorporate IK has grown both by non-Indigenous intuitions/entities and within Indigenous organizations and communities. With the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) *Calls to Action* (2015), there have been concentrated efforts in this country towards reconciliation with Indigenous people and an advocacy for the decolonization of Canadian systems, policies, and processes. Part of that reconciliatory process has been to create spaces and opportunities to amplify and include IK and voices. However, we also live in a society where the perceived value of IK has been impacted by colonization. We live in a world where there is an exceptional amount of importance and value put on formal education, and that has left us to question whether IK is viewed as something outside of those 'educational' parameters, potentially because of its organic ways of development.

Understanding Indigenous Knowledge

To fully appreciate the volume of work that has been done on why and how IK should be incorporated into Western – meaning Eurocentric and dominant - society, we have to first

understand what IK is and how it is defined. In Coleman et al. (2012), James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson, from the Chickasaw Nation explains that,

> …the expression 'Indigenous Knowledge' was created in the very late 1960s in the [United Nations (UN)] forums, when all of us were trying to collectively talk about our traditions, our teachings that had been passed down to us as Indigenous people to the Great Assembly of mostly Eurocentric representatives of the member states of the UN (p.154).

While for Indigenous people themselves the term IK may seem straightforward and easily understood, volumes of literature have also created a myriad of definitions that could impact one's fulsome understanding of the terminology. Around the world, understanding IK continues to be an expanding area of inquiry (Battiste, 2005). Terminology such as IK, Traditional Knowledge (TK), and Local Knowledge (LK), are used by various authors, some interchangeably, while others argue that there are differences between each.

Callison et al (2021) argue that TK differs greatly from IK as the latter includes a combination of both traditional and contemporary knowledge, where TK is only focused on the data and information that has been passed down through generations, making it historical in context. Yet, at the same time they acknowledge that limiting TK to old information also adds risks on how it is viewed by non-Indigenous audiences. Other scholars have made TK and IK synonymous, removing any distinctions between what is included in one or the other (Battiste, 2005; McGinty, 2012). Whereas LK is a term that is used less often, but some scholars have used it to describe the knowledge that is indigenous to a specific geographical area (Battiste, 2005; Kolawole, 2022). However, because LK can be associated with the broader knowledge of a

localized area, and not have Indigenous-specific roots, this terminology has been omitted from further discussion and described only as IK when used herein.

Generally, in current literature, IK is defined as the epistemological functions of Indigenous people stemming from their particular way of seeing and doing, that includes both tangible and intangible expressions of cultural life, such as song, dance, ceremony, storytelling, art, and language (Battiste, 1998; Callison et al., 2021; Ledoux, 2006; McGinty, 2012). IK is understood to be a dynamic system, that embodies the values, cultural beliefs, and world views of Indigenous peoples and continues to be transmitted from generation to generation within these Indigenous communities, remaining adaptable to environmental and world conditions (Battiste, 2005; Callison et al., 2021). IK is understood to incorporate the language, customs, values, traditions, and spirituality from the holistic and epistemological understandings that Indigenous people have of the world around them (Battise, 2005).

Despite best efforts to educate and inform, in some parts of the world IK continues to either be seen as primitive ways of thinking rooted only in the past, or alternatively new knowledge that is only being formulated because of public activation and awareness (Battiste, 2005; MacLeod, 2021; Yurdakul, 2020). These generalizations continue to plague many Indigenous nations globally and has often led to misrepresentations of IK. Callison et al. (2021) and Kolawole (2022) state that because IK can be so different than Westernized ways of thinking, Indigenous understandings and teachings are often relegated to the periphery and seen as in defiance to the dominant discourse. However, Battiste (2005) points out that IK has always existed regardless of whether or not it was acknowledged by Western society.

Creating opportunities to share and understand Indigenous perspectives

"Oral teachings have survived since time immemorial and deserve the same respect that we afford the great stories and minds of the Western world" (McLeod, 2022, p.2).

While the release of the TRC's *Calls to Action* in 2015 created a shift in the dialogue with, and about, Indigenous people in Canada, discussions about the need to incorporate IK into classrooms and government offices began to evolve in the 1990s (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998; Prest et al, 2021). Research in the 1990s also attempted to spark movement with international policy makers, lawyers, and activists to support Indigenous people in developing processes to protect their knowledge through intellectual property rights, copyright and customary law (Callison et al., 2021).

Across the globe, dialogue has since increased on the need to expand the understanding of what IK is and how to reformulate existing curricula to include Indigenous understandings and perspectives into educational systems and institutions (Battiste, 2005; Prest et al., 2021, Reid, 2018). Several reviews and reports have been written on the need to incorporate marginalized pedagogies and epistemologies into Westernized educational systems in the past 20 years, which has ultimately resulted in an important reform of the current public education systems (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998; Prest et al., 2021; TRC Calls to Action, 2015).

While many would believe that positive steps forward are being taken towards decolonization and reconciliation, efforts are still being met with resistance and scholarly debate. Some argue that the incorporation of Indigenous worldviews into current education systems and the quality of that education is subjective and not does not make a real difference. Tuck and Yang (2012) and Simpson (2014) believe that the only way to affect change in the current discourse is to shift the power dynamics, arguing that otherwise efforts are nothing more than an "…attempt

to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all" (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p.10).

Commentary is also growing on the fact that while governments and educational organizations have good intentions to incorporate Indigenous teachings into classrooms, teachers are often ill-prepared to do so appropriately and have limited understandings of Indigenous pedagogy (Prest et al., 2021). Further supporting this point, others have said that unless a person immerses themselves into Indigenous communities and cultures, they are unable to fully comprehend the depth and breadth of Indigenous epistemologies and teaching it should therefore not be under their jurisdiction and authority (Reid, 2018; McGinty, 2012; Simpson, 2014).

Value attributed to Indigenous Knowledge

With the arrival of Europeans on the shores of Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq which comprises present-day Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, parts of the Gaspé peninsula, and some also including Maine and parts of Newfoundland, early missionaries and ethnographers captured Mi'kmaw knowledge, information and understandings only to unethically appropriate these under the guise of documenting history or 'saving souls', as was done with countless other Indigenous nations across the globe (Callison et al., 2021; Paul, D.N., n.d.). This, along with views that Indigenous nations were primitive and uncivilized, forced cultural biases upon Indigenous peoples. Living under colonial policies continued to be challenging for Indigenous nations to escape (Battiste, 1998). When knowledge or viewpoints are accredited to others or completely relegated to the margins for centuries, we are left to consider what impacts that has on the assessed worth and value of said contributions.

For centuries, many in the non-Indigenous world saw IK as a raw resource available for their benefit and the cultural biases and prejudices against Indigenous people continued to

exclude and devalue their knowledge (Anderson, 2010; Battiste, 2005). As a result, IK was silenced or stolen by the dominant Western knowledge systems, and it was believed that only those of European decent could progress. Indigenous peoples were seen as having had knowledge systems that were either non-existent or completely frozen in the past (Battiste, 2005; Callison et al., 2021).

Despite centuries of oppression and attempts of assimilation, many Indigenous nations were able to maintain their own knowledge systems and the information that lay within. For Indigenous peoples the wisdom of their Elders and Knowledge Holders remained an integral part of their culture. These individuals were respected and understood as having important contributions to make to their communities and to the broader society (Battiste, 2005; Ledoux, 2006; McGinty, 2012). In fact, in many Indigenous communities it is understood that their own epistemologies could be complementary to Western epistemologies and help to build understandings of how both world views could work in tandem (McGinty, 2012; Callison et al, 2021).

Credit and compensation for Indigenous contributions

Dialogue in literature is continuing to grow on properly acknowledging Indigenous contributions in research. As mentioned earlier, when deemed useful IK was often stolen or accredited to the individual(s) who captured it. Countless examples can be drawn from the way that flora and fauna resources have been ‘discovered’ and extracted for a multitude of purposes.

In Ecuador, the Fundación Sabiduría Indígena (FSI), or Foundation of Indigenous Wisdom, created the Rights to the Benefits of Research Protocols (1997) which are parameters used to force individual researchers to reflect upon how they are benefitting from the research they have conducted with their Indigenous peoples. Faced with ongoing challenges where IK is

being obtained by researchers and then provided to pharmaceutical and resource extraction companies for profit, the FSI and co-author, Kothari, are working to increase awareness of compensation issues amongst Indigenous peoples. Bindi Bennett, an Indigenous scholar from Australia, agrees about the need to clearly, and appropriately, acknowledge the participation and contribution of Indigenous peoples in research. Both arguing that non-Indigenous researchers need to acknowledge the Indigenous groups they study and how, without those contributions, the research could not have progressed (Bennett, 2020; Fundación Sabiduría Indígena and Kothari, 1997). While Bennett focuses primarily on acknowledgement and accrediting sources properly, the FSI (1997) pushed those boundaries further to include financial compensation adding that, "compensation is not charity but a right of Indigenous peoples" (p.130).

Decolonizing our mindsets

"We cannot just think, write or imagine our way to a decolonized future" (Simpson, 2014, p.16).

For centuries, under colonial influence and rule, IK was deemed inferior and in opposition to the Western ways of knowing (Anderson, 2010; Battiste, 2005; Reid et al., 2021). In more recent years, literature has emerged to counter those beliefs. To support that shift in mindset further, Indigenous peoples themselves have begun advocating for their voice and perspectives to be heard, ultimately to push the boundaries on how and where IK is included. Today, there is little debate that colonization has impacted the way of life of Indigenous peoples and on how IK has been historically viewed and understood. Several authors have written about how critical it is to decolonize and Indigenize education and institutions, but all have different recommendations on how to achieve that.

Absolson (2011) states that the Indigenous worldview needs to be positioned at the centre of all discussion. While the narrative of integrating IK and perspectives into other knowledge

systems might feel like the right thing to do, for others it becomes nothing more than a euphemism for further assimilation and settler appropriation (Reid et al., 2021; Tuck and Yang, 2012). A full transformation of societal understandings and ways of thinking will be required and an overhaul of current pedagogies, including challenging society with concepts of repatriation, complete embodiment of Indigenous practices and reevaluating current knowledge systems, are necessary to actualize real change (Coleman et al., 2012; Reid, 2008; Reid et al., 2021; Simpson, 2014; Tuck and Yang, 2012).

Methodology, research design and theoretical framework

The need for society to undergo a full transformation to actualize change, and the growing dialogue on the fundamental differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems, led me to consider how a 'sociology of knowledge' could impact these understandings. Robert Merton (1937) was well known for having led many discussions on the broader concept of the sociology of knowledge. Merton's work often reflected upon how knowledge is impacted by one's social position and worked to illustrate how socio-cultural factors influence how our beliefs and opinions are formed. Other scholars, who have continued this line of study, have pointed out that although Merton's focus on inequalities were advanced for his time, a glaring issue that remained was how the dominant theories and concepts in sociology were "…developed by and for white, middle class peopleand [*sic*] routinely depreciate[d] the value and usefulness of indigenous [*sic*] modes of thoughts or value" (Khoury and Khoury, 2013, p.1).

Current sociological discussions illustrate how social context, historical experiences and cultural backgrounds have yet to be fully considered in how knowledge is produced and shaped (Connell et al., 2017; Khoury and Khoury, 2013; Tuck, 2013). To get the core of why there are epistemological differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems, a

sociology of IK would need to be developed. While building a sociology of IK would be an extremely interesting and fulfilling task, to do so one would not only need to be built from the ground up but would also require a rethinking the current sociological parameters through an Indigenous lens. Undertaking this level of work is an important and necessary task, but far exceeds the scope and timelines of my current work, and thus will need to be left to future Indigenous scholars, myself or otherwise, to pursue.

Etuaptmumk

In the absence of a sociology of IK, we are left to consider how research on IK could forge ahead without the fundamental academic understandings of what it is, how it is perceived, and how it comes to be. To address that, I turned to Mi'kmaw epistemologies and pedagogies and consider how they can be blended with Western methodologies to better understand the circumstances we find ourselves in. Through the Mi'kmaw theoretical concept of Etuaptmumk, or 'Two-Eyed Seeing', Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders have developed an abridged way of thinking, highlighting the strengths of all understandings.

In the early 2010s, Mi'kmaw Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall, of the Eskasoni Mi'kmaw community in Unama'ki (Cape Breton), Nova Scotia were the first to publicly explain the concept of Etuaptmumk to non-Indigenous audiences. In their words, Etuaptmumk is "learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing, and to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all" (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 335).

Still, it is questioned that while the shift in seeing the world through both lenses had happened for Mi'kmaq, has the non-Indigenous population also made reasonable efforts to see the world through vantage points other than their own (Bartlett et al., 2012; Reid et al., 2021)?

To understand and examine that, research would need to be conducted through both Indigenous and non-Indigenous lenses, using methodologies established upon each of their understandings.

Critical sensemaking

Karl Weick (1995) developed 'sensemaking' to explain the process of organizing and to build understandings on how people define and give meaning to their actions (Helms Mills et al., 2010; Klein et al., 2006; Taylor and Williams, 2022). "At its most basic, sensemaking is about understanding how different meanings are assigned to the same event" (Helms Mills et al., 2010, p.183).

Over the years, sensemaking has evolved into an analytical framework of 'critical sensemaking' which uses Weick's original sensemaking framework along with aspects of formative contexts by Unger (2004) and organizational rules by Mills and Murgatroyd (1991) (as cited in Thurlow and Helms Mills, 2009). With these expanded parameters, critical sensemaking (CSM) has been used as a tool to examine how a person's actions and beliefs are influenced by their broader social environment (Taylor and Williams, 2022).

CSM has also been used by scholars to better understand the concepts and understandings of knowledge. Dervin (1998) used CSM to determine how sense is made of knowledge at a point in time and space by and individual and how sometimes, that knowledge gets shared having others agree upon it, leading to that knowledge sometimes then being accepted as fact. Dervin's analysis could lead to an interesting examination of how knowledge is perceived by non-Indigenous societies.

Case Study

To further inform my research and questions on compensation and value of IK, qualitative research with Indigenous Knowledge Holders was required. By way of a case study involving

Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders, I conducted interviews with eight to ten individual Knowledge Holders, in efforts to fully examine how they believe their knowledge is perceived by both Mi'kmaw and non-Indigenous audiences. The goal was to extrapolate, from their responses, whether there is a discrepancy in the value of knowledge in a post-colonial world.

Questions included in the qualitative research component were part of the development of ethics applications for both Mount Saint Vincent University's ethics requirements and of the Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch, housed out of Cape Breton University. Questions included asked about how the Knowledge Holder came to obtain their knowledge, what activities they undertake to keep that knowledge relevant, whether they are asked to share that knowledge and if they have received compensation for their expertise. Follow up or further probing questions were also asked in some circumstances to help build foundational understandings.

While the broader IK is discussed in my research, interviews were confined to the 13 Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia to not only make this research more manageable, but also relevant to the Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders and Mi'kmaw organizations that I work for/alongside. Focussing on one specific area of IK did not have any impacts on my overall findings, however as the Mi'kmaq were one of the first Indigenous Nations impacted by colonial arrival on Turtle Island (present-day North America), frankly the impacts of colonization and colonial ways of thinking might be most evident in this region and with this nation.

As a Mi'kmaw scholar, my priority and goal is to also give back to my community by sharing the understandings I build and develop with them. Therefore, focusing on the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia specifically allowed me to build understandings of my own people, and further support how reconciliation is considered with the Mi'kmaw Nation.

Chapter Three: Theory

Critical sensemaking and Etuaptmumk (Two-Eyed Seeing) were the theoretical frameworks and lenses that helped to guide this research and the interpretation of its findings.

Critical sensemaking

In 1995, Karl Weick developed 'sensemaking' which used aspects of social psychology to explain the process of organizing and to build understandings about how people define and give meaning to their actions (Helms Mills et al., 2010; Klein et al., 2006; Taylor and Williams, 2022). "At its most basic, sensemaking is about understanding how different meanings are assigned to the same event" (Helms Mills et al., 2010, p.183). Over the years, sensemaking evolved into an analytical framework of 'critical sensemaking' which expanded upon Weick's original sensemaking framework, with aspects of formative contexts by Unger (2004) and organizational rules by Mills and Murgatroyd (1991) (as cited in Thurlow and Helms Mills, 2009). These expanded parameters established critical sensemaking (CSM) as a tool to examine how a person's actions and beliefs are influenced by their broader social environment (Taylor and Williams, 2022).

In CSM, disruptions to routine force individuals to make sense of what is happening and what one should do next (Boudes and Laroche, 2009). As a result, we are constantly having to make sense of the world around us through seven connected properties (Mills et al., 2010). Weick's discussion of identity construction, retrospection and social were the properties used in this research as guideposts to help frame the analysis. These properties, as explained by Mills et al. (2010), illustrate how we create understandings and influence our view of the world and people around us. *Identity construction* focuses on how our perception of the world is shaped by who we are and external factors that have influenced our lives. Our identity is constantly

evolving as a result of our experiences and interactions with others. *Retrospection* describes how we use past experiences to understand and interpret what is happening now. When making sense of the present, we compare it to past events that are similar or familiar, which influence our interpretation of the current situation. The *social* property of CSM explains how an organization's rules, routines, language and symbols influence how individuals make sense of situations and provide us with established guidelines for proper behavior.

Through these properties of CSM we come to understand that fundamentally the factors that shape our life influence how we see the world. As a result, they also construct our identity. The experiences and contact that we have with others such as our friends, community, school, as well as religious and spiritual connections, impact how we view and understand situations that we find ourselves in (Helms Mills et al., 2010). In essence, we construct meaning, or sense, about an event individually, and that meaning may or may not be the same meaning as others have given to the same situation. “CSM offers a frame of analysis that looks at actions and beliefs as driven by plausibility not accuracy” (Thurlow and Helms Mills, 2009, p.462).

Brenda Dervin (1998) also utilized CSM to better understand the concepts and understandings of what knowledge is and in her own work determined that that knowledge is sense that is made at a “…particular point in time-space by someone” (p.36) which is sometimes tested, and other times just assumed to be facts. Dervin’s analysis of knowledge, through the CSM lens, could help to further guide my own analysis of how IK has been perceived pre- and post-colonization.

Etuaptmumk

In the early 2010s, Mi’kmaw Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall, of the Eskasoni Mi’kmaw community in Unama’ki (Cape Breton), Nova Scotia, were the first to publicly explain

the concept of Etuaptmumk, Mi'kmaw for Two-Eyed Seeing, to non-Indigenous audiences. Described by the respected Elders, Etuaptmumk is "learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of mainstream knowledges and ways of knowing, and to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all" (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 335). Etuaptmumk provided a better-defined path to co-existence; one that was respectful of both ways of knowing and learning that had developed over time.

Etuaptmumk highlighted that there were ways to bridge the cultural gaps that had been put between Indigenous and Western thinkers, and for each of their knowledge systems to be paired, rather than subsumed by one another (Reid et al., 2021). Etuaptmumk provides an opportunity for both sides to see the merits of one another's perspective and acts as means to avoid a clash of said knowledges (Hatcher et al., 2009). Etuaptmumk has also become a framework that many Indigenous scholars are using to reconcile their own knowledge and understandings, with the Western methods and theories they use in their research (Marsh et al., 2015; Peltier, 2018). In this research, the voices, insights and experiences of Mi'kmaw Knowledge holders, as well as those working for Mi'kmaw organizations under Western financial policies, was fundamental to my work. Examining those stories, using a Western theoretical framework, always had to be mindful of the fact that CSM and Etuaptmumk may have vastly different cultural origins, both were established on the understandings that there are a variety of ways that we see the world around us.

Merging these two theoretical frameworks

Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall said in Barlett, Marshall and Marshall (2012), that there is a need to learn how to weave back and forth between Indigenous and Western knowledges and

worldviews. That perspective became critical to how I would conduct work in my own academic endeavours. The combination of the two theoretical concepts of Etuaptmumk and CSM appeared to be natural, as both are focused on how we perceive the world, and the processes which we undertake to build understandings about situations that we find ourselves in. CSM focusses on a collective and retrospective understanding of situations, and Etuaptmumk is grounded in cultural understandings that there are other perspectives that need to be taken into consideration, and therefore also builds a collective approach.

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) published a Research Toolkit (2020) that also addressed the concerns that Indigenous people have with Western research methods. Acknowledging community-based concerns that Western research, and corresponding research methods, often facilitates on-going colonialism, NWAC highlighted the need for a more humanizing and respectful approach to conducting research with and on Indigenous peoples. These concerns and community voices only further reiterated the need and my own desire to utilize a hybrid, or at the very least a more culturally sensitive approach to research methodologies in my own work.

Similarly, Mi'kmaw scholar Dr. Mary Beth Doucette (2023) recognized that "mainstream and critical Indigenous research methods are, each on their own, insufficient" (p.45) and thus she developed a new research method entitled *Two-Eyed Critical Sensemaking*, which blended the methodologies of Etuaptmumk and CSM succinctly. For Doucette, Two-Eyed CSM became an amalgamated approach to conducting research, where one could easily weave between the two, Indigenous and Western, methodologies. Where CSM's foundations are based in a critical and phenomenological paradigm, it allows opportunities for it to align with IK theories and cultural approaches to thinking (Smith, 1999).

In efforts to change the way research is conducted with Indigenous people, and as a Mi'kmaw scholar myself, from the onset I had committed to blending these two, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, theoretical and analytical frameworks. This decision helped to further the commitment of conducting research in a manner that privileges, rather than assimilates, Indigenous voices and ways of knowing, and helps to further the objectives of putting the Indigenous people as the researchers and theory developers, rather than merely subjects to be researched (Smith, 1999; Peltier, 2018).

Chapter Four: Methodology

For centuries, IK, stories, culture and ceremonies were stolen and used, often without the consent of the rightful holders of that information. Early missionaries and ethnographers who captured Indigenous information and stories were often doing so as part of the colonization efforts (Callison, et al., 2021; Smith, 1999). When conducting research in Indigenous communities today, one must be informed and conscious of the relationship Indigenous people have had with researchers, and the history of unethical appropriation of IK and understandings. This history is built from exploitation and manipulation of nations of people and the result of its legacy has left much for Indigenous people to unpack.

As Indigenous people in Canada continue to confront and deal with this history, organizations working on their behalf have developed principles and protocols to help researchers recognize and understand the importance of integrating ethical approaches when conducting research in Indigenous communities. The Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (Cape Breton University, n.d.) and the First Nations Information Governance Centre's *Fundamentals of OCAP*

(n.d.) are examples of how Indigenous people are challenging this legacy by providing researchers with tools designed to work in Indigenous communities and with Indigenous people.

For Indigenous scholars, while most understand their Nation's concerns with how research was historically conducted by outsiders, they too must reflect upon their positionality when it comes to their subjects. Generally, while Indigenous academics and scholars recognize the research sensitivities within their own Nation(s), they have often been educated in Western systems, and with Western schools of thought. As a result, before undertaking any work of their own, they must also know and understand the reasons of ensuring that they also practice ethical research methods (Smith, 1999). Indigenous researchers must recognize that although they are from an Indigenous community or Nation, they cannot speak for all Indigenous people. Perhaps they share similar world views, it does not necessarily mean they understand how a community may feel about an issue, nor can they speak for an entire Nation.

As an Indigenous researcher, I am deeply aware of the delicate position I am in. While I want to contribute to developing strong foundational understandings of IK and how it is perceived in today's world, my work in this study is not intended to build acclaim for myself. I am a Mi'kmaw student. I believe that I not only have a responsibility to those who have entrusted me with their experiences, stories and information, but also to the many generations who have come before us, and to all those who will follow. The information I collected and presented in this work does not belong to me; it is owned, shared developed, and managed by the Mi'kmaw Nation. In this process, I gathered and analyzed their information. Understanding one's role in conducting Indigenous research is fundamental to understanding the methodological approach taken in this work.

Topic Selection

As a Mi'kmaw woman from Millbrook First Nation, Nova Scotia, I have worked for Mi'kmaw organizations for almost two decades. My current organization is successful because it relies on the input, feedback and guidance of Elders, Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders, Mi'kmaw leaders and community members. Understanding how and why our people think or feel the way they do about issues are requirements to how we proceed as an organization, and as a Nation. Amongst my colleagues and various departments, there have been many conversations about how we would like to compensate Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders for their time and expertise. Those wants are restricted by funding dollars and the limitations put in place by federal and provincial governments that outline how funding dollars can be spent. My questions became, how are Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders impacted by these financial limitations, and have these funding guidelines caused strangleholds for all Mi'kmaw organizations?

Research involving Indigenous nations require collaboration, cooperation, and partnership. Essential to conducting research in Indigenous nations, communities and organizations, is to recognize that they lead the decision-making process, and a researcher must not independently decide what is important to the people. Research involving Indigenous nations must always be led by the people, and not the researcher. So, while I will be examining an issue that appears to have a lack of available published sources from other Indigenous scholars to draw lessons from, this is not a new topic that I, alone, determined to be important. This topic came from those who work with Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders and their communities. Out of the greatest respect for the Mi'kmaw Nation, this gap was worthy of deeper investigation.

Anticipated ethical issues

This research involved human participants, which requires completion of the Course on

Research Ethics issued by the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (see Appendix A). As this research involved Indigenous people, it was important that I also understood ethical research methods, as determined by First Nations agencies which led to the completion of the *Fundamentals of OCAP* course (see Appendix B). This research also received clearance from the University Research Ethics Board at Mount Saint Vincent University (File # 2023-227) as well as clearance from the Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch.

In addition to ethical understandings of conducting research, obtaining consent and ensuring confidentiality is extremely important when undertaking any qualitative research (see Appendix C). They are critical elements when conducting research in Indigenous communities and cannot be fully secured until trust is established. The probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research was no greater than those encountered by participants in aspects of their everyday lives. While that is true and acknowledged, there are considerations when it comes to Indigenous nations and conducting research with them that must remain at the forefront throughout the research process. These include, but are not limited to, historical interactions with researchers, transparency, control, comfort and trust.

In the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007), the United Nations General Assembly included specific reference to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), highlighting its importance when working in Indigenous territories (Government of Canada, 2021; United Nations, 2016). While the research conducted in this thesis study does not have implications to the lands, territory and communities of the Mi'kmaw Nation, respecting FPIC is still key to building trust and showing respect to the Indigenous nation being studied. By following the fundamentals of FPIC, a researcher must ensure that the participants are made comfortable with the interview questions before any conversations take place, they understand

the reasoning behind the research, they are made aware of the ways to withdraw and have the freedom to do so at any time, should they choose. Because there has been a history of coercion and exploitation, these actions are essential to creating transparency, continuing to build trust, while respecting personal autonomy to ensure the participants do not feel coerced or blindsided by any of the process, and are comfortable with how their information is presented in the final document.

Beyond building comfort and trust with the individual participants in Indigenous research, the same needs to be done for the nation(s) being studied. The First Nations Principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) offers guidelines for how Indigenous information and data should be collected, protected, used and held (First Nations Information Governance Centre, n.d.). Ownership of any Indigenous research and all the understandings built from it, belong to the Indigenous nations from which it came. In the case of this thesis work, the research and information collected belongs to the Mi'kmaw Nation. Although I am the author of this thesis and claim it as my own work, I cannot claim ownership of the stories and experiences within it, as that belongs collectively to the Mi'kmaq (Wilson, 2008). The understandings derived from the research findings belong to the Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders who participated in this study, to the generations who have come before us, and to the Mi'kmaw Nation.

Process and tools for collecting the stories

Respecting the leadership of the Mi'kmaw Nation, I began the research process by reaching out to each of the thirteen Mi'kmaw Chiefs in Nova Scotia to ask permission to enter their communities to talk to their Knowledge Holders and the organizations in which they oversee. This was done through in-person conversations, or by email. Respecting and understanding how incredibly busy the Chiefs are, attempts were made to contact all thirteen

Chiefs but, in the event, I did not receive a response from them right away, I chose not to push or persist in getting responses, beyond one follow up attempt. Two Chiefs required my request go before their full community council; and in both cases, permission was granted.

Many of the Chiefs I spoke with were very keen on my topic. In fact, several immediately offered their own comments and insight into the issue I was exploring, which helped to further solidify that this topic was in fact important to the Nation. In the end, I obtained approvals from eleven Chiefs and was unable to reach the other two. My priority was to ensure that I had approvals from the majority, so I could conduct research in varying locations across the province of Nova Scotia. As a result, my research was confined to the communities who gave me approval and was directed by additional guidelines, if any, offered by the Chiefs on how to engage with their Knowledge Holders, Elders and/or community members. For example, one community requested I put a notice into their community newsletter seeking participants, rather than communicating directly to community members. This request was respectively observed and followed.

After approval was granted by a Chief to enter their community, I began the qualitative research process, reaching out to individuals who work for a Mi'kmaw organization and Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders. Requests for interviews were sent via email, phone or social media. In my initial outreach with each of these individuals, I explained my research topic and asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. If they were interested, I followed up with an email that included consent forms, the list of interview questions for their review, and we confirmed a date to conduct the interview.

Each interview began with my request for permission to record. Once permission was granted, I explained the consent forms and described the interview process. To ensure I respected

the traditional ways of communicating in Indigenous nations, as outlined in my ethics applications, I wanted to allow participants to provide their consent orally, rather than insisting that they sign documentation. There was a balance between those who wanted to provide oral consent and those who agreed to sign the forms. For those who provided oral consent, that was recorded during interviews and included in the transcription.

Before each interview began, I explained the process and the steps taken to ensure confidentiality and how they could withdraw from the study, should they wish, and the timeframe for doing so. As recommended by the Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch in their feedback to my application, I confirmed with each participant whether they wanted to be referred to by a pseudonym in my final work, or if they would rather me use their proper name.

While the interview questions were provided to the participants beforehand, I explained to them that I would be conducting my interviews in a semi-structured manner. Semi-structured interviews strengthen the list of predetermined questions by providing the opportunity to ask follow-up questions not included in the list, as well as allow the researcher to return to statements given during the interview. I felt this approach creates space for participants to reflect upon the experiences they shared, while allowing time for them to share their stories organically. In Indigenous communities, retelling one's stories often helps individuals to communicate their full thoughts and feelings about a topic. While the list of pre-determined questions provides a consistent framework and structure to the interview, the scope is not limited, allowing room for contemplation (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).

Although several participants were Mi'kmaw language speakers, I am not fluent in the language. As a non-Mi'kmaw language speaker, it was important to me that I respected the confidentiality parameters I developed for this research, and thus elected not to involve another

party to conduct translation services for the work, therefore it was not an option. All participants were comfortable with this fact, with only one participant specifically asking if I was a language speaker in my initial outreach to them.

Following the interviews, a thank you gift was provided to each participant, as is common in the Mi'kmaw culture. In the absence of having funding to conduct my research to pay participants, a traditional offering was selected as the culturally appropriate sign of respect and acknowledgment of the valuable contributions they made to this work. In the days following the interviews, copies of the signed consent forms were scanned and emailed to each participant who had requested a copy. Thank you cards and gifts were mailed or delivered to those who participated in the interview virtually. This was also the time when the process of reviewing and transcribing the interviews began.

Participants

This research included two categories of expertise to help me better delineate an understanding of the complexities of the value and understanding of IK. The first series of interviews were with individuals who work in finance or in an executive position for a Mi'kmaw organization in Nova Scotia. The overarching goal of these interviews was to determine if they had experienced challenges with the process of remuneration of Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders in the work their office conducts. Questions focused on the parameters of their organization's financial policies and included specific questions about whether they encountered challenges with what they were able to pay Indigenous Knowledge Holders. I also wanted to know if they felt there was any discrepancies to what could be paid to Indigenous and non-Indigenous experts/consultants, and whether there have been changes or improvements with efforts towards reconciliation in Canada. Four individuals were invited to participate. Three interviews were

confirmed with individuals who were directors at their respective organization. Each of these participants either manage departments that engage directly with Mi'kmaw Elders and Knowledge Holders, or they manage the financial department of their organization. The interviews were approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length and created the opportunity to further examine if there were challenges with how Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders are remunerated beyond what I had learned through my own experiences at the organization where I work. These interviews were essential in creating a foundation for later discussions with Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders.

The second series of interviews were with individuals who are well known Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders. These individuals are often replied upon and invited to provide teachings to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences. After a review of the members of the Mi'kmawey Debert Elders' Advisory Council (Mi'kmawey Debert, 2024), blended with my own personal knowledge stemming from a lifetime of participant observation (Wilson, 2008), seven Knowledge Holders agreed to participate in my research.

The overarching goal of these interviews was to discuss how they learned the information they possess, what they do to maintain that knowledge, whether Mi'kmaw understandings have been adapted over time. I also wanted to know about compensation for the services they provide. Fourteen individuals were invited to participate. Three requests went unanswered. Four were scheduled but could not participate due to personal conflicts during the time when interviews were being conducted. These participants represented a broad range of demographic information, including age, gender, location and field of expertise.

Protecting the findings

During the research process all transcriptions and research materials were stored on a private computer that is password protected. Collected research was also backed up on Mount Saint Vincent University's system during thesis development. Access to this sensitive information was limited to my thesis supervisor and myself. Once the thesis was completed, I followed the Fundamental Principles of OCAP and entered into a formal data-sharing agreement with Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMK), the administrative arm for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs, which will ensure the control and possession of research materials remain with the Mi'kmaw Nation (see Appendix D). The final thesis document was also shared with everyone who participated in interviews.

Building trustworthiness

My experience has taught me that understanding IK and remuneration would be a sensitive topic. Although, I am Mi'kmaw, I am working with my own community members as an academic at a Western institution, which creates a different power dynamic. In addition, some participants may have been introduced to me through my professional career, which could raise concerns that my academic research could influence my work or judgement. Recognizing this, I took a cautionary approach to my research from a position of vulnerability and through transparency, I addressed any of those potential concerns when reaching out to members of our shared community. From the first message, I informed potential participants what Mi'kmaw community I was from. This is important to the Knowledge Holders because it helps them to situate me in a family and within the Nation. I communicated where I was employed, explained how this research was a separate endeavour from my job and that I was doing this as a student at Mount Saint Vincent University. When entering the homes and lives of these individuals, I knew

that despite all best efforts, because of the above noted positionality factors, I could still be seen as both an insider, and an outsider by my participants. (Smith, 1999).

Throughout the process I had remind myself I was not undertaking this research on my own. Rather, it is a cumulative effort built by individuals from communities, organizations and the Nation that we collectively represent. This research is a shared journey. While I am a member of the Mi'kmaw Nation, I cannot speak for the Nation on my own, nor could I interpret the statements provided as I hoped they would be understood. I had to open myself up to allowing the voices of the participants to lead the conversation and thus the research.

Finally, I was deeply aware of personal bias. My strategy to ensure my findings were validated and transcribed in an accurate way conveying an authentic reflection of the voices of those who participated in the research. Following FPIC and the Principles OCAP, I did this by sending the transcript from each interview back to the participant for an opportunity for them to review what I heard and captured. I asked them to read it and verify the document was accurate.

Approach to analysis

After approvals were received from the participants on the transcriptions, I began searching for keywords and concepts that arose from their stories. It was crucial to become immersed in the words of the participants, to better understand the intentions of their words, but to also ensure that I did not impose any my own interpretations onto the materials. Their words had to be foundational to my analysis.

McCracken (1998) explains that when qualitative researchers work in their own culture, their "…intimate acquaintance with one's own culture can create as much blindness as insight" (p. 12). With this advice in mind, Putnam (2005) offers insight to researchers conducting discourse analysis through a series of principles that outline how one must, allow the text and

context to talk to them; work back and forth between concepts and text; monitor for occurrences that stand out as inconsistent, ironic, or unexpected; and use this information to dispute one's own interpretation and explanation (as cited in Thurlow, 2007). These principles became the guide for my research design and analysis process. They allowed me to narrow the focus on words spoken by participants and contributed to the goals and objectives of the questions created for interviews (see Appendix E).

In Vivo coding was used during my initial review of the transcripts where codes were generated by the participant's own words and phrases (Manning, 2017). Going through the transcripts, line-by-line, and moving in an iterative manner between the text and the context, I highlighted words or phrases used by the participants that were relevant to the research question and held properties of critical sensemaking and Etuaptmumk. This process generated 34 unique codes from the respondents' own words or phrases (see Appendix F) and these codes became the structure that shaped the foundation of my analysis.

Chapter Five: Analysis and Findings

In order to understand how IK is made sense of, valued and perceived, I needed to hear from those who carry and share their knowledge, as well as those who look for the feedback and guidance of Knowledge Holders in their work. This chapter will present the takeaways from conversations I had with Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders and Mi'kmaw organizational representatives, and the process undertaken to achieve these results.

Following my interviews, I began an analytic process by reviewing the interview transcripts through a critical analysis lens to identify signs of CSM, Etuaptmumk, and repeated concepts. This resulted in 34 unique codes emerging from the text. Each of the initial codes and

the sentences or phrases that corresponded with them were collated into a chart. A total of 591 segments of text extracted from the transcripts. These segments were then organized by code, which allowed me to identify patterns and/or anomalies occurring within the text, and thoughts of the participants were then pulled into broader categories, based upon the commonalities emerging during the analysis process. A total of 86 sub-themes developed from this phase (see Appendix G).

Creswell (2014) states, when themes are established based upon the participants' perspectives, it adds to the validity of the research. The groupings of sub-themes ultimately led me to nine overarching themes - six stemming from the words of the Knowledge Holders, and three from those who work for a Mi'kmaw organization. All themes were grounded in the participants' words and captured the collective voice that came through the interviews. While some of the concepts that emerged did surprise me, for the most part, being Mi'kmaw myself, I understood how they were rooted in cultural ways of thinking.

As can be seen in Figure 1 below, the six themes that emerged from the voices of the Knowledge Holders were inadequate compensation, colonial impacts, valuing experience, cultural survival, Etuaptmumk, and knowledge protection. The three themes that emerged from the voices of the organization representatives were reciprocity, funding challenges, and reconciliation realities.

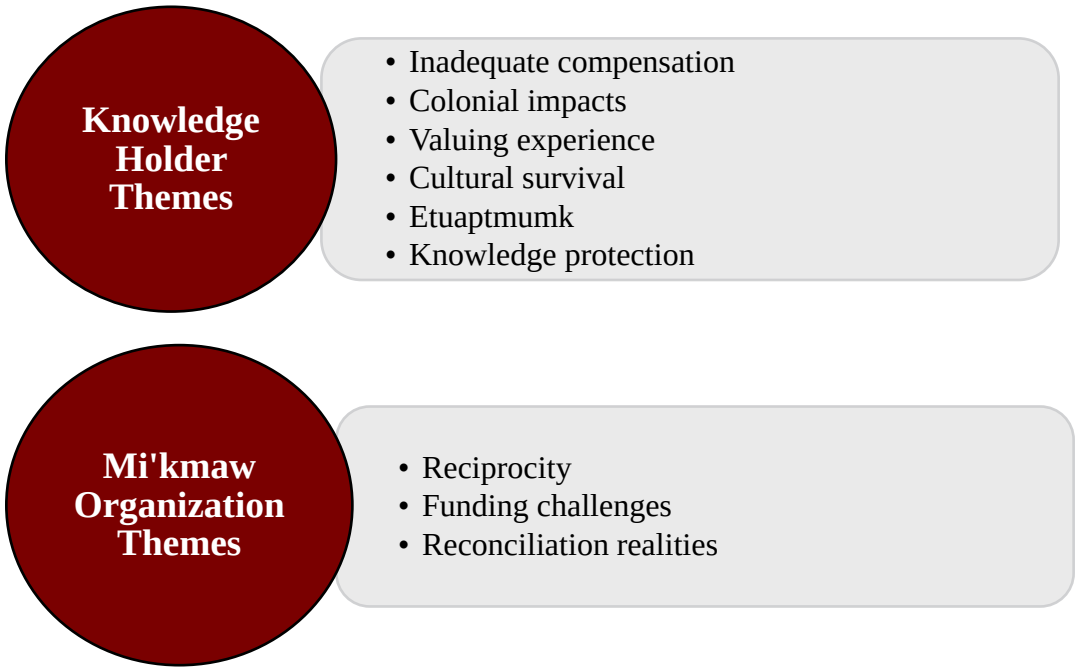

Figure 1: Themes that emerged from interviews

These themes and how they developed are described in greater detail below.

Inadequate compensation

Indigenous Knowledge has been seen as a free commodity for too long.

This was the most predominant theme to arise from the research with Knowledge Holders. What became clear during conversations was an overwhelming sense that Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders are not compensated fairly for their time when providing teachings. Some spoke about instances when leaving events or meetings, they had been required to participate in, feeling disregarded and/or taken advantage of. Words such as 'abused' or 'beat up' were used to describe how they felt in those situations. One Knowledge Holder reflected on being asked to provide teachings said that they had "a very difficult time… with people beating up Elders without compensation". A majority of the Knowledge Holders spoke about how Indigenous people in general, have been treated poorly for centuries. Comments included how IK has been

viewed as a free commodity for too long. Generally, Knowledge Holders believe they deserve more respect.

One Knowledge Holder spoke about how traditionally there were philosophies and rituals of reciprocity and payment. They spoke of how hunters would have compensated their Grand Chief for time spent governing the nation with a piece of an animal they had harvested. Others noted that payment was not only part of the Mi'kmaw means of survival and tradition but was an important aspect of the treaties. One Knowledge Holder noted that the covenant chain of treaties signed between the Mi'kmaq and the British were focused on "economic development and trade. They're not just about peace and friendship"; noting that the former is often forgotten, overlooked or disregarded.

Another talked about how Knowledge Holders are often expected to host and feed researchers who enter their communities and homes to study them. They spoke about how they rarely felt they were treated with that same level of respect. Some expressed that they felt confident to ask for what they deemed fair for their services, while other Knowledge Holders said that they found it challenging to put a price tag on their life teachings. Knowledge Holders noted that they often incur expenses when travelling to places to speak or provide cultural ceremonies and these expenses are not always covered by the organizations who hire them. This particular issue was consistent in all the conversations and expressed they wished it would be a consideration.

The Knowledge Holders I spoke with were often left to draw comparisons between their own value and worth, particularly as it compares to how non-Indigenous experts are being paid for their time and expertise. One Knowledge Holder addressed the comparison between Mi'kmaw experts and consultants stating that, "you go to a consultant, they charge you $3000 -

4000 a day… and this person here is deemed or determined to be worth 100 bucks". There was a shared sentiment between those interviewed that they believed one person's perspective is deemed to be more valuable than another's, expressing that they want to be valued equally with non-Indigenous consultants.

A couple of Knowledge Holders shared how they have experienced instances where they felt compelled to use their formal, academic education and degree as justification to be compensated for speaking to people about their Indigenous teachings. One stated that while they know they could use their degree to help establish a fair compensation rate, they tried not to do that, stating, "I can flip back on the back end of having a degree… but I don't. I don't usually use that, you know, unless it's necessary". As a theme, inadequate compensation, was expressed as a challenge widely among Knowledge Holders with some emphasizing if there is an acknowledgement their teachings have value and they have been asked to share, then they should be compensated as such.

Colonial impacts

The hurt and trauma from colonization is still felt today.

When talking about education, knowledge, value and worth, it is almost impossible for Indigenous people not to discuss the impacts of colonization. The hurt and trauma that has been experienced as a result government policies, such as Indian Residential Schools (IRS), the Indian Act, 60's scoop, and more, still resonate within Indigenous nations and people today. Going back to the early days of settler colonization, comments were made by participants about how the Mi'kmaq were willing to teach and help people survive here in Mi'kma'ki, but as a result, aspects of the Mi'kmaw culture were either made illegal, or their traditional understandings were stolen. On a couple of occasions, specific reference was made to different medicinal recipes that

were provided by the Mi'kmaq to help settlers survive, and how they were eventually stolen and marketed by non-Indigenous folks who were the only ones to profit from those ventures. One Knowledge Holder commented that these experiences left Mi'kmaq to consider, "if we shared this knowledge will they take it and use, you know, to benefit themselves, but not us"? Illustrating that further, a couple Knowledge Holders spoke about how historically non-Indigenous individuals, who were taught skills and lessons by Mi'kmaq, often published that information under their own name, and not giving credit to those whom they obtained that knowledge from.

When discussing the impacts of IRS and colonial education systems, many Knowledge Holders spoke about how they were taught to believe that non-Indigenous ways of knowing, speaking and doing were better; and that, the only way to get ahead in life was to replace their own cultural understandings with non-Indigenous ones. There were discussions with Knowledge Holders about the experiences they had when attending provincially administered schools in Nova Scotia. They shared how they were issued textbooks describing Indigenous nations in negative ways. Some spoke about how, amongst their non-Indigenous peers, they were accused of receiving a "watered-down version" of the education being taught, because of their ancestry. One individual, commented on how when asked to share their knowledge, they sometimes feel "unworthy" and "worthless", recognizing that those feelings stem from their time in IRS. Cognizant of the long-term impacts of colonization, several Knowledge Holders commented on how the Indigenous experience also highlighted the need to continue to pass along their teachings to younger generations of Mi'kmaq. Discussions included topics, such as the need for a more balanced perspective of history to be told, and the need to educate all who live in Nova Scotia and Canada. In some discussions, they shared that entire chapters of books should be

completely rewritten from an Indigenous perspective, so all voices are included in the histories told.

Valuing experience

Indigenous Knowledge and understandings are obtained from life-long, lived experiences.

The individuals I met with spoke very passionately about how they learned the knowledge and information they possess. I observed an overwhelming sense of pride when they expressed stories about their culture, the unique understandings, and the experiences they learned from other Mi'kmaq. Stories told of time spent with parents, or grandparents, who shared with them a variety of first-hand cultural teachings, lessons and understandings. They expressed how teachings were immersive, sharing that their cultural beliefs and ways of seeing the world are embedded in them from their earliest days of childhood. Many noted the same processes used to teach them, were the same processes used by those who taught their parents or grandparents. They mentioned that they continue to maintain and pass down this knowledge the same way to their own children, grandchildren, neighbours, friends and family.

A common topic, under the theme of valuing experience, is how knowledge is developed outside a classroom. Nearly every Knowledge Holder talked about how knowledge is measured in Western Society through degrees, "papers, books or manuscripts." They shared that Indigenous people too hold knowledge which is developed through experiences gained throughout a lifetime. One Knowledge Holder spoke about teachings passed down from his great-great-grandfather, noting that "Indigenous Knowledge comes from generations…" but a "three-year course gives you a biology degree". Although IK has been built through a different process, it is no less significant. Several Knowledge Holders felt that as a result, they should be compensated more so than their academic counterparts.

All Knowledge Holders spoke about how their lived experiences are not just theirs alone, but rather the cumulation of experiences built from the generations who have come before them. Each Knowledge Holder held the individual experiences of learning information, in as high regard as the person they acquired their teachings from. In fact, every participant, when talking about their Mi'kmaw Knowledge, attributed their teachings to specific people in their family or network. They never claimed the knowledge as their own, but emphasized how it forms through collective, shared knowledge. In many of the conversations with Knowledge Holders, they pointed out that Mi'kmaq are taught to acknowledge where they learned their teachings, to always "give credit" to those who they acquired their lessons from, and who taught the lessons before.

Cultural survival

There is a responsibility and a sense of duty to share Indigenous Knowledge.

Participants spoke at length about how sharing is part of the Mi'kmaw culture and principles. It is, and has been, a key component to cultural survival. This, of course, includes sharing their teachings and understandings. The majority of the Knowledge Holders noted passing on their teachings is a "duty" and "responsibility" bestowed upon them. This concept of duty and responsibility was a subject discussed throughout interviews when sharing stories during all questioning and often spoken with respect to the Indigenous principles of the Seven Sacred Teachings (see Appendix H).

Participants shared their desire to keep Mi'kmaw Knowledge alive, emphasizing to do that means it must be shared and provided to the next generation. Most Knowledge Holders declared their willingness to share their knowledge, with one stating she was "eager to share" with anyone who expressed a desire to learn.

Etuaptmumk

Indigenous and Western ways of knowing should not be seen as competing interests.

Etuaptmumk, as described in chapter four, was another theme that emerged from interviews with Knowledge Holders. During conversations, discussions about how 'we', as humankind, must be open to how others have experienced the world, further communicating, so there can be a more complete understandings of how the world works. Words like "equality", "sharing" and "being open" to other points of view were all key take aways from conversations on Etuaptmumk. In fact, many Knowledge Holders while discussing the root of their education and knowledge, emphasized the importance of learning from everyone – whether people are Indigenous or non-Indigenous. When it came to the value of their own cultural understandings, the Knowledge Holders expressed thoughts around learning how the world around them works continues to be essential to Mi'kmaw survival and includes understanding non-Indigenous ways as well. One Knowledge Holder speaking about the gaps when separating the two forms of knowledge said, "I can have a degree in biology and marine life, but do I understand it? I understand it in the non-Indigenous way, but I don't understand it in the Indigenous way under the Two-Eyed Seeing approach".

Knowledge Holders shared how Indigenous learning is an equally important type of education and opening up to multiple understandings and perspectives is critical. There was a shared belief in how Mi'kmaq acquire knowledge, whether through experiences or through a Western educational system, each perspective has value. Another Knowledge Holder spoke about seventy-five percent of his teachings came from his grandfather and twenty-five percent, from non-Indigenous ways, stating that, "the Indigenous [and] non-Indigenous Knowledge is necessary now because of the input done by Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people in our

planet". There is value in what others know, and there is room for people to learn from other points of view.

Knowledge protection

Telling our own stories is a means of protecting our knowledge and keeping it alive.

While it could seem counter-intuitive, many Knowledge Holders spoke about how sharing their teachings was a way to "protect" and "preserve" these teachings for future generations. A common theme that continually surfaced during conversations with Knowledge Holders, was the manner in how they were taught by their grandparents and parents to share their teachings. Beyond the traditional ways of sharing, an additional way Indigenous people are now using to protect their knowledge to keep it alive is through publishing their own work and in their own language. The example of *Muin and the Seven Bird Hunters*, a book by Lillian Marshall and Murdena Marshall (2010), was provided by a Knowledge Holder. Many Knowledge Holders expressed that Mi'kmaw publications have become a new tool that can be used to protect their information. There was recognition that by keeping the understandings and knowledge locked up tight and not sharing it, there is a risk of it being "lost forever".

In addition to the importance sharing the knowledge themselves, comments were made by a couple of Knowledge Holders cautioned against non-Indigenous people speaking or writing about Indigenous experiences. Stating that Indigenous experiences are not theirs to share and when writing about Mi'kmaw history, they wrongly "declare themselves as experts". It is happening too often, sharing that Mi'kmaw Knowledge is intrinsic to Mi'kmaw and belongs to the Mi'kmaw Nation. Therefore, the people who should be sharing or profiting from the knowledge are the owners of the teachings and the nation they are apart of.

Reciprocity

Knowledge Holders are not demanding to be paid; it is a matter of reciprocity.

It is important to note, while the challenges and concerns with compensation were made clear during my conversations with Knowledge Holders, those who work for Mi'kmaw organizations expressed that Knowledge Holders who are invited to share their teachings, rarely ever demand large financial payments for their time or information. During one interview, it was shared that Knowledge Holders participate and come to meetings because they want to be involved, not because an organization is "dangling money in front of them." Another Director accentuated the importance of Knowledge Holders being able to disclose what is fair compensation for their time and knowledge. All three participants representing organizations shared in their interviews that Knowledge Holders must be paid for their contributions. Not only because their contributions hold incredible value, but their organizations also want to also give back and take care of them since they provide so much to them. These are not a once-in-a-while request, rather many Knowledge Holders are asked quiet often throughout a year for their guidance and expertise – and some are reliable contributors of wisdom and knowledge to the work of these organizations.

Those interviewed, as directors of a Mi'kmaw organization, talked about how often they have discussed with their funding partners the need to include Mi'kmaw voices and insight when working on behalf of Mi'kmaw communities or initiatives. When they are included, because they offer a necessary perspective, there is a responsibility to fairly compensate these individuals for their time and expertise. All three directors noted the challenges or "push back" they have encountered from government employees or agencies not recognizing the value and importance of Knowledge Holders. One director shared, in their opinion, the challenges seem to stem from

the fact that Indigenous Knowledge systems "do not fit neatly into government boxes". As a result, the knowledge itself is being devalued.

Reconciliation realities

The colonial bias is still being felt and experienced by Indigenous people.

On a general level, reconciliation has been considered a positive thing in Canada. While true on many levels, the directors shared that they have experienced new challenges since the concept of 'reconciliation' has been adopted by government department and employees in Canada. On the positive side, on a national level, governments are becoming more aware of the need to decolonize programming. One Director spoke of those Knowledge Holders who shared with them how they want to provide insight, because not only does it support Mi'kmaw organizations, but it helps reshape federal and provincial governments' decision-making processes. One felt that this awareness has also led to improved funding policies, sharing they no longer have to argue "eligible or allowable expenses anymore". They continued to share that they were now able to include paying Knowledge Holders and Elders as a budget item. This was not the case for all interviewed. Two representatives disclosed that they have only seen minimal changes since talks of reconciliation really started in Canada.

When discussing the challenges encountered with obtaining funding for Knowledge Holders' honorariums, one of the directors spoke about how the understandings from these individuals could "help immensely with reconciliation", but the government still does not recognize the correlation between knowledge and value. Discussions included how government authorizations and authorities are still rooted in colonial mindsets, and most government employees they are in contact with have "no [cultural] understandings". Because of this lack of understanding, they feel it impacts what can and cannot be funded. One Director shared how

they feel like they are constantly having "to fight" for recognition of Indigenous understandings, but still feel like its significance is not properly understood.

Discussions about the lack of resources, both human and financial, and the ability to respond to the demand of reconciliatory efforts and requests received by their offices, was a key conversation topic during interviews. All individuals talked about the changes they have seen since the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action* in 2015. All three discussed how reconciliation has become an endeavour that often comes at the expense of the capacity of Indigenous organizations. One Director stressed the need for a decolonization process, particularly when it comes to how knowledge is understood in Canada. They also spoke about the importance of integrating Etuaptmumk, while another shared their concern that the federal policies in place are still directing how/when Indigenous information can be disseminated, and how it can be disclosed to outsiders "without permission". It was inferred that these could be improved upon, and changes would be beneficial to everyone involved in the spirit of reconciliation.

Funding challenges

Restrictions and discrepancies with government funding challenge how Indigenous organizations operate.

All three of those interviewed who represent a Mi'kmaw organization requires some level of federal or provincial government funding in order to operate. The participants all discussed they felt challenged often by government-established policies within funding agreements, leaving them to either figure out ways to work within their narrow parameters or to find ways to work around them. During conversations, each of the directors shared their experiences with the

restrictions inherent to them, as well as the challenges and/or discrepancies to how funding can be dispensed. They spoke of inconsistencies with whether honorariums for Knowledge Holders qualified as an allowable expense between government departments, and sometimes even between one funding agreement to another. Each participant spoke about how important Knowledge Holders are to the work being done at their organizations, yet despite emphasizing the importance of the knowledge shared with their government counterparts, they are often left with an inadequate amount of dollars to do what is required. One director shared how they had been advocating for "adequate funding for years". All three directors interviewed spoke about the notable differences between how non-Indigenous consultants and experts could be paid under federal or provincial funding guidelines, especially in comparison to Mi'kmaw experts or Knowledge Holders.

Frustration was observed during interviews with the directors, particularly during conversations associated with funding challenges and the discrepancies they encounter. One Director shared that regardless of the efforts made to inform government employees, these organizations felt like they are forced to work under Western-developed policies that have been imposed upon them, rather than having an opportunity to build a process that could be more conducive to their circumstances. One Director spoke of "the hoops" their organization must often go through when applying for funding, and how much of their finite human resources they had to use, in order to meet requirements of these funding policies. It was noted that it seemed counterintuitive to have to use so much staff time, and ultimately spend a lot of resources, just to apply for resources to support their work.

Concluding Comments

Although the interviews with Knowledge Holders and organizational representatives included very different types of questions, it became clear that there were overlaps in their experiences. The challenges imposed upon them because of colonial polices, mindsets or institutions continues to remain. There is a legacy of troubling attitudes towards Indigenous people in Canada, and despite best efforts to grow and heal from those traumas, the realities of how they continue to impact Indigenous communities and people remain. There are glaring differences in how Mi'kmaw Knowledge is perceived and valued outside of their communities, and while much of that is attributed to historical interpretations and critical sensemaking, there are indicators that these differences are a result of very different cultural understandings. While Etuaptmumk arose as a theme, it could also become a solution to how to move forward, and beyond these centuries-old ways of thinking.

There continues to be a gap in the understanding of knowledge in Indigenous and Western worlds, and the participants in this research highlighted how much can be connected to understandings long established through colonial policies and mindsets. And while there has been a desire to change those perceptions, the efforts being made through reconciliation are coming with their own set of unique problems. My goal with conducting these interviews was to get a fulsome picture of what Knowledge Holders and Mi'kmaw organizations have been experienced and their thoughts on the value of IK. Through these conversations, I also received valuable lessons about how vital it is to not only maintain Mi'kmaw teachings but also to share them.

Chapter Six: Discussion

Knowledge is power, unless you are Indigenous. Conversations with Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders and directors of Mi'kmaw organizations taught me that when you are Mi'kmaq, knowledge is much more than a mechanism to obtain power and status. For the Mi'kmaq, they see their knowledge is not regarded as highly outside Indigenous communities compared to knowledge gained from Western schooling. Several factors point to why, and they will be explored in this chapter.

How knowledge is formed

In the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2024), the definition of knowledge does not include any reference to education, yet some how in the modern Western world, we have come to understand knowledge and education as being synonymous. Descriptive words such as 'information', 'reasoning', 'truth' and 'experience' are all used in the dictionary definition of knowledge, but there are no references to anything that occurs within the walls of classrooms or on the pages of literature. For many Indigenous people, there are different kinds of knowing and this dictionary definition captures the intuitive nature of knowledge is recognized or understood, in the English language.

In chapter three, I included what some may consider a very loose and broad definition of IK: the epistemological functions of Indigenous people stemming from their particular way of seeing and doing, that includes both tangible and intangible expressions of cultural life (Battiste, 1998; Callison et al., 2021; Ledoux, 2006; McGinty, 2012). Through my journey to write this thesis, I learned that the definition is not only broad because IK is so inclusive of, and immersed in, all aspects of their way of life, it does not establish a pan-Indigenous definition and is cognizant of considerations for the differences and intricacies amongst different Indigenous

nations across the globe. It must be recognized that when Indigenous people try to create English definitions of Indigenous understandings, we are trying to define these concepts into non-Indigenous words. The effect of this leaves Indigenous nations to reconceptualize and reformat their inherent philosophies and concepts into languages which they were never intended to be experienced through, potentially altering its accuracy, or meaning. With the increasing speed that Indigenous languages are being lost, and the desire to build understandings with non-Indigenous audiences, some Indigenous people may feel that creating English definitions might be one of the only ways to sustain certain aspects of their culture. Although this is not the case for everyone. What might be useful to consider and an important conversation in many Indigenous communities, what is lost in translation may be greater than what is being maintained. In addition, defining IK in Western words and for Western audiences, often forces Indigenous populations to prioritize what the dominant Western society sees as important (Simpson, 2001).

What I learned, through the process of developing my literature review and during conversations with Knowledge Holders, was reaffirmed that in Indigenous nations, knowledge is tied to an experiential way of life. It is rooted in the wisdom accumulated through time from hands-on learning. The social understandings of CSM in Indigenous communities has taught Indigenous nations that there is great value in Indigenous ways of knowing.

> Elders are libraries… their knowledge, their skills, attitudes and their experiences constitute the record of knowledge and the wisdom of the people. Their memory serves as the collective knowledge and wisdom. Education is the process of communicating this knowledge and wisdom through oral language, actions and behavior (Ing, 1990, as cited in Charters-Voght, 1991, p. 113).

Our understandings, beliefs, and knowledge are built from our ancestors, the world around us, and the way in which we live. Because of these understandings, IK is seen as having its own agency. It is not tied directly to one individual, nor it is tied directly to the knower (Martin, 2017). This epistemological view is different than Western ways of understanding knowledge. In the Western world, CSM about knowledge is built from community, family and a formalized education process with a curriculum. We are taught that knowledge is something that is gained or earned, and something that an individual can have agency over. These perspectives have deep fundamental differences at their core, creating some of the challenges around the value of knowledge.

In Indigenous worlds, developing understandings and foundational knowledge is seen as critical to Nation's stability and survival, not just for themselves, but also for msit no'kmaq (all my relations), which include all flora and fauna. The physical evidence of life in Mi'kma'ki begins over 11,000 years (Mi'kmawey Debert, n.d.). The Mi'kmaq have developed deep understandings and unique connections to the world and environment around them. This remains true for any Indigenous Nation still residing in their traditional territory today. With this unique lived experience, generation after generation of Indigenous people have inherited teachings, attitudes, beliefs, and skills from those who came before them. Mali, a Knowledge Holder interviewed for this research, describes her experiences "being outdoors and learning stuff and going to the woods, my grandfather would mention a plant that was medicine…. He was teaching me the same time as just taking a walk in the woods". The time spent with her grandfather helped her to establish her identity, her understandings of what it means to be Mi'kmaw and as CSM illustrates, contributed to her own processes of identity construction and

social understanding on how knowledge is developed, and the meaning of those interactions is created.

During my conversations with Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders each recalled where and how they learned their knowledge with immense passion and pride. Grandparents, parents, Elders and community members were listed as their guides and their information was rooted in the earth. All their lessons were connected to concepts of observational science and hands-on learning. Knowledge Holder, Gerald explained,

> Just those teachings where you could physically just point and show…what happens to the environment. It's all about patterns, pattern recognition. You can still see these things being played out today and that's the part of an education system [that won't] pass through a book. Like you read this, and you'll understand it. No; you go outside, and you see things and you see how it happens, or you watch something, and you see the differences, like you really know.

Throughout this process of building an understanding of what IK is, the value of what is knowledge in Mi'kmaw communities has emerged, while simultaneously inspiring important conversations by Knowledge Holders to talk about how they feel their knowledge is perceived.

Survival and the impacts of colonial policies

For centuries, Indigenous people lived off the lands, waters, and resources within their traditional territories. Being immersed in, and building understandings of, the environment and world around them was essential to their Nation's survival and formative in their identity construction and CSM. During the early days, after Europeans arrived on the shores of present-day Nova Scotia, explorers and missionaries observed the oral transmission of information and

began developing orthographies, not to help understand the Mi'kmaw language, but to be used to support their own affairs and theological doctrines (Battiste, 1987).

On the heels of adopting the *Indian Act* in 1876, a federal policy already fraught with detrimental impacts to Indigenous peoples, a new school system was established whereby approximately 15,000 Indigenous children from across Canada were forcibly removed from their families and sent to government-funded, church-administered schools. These Indian Residential Schools (IRS) were outside organizations built to impose order and established by the Canadian government to 'civilize' Indigenous children and integrate them into Western society. In 1920, attendance at an IRS became mandatory by Canadian law for all Indigenous children aged seven to fifteen (Henderson and Wakeham, 2009). CSM tells us that we have an innate desire to understand the situations we find ourselves in. The experiences of Indigenous students at IRS only served to impact Indigenous identity construction and social understanding of how their knowledge, culture and education is viewed by Western society.

In addition to targeting children at IRS, in Atlantic Canada, the federal government also developed policies that focused on Mi'kmaw adults. From the 1930s to the 1950s, a Centralization Policy was initiated where Mi'kmaw families and community groups were moved to central locations, away from their traditional areas. In Nova Scotia, this policy saw the Mi'kmaq being forcibly moved to either Eskasoni in Unama'ki (Cape Breton), or Sipekne'katik (née Indian Brook) on the mainland. Centralization disrupted families and traditional ways of living that managed to survive the legacy of IRS (Smith and Peck, 2004).

Historically, additional government policies were developed, such as enfranchisement, that further disrupted the value of IK. Enfranchisement, fell under the *Indian Act* and was enforced until 1961. In the *Enfranchisement Act*, the federal government outlined that an individual could

lose Indian Status by obtaining a university degree; becoming a professional, such as a lawyer or doctor; serving in the armed forces; or if an Indigenous woman married a non-Indigenous or non-Status man. Being victim of the enfranchisement policy meant that one would no longer receive government compensation or support, nor could they be guaranteed access to their community of origin, as band membership would be removed (University of British Columbia, 2009). While this severed ties to one's community and ancestry, it was depicted by the federal government as a benefit, or a 'step-up' in life. This further illustrated how being educated in Western ways, made one no longer 'qualified' to be considered a member of their own Indigenous nation.

As CSM does not always have a clear beginning or end, these colonial policies, and the efforts toward full integration of Mi'kmaq into Western society, continue to impact how Mi'kmaw culture and understandings were ultimately perceived by Western audiences, and in many cases continue to be perceived. Historically, Indigenous people were depicted as 'savage' and 'barbaric' people who needed to be civilized through education. "Whenever there was close contact between white settlers and Indians [*sic*], efforts were made to make Indians conform to white [*sic*] ways of behaving…. Schools and education were seen as aways of assimilating young Indians into the dominant society" (Eder and Reyhner, 1988, p.29). No merit was given to Indigenous understandings and ways of seeing the world. Some might say that these perceptions followed Indigenous people from the early days of colonization up until the 20th century when conversations started to emerge about decolonizing the education system. However, in my interviews, statements were made that led me to believe these impressions of Indigenous people may not be completely resolved.

Mali spoke about her grandchildren and the influence provincial education system has on their learning and understanding of the Mi'kmaw culture. She shared, "it's kind of a struggle with the grandchildren because I don't know who's putting in their heads that being able to speak English makes you better. I don't know where that idea came from, but it's not true. You know, it's not true at all". In this statement, Mali shares concerns for the influence still being placed on the English language and Western ways of thinking, but also concerns for one knowledge system being valued higher than the other. It must be emphasized, the influence her grandchildren are experiencing is occurring during a time in our history, when there is heavy focus on decolonization and reconciliation.

The value of Mi'kmaw knowledge

Building upon the concerns that Mali has for her grandchildren and perceptions of the Mi'kmaw language, other Knowledge Holders also spoke about how Indigenous nations are still being made to feel the divide between knowledge systems and understandings. Several Knowledge Holders spoke about how Mi'kmaq learn through experiences and sharing that Western degrees or diplomas should not define knowledge as being more valuable.

The Etuaptmumk approach to knowledge and knowledge systems, was further illustrated in a statement made by Gerald when talking about education and education systems. "There's a difference between what you know and where you learned it. [Some] might have the highest degree in everything that they got from a university and never stepped foot out of the classroom". Gerald's comments about where knowledge is learned, further highlights the concepts of experiential learning and the ongoing nature of understanding the social activities that often lead to CSM of how Indigenous people learn and come to believe are the limitations of only relying on classroom education.

The Knowledge Holders I spoke with also talked about how significant their cultural understandings and knowledge systems are and yet, they see Indigenous people having to continuously choose between the Western system and their own. Viola looked at how we have been educated and shared, “you have two competing interests going on because you have education over here. And you need the education… but you should be able to do that and yet, hang onto what you have that's your own - Indigenous learning and education. You should be able to learn both without the expense of losing one or the other”.

Viola’s statement acknowledging these two knowledge systems are regarded as ‘competing interests’, further explaining that ways of knowing are seen in opposition to the other and raises concerns that Etuaptmumk may not be a framework easily understood or appreciated outside of Mi’kmaw, or other Indigenous, nation(s). Despite efforts to improve education systems through the integration of different cultural learnings, such as decolonizing institutions, and integrating Treaty Education programming, there continues to be issues with other knowledge systems being subsumed by the Western, more dominant system.

In fact, in the beginning of my journey to write this thesis, I was questioned about my own Indigenous Knowledge. To appease a Western institution, I was asked to ‘better define’ Indigenous terminology and questioned on my knowledge of Mi’kmaw Knowledge Holders. As a Mi’kmaw studying how IK is perceived in the non-Indigenous world, I felt my own Mi’kmaw cultural understandings were being called into question and devalued. While I can assume it was not the intention of the institution to trigger these feelings and rather part of their own socially learned CSM drawing from the organizational policies which they have been instructed to follow, doing so seems to support historic practice in Western ways of thinking that informs the

Indigenous researcher where institutions may be on their decolonization journey, and providing a curt example of how normal it is to try to shape IK to fit into Western molds.

As institutions endeavor to work towards reconciliation, the need to incorporate and better understand Etuaptmumk, is a critically important investment of time. There is undoubtedly an opportunity for both, Indigenous and Western knowledge systems to work side-by-side; but until the merits of each perspective is realized, there will continue to be a clash in how knowledge is obtained. In Bennett (2020), an Australian Indigenous education researcher, Kathleen Butler-McIlwraith, stated that denying Indigenous people a legitimate position in knowledge production would only continue to lead to their knowledges being seen as "appendices to White thought" (p.172). Measuring IK and understandings against Western knowledge, rather than seeing it as its own separate epistemology with equal value and merit, will continue to keep Indigenous people and nations as a subsidiary in society. While some may believe that mindset is something of the past, the examples given by Knowledge Holders, and my own experience, highlight how this continues to reign true for many Indigenous people today. As CSM focuses on a collective and retrospective understanding of situations, we are left to wonder, can anything be done to change those perceptions going forward?

Comparing knowledge systems

To help determine how IK systems are viewed outside of Mi'kmaw communities, in my interviews the concept of 'value' was brought to the participants in terms of how they feel their knowledge is respected and understood. In many cases, this initially led to discussions on differences between Indigenous and Western knowledge systems, where Knowledge Holders noted the expansiveness in understandings in Indigenous Knowledge systems. The interconnectedness and wholistic nature of Mi'kmaw Knowledge was raised on several

occasions, noted as a gap in Western knowledge. Two participants shared Mi'kmaw understandings on water and water use to illustrate. Lorraine said, "I can have a degree in biology and marine life, but do I understand [the water]? I understand it in the non-Indigenous way, but I don't understand it in the Indigenous way".

Lorraine's comments on the Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of understanding highlighted the differences seen, and levels of understanding in Indigenous and Western knowledge systems. For Mi'kmaq, they see themselves as a component in nature's lifecycle, rather than the species overseeing it. This is fundamentally different from Western understandings. Discussions focussed on how in-depth Indigenous teachings are, whereas Western students study specific aspects of nature but do not necessarily understand the interconnectedness with all of nature's organisms. Gerald explained,

> You can go into the water swimming in May and June, but it's not your turn. May and June [are for] the animals, like the insects and the frogs, and the reptiles and the fish. They're using the water at that time. If you go in and disturb, disrupt, or destroy, you're going to affect the entire cycle. If you go in, the bugs won't be there to feed the frogs, the frogs won't be there to feed the trout, and the trout won't be there to feed you…. Anything you do to the cycle is going to ultimately come back to affect you… The cycle of life doesn't go on exclusively for your purpose…. Being part of it, you understand your relationship to it.

The relationship between their responsibility to the environment and all living species within it, and the value placed upon the time spent learning understanding how these teachings connect to a bigger picture, factors heavily into their identity construction and their interpretation of what is missing in Western education processes. Knowledge Holders explained to me the time

invested Mi'kmaw learning, and how proud they are to pass their teachings onto someone else. This led several Knowledge Holders to compare the time invested into learning through Western and Indigenous Knowledge systems.

Interview questions about whether Knowledge Holders saw a difference in how their knowledge is valued in comparison to Western knowledge, led to follow up questions about financial compensation for providing teachings and understandings. In the development of my original interview questions, I assumed that the answers would be very clear. In actuality, the discussions on financial compensation led me to deeper conversations on the significance of Mi'kmaw knowledge, individual experiences, and some very important cultural teachings.

The value that Knowledge Holders put on the experiences and where they developed their knowledge was extremely high. Yes, they saw discrepancies between how their knowledge and Western expertise is viewed, but overall, this was not their focus. While my question was posed in efforts to highlight an issue, these individuals taught me that when it comes to Indigenous nations, value is in something very different. When responding to my question, 'do you think that there is a difference between how IK is viewed, in comparison to the knowledge of a non-Indigenous expert', the majority said yes. But, for these individuals, value was not found in something tangible, as it often is in the Western world, but rather in the emotional connection to those who taught them, or those they have inspired.

This CSM on community-built social understandings about what is valuable and important, was unexpected and taught me countless lessons. After centuries of being devalued or forced to fit into Western molds, I expected the Knowledge Holders to solely base their Indigenous experiences in the retrospective analysis of events through CSM and as a result, be vocal about the outside valuation of their knowledge. But rather, there was a humble appreciation

for what they had, as well as realization that while they may not be able to change the perceptions of others, this had very little impact on the appreciation they have for their own life teachings. In this circumstance, their CSM served to guide their exploration of the information and experiences they had (Klein, Moon and Hoffman, 2006).

Through the process of listening to Knowledge Holders' stories and experiences, some things were made evidently clear to me. Western scholars are often positioned as experts, which in turn, has impacts on the value of IK outside of Mi'kmaw communities, but not within them. During discussions with the Knowledge Holders about how their knowledge is valued in comparison to non-Indigenous experts, there were discussion about how the 'knowers' of Indigenous lives and experiences have historically been non-Indigenous government, clergy or researchers. Rarely have Indigenous people themselves been seen as the experts. Knowledge Holders talked about how little those perceptions have changed and still to this day, experts are often the people who studied and researched things rather than those who lived them.

As shown in my literature review, historical research on Indigenous populations was inherently biased and ethically questionable, often being used only for Western gain (Bennett, 2013; Green and Baldry, 2008). What became clear during my process of research is that "Western imperialistic attitudes" are still lingering (Bennett, 2020, p. 169). As a result, Indigenous epistemologies continue to be marginalised. These 'attitudes' fall into the social sensemaking property and influence one's own understanding of the education and schooling they receive, but also continues to determine the perception and value of IK today.

During interviews, one Knowledge Holder spoke about how it is challenging for Indigenous people not to feel undervalued when their understandings are undermined and viewed as second tier. An example they provided was on the recommendations and insight put forward to

federal and provincial governments, and how that continues to be ignored. Viola, who dedicated her life to advancing Indigenous issues as the political level shared, “a lot of people felt that they were giving out a lot of their expertise, and their knowledge and things, and it just gets ignored”. These experiences continue to injure the value of IK offered by people who have been asked to share their perspectives and understandings, only to be ignored, perpetuating all government entities to continue to dismiss what is brought forward by Indigenous people and nations. The CSM continues to build around these scenarios and does not work to improve these types of situations or the benefit of integrating IK.

As Canada works towards reconciliation, there is hope for better, through initiatives such as the TRC’s *Calls to Action* (2015). The Articles in this report call upon institutions and governments to create that change. Words such as ‘collaboration’, ‘consultation’ and ‘contribution’ are included in those Calls. Although the document addresses how there needs to be change, control remains with non-Indigenous entities. Even in documented reconciliatory efforts, why are Indigenous people still not seen as the experts to establish the value of what is, or is not, included? The Knowledge Holders who participated in my research, would likely have questioned why those responsibilities were not offered to those who are most impacted by reconciliation. As it stands, decision making continues to be left in the hands of Western institutions, and upon timelines of outside agencies. Article 62.ii illustrated this when it called on federal, provincial and territorial governments to “provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). These factors outside of the control of Indigenous Nations continues to further the gap on how IK, insight and involvement is valued.

The challenges continue

To further illustrate the issues in the value and perception of IK, we turn to the challenges faced by Mi'kmaw organizations when it comes to working with federal or provincial funders. Much like the Knowledge Holder interviewed, the three organization representatives spoke about the challenges they experienced with how IK is perceived or understood in their work. The predominate examples came out in the discrepancies and challenges they encounter when applying for funding through the federal and provincial governments. It is important to note that all three directors do not attach colonial policies to all the people working as government employees. They shared their respect for those who they worked or interacted with, specifically commenting on certain employees as, "well meaning" people, who are working under colonial policies. While their experiences with different government employees ranged from positive to quite challenging, the discrepancies were still abundant in how their organizations were treated. As described by the directors, there have been a few different scenarios they have all experienced in their role. These scenarios will be discussed below.

All three directors talked about how their organizations have been told by government employees tasked with reviewing project funding applications, that there are limitations to what an organization can pay Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders. Although this may sound reasonable, they did point out that those same restrictions were not imposed upon professional fees paid to non-Indigenous experts or consultants. For instance, one director spoke of applying for funding for a Mi'kmaw Elder to oversee a project as an Advisor and were told by funders that the payment amount requested for this individual was too high. On the contrary, in the same proposal, the legal and consultant fees, which were higher than those requested for an Elder, were not questioned at all. This example illustrates how academically accredited individuals

often determined by government employees reviewing proposals to hold a higher value than the Knowledge Holder. Likely as a result of the broader social properties and organizational understandings of CSM that was introduced to them this situation elicits concern. Although, with their lens through Etuaptmumk, the director saw the validity of both types of expert opinions and insight, this perception was unfortunately not shared by the government employee.

A second scenario noted by the directors interviewed is found in discrepancies from one funding agreement to another and whether paying a Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holder or Elder qualifies as an allowable expenditure. Avery, a director of one of the Mi'kmaw organizations shared, "it's not fair, I have one Knowledge Holder under this project… and can pay them $200 a day. But under another project I can only pay them $100 a day. They don't see funding agreements. They see [us] as an organization". Another director spoke of a time when they were asked to sit on a review panel for federal funding applications, and during the review process one of the budget line items the federal employee wanted to see removed were the fees for Knowledge Holders or Elders, stating they were an ineligible expense. Tim, a Mi'kmaw organization director explained, "I've sat on a few review panels for the federal government, provincial government, and they would always try to pick that off first thing. No, no, we're going to uncover that. And I would always say, why wouldn't you [pay it]? You're going to pay this consultant $70,000 but you're not going to pay our consultants, our experts?" The inability to recognize the different valuation of knowledge, only furthers the gap in understandings.

Finally, during my research I discovered there are funding discrepancies between organizations. One of the directors shared that they feel things seem to be improving in recent years with government recognizing the importance of Knowledge Holders. The others did not have the same experience. Although one director was told Knowledge Holder fees are now

eligible expenses and can be included on funding proposals, another was told the only permissible expenses to compensate Knowledge Holders is by calculating the kilometres traveled to and from their meeting.

These variations discussed above cause an array of challenges for these Mi'kmaw organizations. Because these instances are not happening once, they must repeatedly defend how important Knowledge Holders are to their work. The deliberate oversight on why Knowledge Holders should be compensated properly, has often left these directors to acquiesce to these government conditions. It was noted that this was done to not jeopardize their funding entirely. Descriptors of 'standing down' to not put other project dollars in danger, further illustrates how the retrospective property of CSM continues to influence the actions and responses and remains engrained into Indigenous people, as well as those who work on their behalf, to maintain some semblance of functionality.

However, there were instances where some of these organizations have managed to find ways to work around the limitations of funding agreements or applications, not in an illegal or unethical sense, but to ensure Knowledge Holders are compensated fairly. One director recalled they put the responsibility on independent contractors to include Knowledge Holder fees within their own proposals to fulfill these government-funded contracts. They have taken this approach because Knowledge Holder input is vital and a requirement of the project, but consultant fees and contracts by outside agencies rarely raise question. This method of securing adequate funding seems to work for all parties involved.

Another director recalled how they have come to understandings with certain government employees and are now allowed to put Knowledge Holder fees under the category of 'consultant' fees, in recognition of the exact role these Knowledge Holders are fulfilling. When the

philosophy of Etuaptmumk is applied in the consideration and evaluation of Indigenous-led projects, these examples illustrate how small changes allow progress to occur or processes to change. Although these examples have been successful, the directors explain they are not the norm.

In situations where directors continue to be challenged by acceptable fees, a sense of deep frustration was communicated. Avery expressed,

> there's nothing worse then when you have employees that you're trying to explain this to and they're getting frustrated because they can't get the information that they need and they're not getting the caliber of the information that they want…. You feel so bad, because sometimes [you] feel like they're blaming you. Blaming me because I'm the one saying, I just I can't do it. I can't. I can't even try and get away with it, because I know it's not going to go.

The experience of having the responsibility to influence government employees to find ways to work around policies take their toll on everyone. Having to firmly convey rationale regarding the value of knowledge is not only frustrating for the individuals and organizations but could arguably be interpreted as the microaggressions of recolonizing mindsets that continue to be imposed by governments on Indigenous people and their representatives. Due to these repeated instances, the retrospective analysis for these individuals and the situations they are in could further embed a believe that Indigenous perspectives are less important to the government than their own thoughts, challenging their sense of authority.

But what about compensation?

In my literature review, I quoted the Ecuadorian Fundación Sabiduría Indígena as stating, "compensation is not charity but a right of Indigenous peoples" (Fundación Sabiduría Indígena

and Kothari, 1997, p. 130). In their article they discuss how the act of compensation in many Indigenous communities is often regarded as "the Outsider's benevolence rather than their own expectation" (1997, p. 130). During my discussions with Knowledge Holders, while maybe not always having an expectation, certainly did not consider compensation as benevolence. Fair financial compensation for one's time and work are expected in the Western world. Realistically, it is also something that is expected in the Indigenous world. However, because of past experiences and imbedded cultural beliefs, many Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders find themselves in one of two mindsets: proper compensation or reciprocity is not an option because of historical experiences and cultural misunderstandings; or there is a cultural duty to share one's knowledge, free and willingly. We first address the former.

Understanding how IK has been historically valued or stolen for the gain of non-Indigenous researchers and authors for centuries, it is easy to conclude why many Knowledge Holders feel that having their knowledge and teachings received and treated any differently today may not be possible. These understandings have become embedded into their retrospective sensemaking and provides uncertainty for how concerns may be addressed in the future. In addition to this, there are Indigenous organizations who hire Indigenous people and are also underfunding and undervaluing Knowledge Holders. Unknowingly to the Knowledge Holders, this is because of funding policies the organizations must adhere to, further reinforcing a grim believe that 'they get what they get' and that their knowledge is less valuable than that of Western experts.

Using a CSM lens, it is apparent that the formative context of Western education states that formal academic instruction is the best way to learn and become educated. This understanding impacts the sensemaking understandings of education in modern-day Western society. We are

taught that formal education and schooling is the superior way of becoming successful. Little merit and value are given to alternative ways of learning and thus, despite years of immersive understandings and survival, IK systems are still seen as secondary, or less-than. Every barrier that was developed historically, and those that continue to develop in our contemporary society has, and continues to have, an undermining effect on the value of IK. Despite how things have occurred for centuries, many Indigenous people and organizations are finding ways to create change in today's world.

The concept of equitable compensation was not something that was out of the realm of possibility for those who participated in my research, despite the inequity they have seen in compensation for years. While a couple Knowledge Holders noted they just wanted to be made 'comfortable', the level of comfort varied and was situational. For example, Viola said all Knowledge Holders "should be compensated, even through travel and for accommodations, to ensure that they are comfortable". Whereas another Knowledge Holder, who requested to not be directly quoted in my research, noted if they were not served tea at a meeting, they would not be comfortable; and if they did not feel comfortable, then no amount of money would feel appropriate. While tea is a popular drink of choice for Mi'kmaw Elders and Knowledge Holders, there is also a cultural understanding that slowing down to have a cup of tea with these individuals becomes a tangible expression of showing respect and appreciation for one's time. It creates space for organizations and researchers to come together with Knowledge Holders to sit, listen, and engage. It provides time to share stories and information back and forth between the parties, showing them the simplest form of reciprocity.

While travel, accommodations and providing tea, are the benchmark measure where financial and cultural compensation should start, they are also standards noted by all Knowledge

Holder who spoke with me. However, many also felt that they have a duty and responsibility for all Knowledge Holders to advocate for better treatment, because of situations and circumstances they have experienced in the past. One Knowledge Holder recalled a time when she was asked to lead a justice sentencing circle. She explained how the circle ran for over three hours. During this time, she was also asked to conduct the traditional smudging ceremony, to provide Mi'kmaw prayers, and as the Elder in the room, help guide the defendant through their trauma and despair during sentencing. Upon leaving, she was given a cheque for one hundred dollars to compensate her for her time, effort and cultural wisdom. Patsy Paul-Martin explained how she "called their head person and said, you know, you're doing a misjustice here. You want Elders in every meeting, yet you're not willing to pay…. I'm speaking for all the other Elders that you abuse in this program".

Another Knowledge Holder, who was also advocating for others, shared how often Elders and Knowledge Holders talk about 'fair' financial compensation. He noted how many are reluctant to ask because they do not want to appear greedy. Tuma speaks to many organizations and institutions who reach out to him to discuss compensation explaining:

> you have to plan for this properly. The same thing as what we did when [we] planned for the winter. You have to gather enough wood, you have to gather enough food, you have to gather enough berries… so you'll have fruit and stuff for the winter…. And so, I tell people if you're going to be coming to Knowledge Holders, Elders, you have to prepare to come to us. So, go get your research dollars. Go get your program monies first, and so that when you come here you have sufficient resources to get you through the whole thing.

These are all powerful examples that remind us of how valuable Mi'kmaq consider their cultural knowledge and understandings to be, and how important it is for them to use their own situations to help create more positive interactions in the future for others. Comments were made by several Knowledge Holders how important trade was historically and how essential it was for survival. In the early days of European arrival on the shores of Mi'kma'ki, Mi'kmaq and settlers would trade for necessities. Both groups left these instances with what they needed or wanted. This concept of reciprocal exchange has been lost through colonization. Today's lack of adequate payment for one's time, service and knowledge is a clear example of that.

The reference to early days of trade illustrates how the retrospective sensemaking of the Knowledge Holders who participated in this study, still relies on the lessons and believes instilled in them through very early understandings told to them by their grandparents, Elders and teachers. These beliefs are so deeply rooted, they drew comparisons to a time before colonization efforts even began. The truth is, because of the way history was taught, many Westerners would be unable to reach back far enough to the time of their ancestors first arrival upon these shores to understand there was a point in history when things may have been approached, or understood, differently.

The desire to share

The L'uiknek Kina'masuti'l, otherwise known as the Seven Sacred Teachings, are principles that outline the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of Indigenous people and are meant to instill morals and provide a cultural foundation (Southern First Nations Network of Care, 2024). They are traditional understandings designed to teach a series of moral lessons with the intention of influencing a person's conduct towards others. Although they are several variations of these teachings across Canada, they are acknowledged by many Indigenous nations

as fundamental principles. During my research, what seemed to continually surface as a challenge when discussing financial compensation with Knowledge Holders was the moral understandings built from the Seven Sacred Teachings.

Two primary teachings continually emerged during interviews, they were ‘wisdom’ and ‘humility’. At Eskasoni’s Cultural Journey of Goat Island, an interpretive trail sign succinctly describes the Seven Sacred Teachings, including the principles of wisdom and humility (see Appendix H). ‘Wisdom’ focuses on how everyone has a gift which is used to help create a peaceful world. ‘Humility’ asks us to think of others before ourselves and to be thankful (Eskasoni Cultural Journey, n.d.). These matter and are relevant to this discussion because they influence the conversation on compensation for many Knowledge Holders.

The ability to advocate for fair and equitable compensation for others, but for many the hesitancy to do that for oneself, had only highlighted those cultural understandings further. When speaking with Knowledge Holders, they explained the reason they share their knowledge at will, is to expand understanding of Mi’kmaw history and culture, their way of contributing to a better future for all. Mali described “I don’t really expect to be paid. I don't. I'm just so eager to share whatever I have with people”. As a result of Mali’s willingness to share, she further explained, “they usually tell you we're going to pay you for your room, we're going to pay you for your travel and your food. So, that's great. Because that's the money that we earned. That's money off our backs. Why not take it. We earned that money”. But that did still leave gap in compensating them for their time and expertise.

It is these deeply embedded concepts and beliefs connected to ideas of sharing and earning money that led me to begin conversations with Knowledge Holders in the first place. What are they gaining from their effort in attending a meeting/event where their knowledge is

sought and yet they get nothing in return but basic compensation for the travel they must do, the food they must eat, and a place to sleep. Factors they would not need to worry about if they were to stay home. This is where conversations about compensating them for their time, effort and knowledge came into account.

When I asked about what they expect to receive for compensation when sharing their teachings, conversations often fell to sharing within their own Mi'kmaw communities. In all cases, I was told that an acknowledgement or gesture of appreciation were all valid forms of compensation. Knowledge Holder Tuma explained, "if I'm going to take a couple, a family, who wants to learn how to pick sweetgrass, there's going be no fee. Give me a bologna sandwich".

Knowledge Holders shared with me that there have been situations where they have been compensated for their time and teachings with gifts. Most acknowledged, to not appear ungracious or ungrateful, they accepted the gifts and talked further about the various types of gifts they received. Each Knowledge Holder spoke of instances when gifts or verbal acknowledgement was payment enough. Those instances should always be at the discretion of the individual and never assumed to be appropriate. Some Knowledge Holders acknowledged that they were flexible in the types of payments they have received by individuals, families or even organizations who request teachings. Whether decisions were made based upon either a "sliding scale" or some other personal principle, it is important to recognize those decisions should not be made by outside parties, but by the Knowledge Holders themselves.

While flexibility and generosity of these individuals is commendable and supports their Mi'kmaw cultural teachings, it is concerning this willingness to share can be taken advantage of or be a cultural misunderstanding. Sharing knowledge is an ethos practices throughout Indigenous cultures. It has been repeatedly exploited for profit. A willingness to share does not

mean the knowledge should be given freely. It does not justify compensating an Indigenous person differently than any other invited or contracted expert would be.

I learned during my conversations, with both the Knowledge Holders and directors from Mi'kmaw organizations, that the Seven Sacred Teachings and the willingness to share speaks about Indigenous identity and how Indigenous people see themselves. Going back to earlier statements made in this chapter about the Indigenous lack of agency over education and knowledge within their own communities, the term 'Knowledge Holder' itself came into question. Several participants said that they did not consider themselves a "Knowledge Holder". This was further supported by Director Tim, who pointed out during his interview that he has been told to call them "Knowledge Carriers", because 'holder' implies that "they are withholding information". The alternative, 'carrier' better illustrates the transfer of knowledge from one place to another, or one person to another. The use of 'carrier' is actually more accurate to the meaning and cultural understanding of their role as a Knowledge Holder within Indigenous knowledge systems.

It was during this conversation where I realized to carry something is a verb, an action. During my interviews, I was reminded time and time again, as Mi'kmaq, we have a verb-based language. Through action our communities survived. This is key to understanding how individuals in our culture see themselves and the social sensemaking of what it means to be Mi'kmaq. It also provides clarity about the role these individuals fulfill to help keep Mi'kmaw understandings alive, reinforcing how deeply embedded sharing their teachings are, and will always be, to them.

Changes in the conversation

During my research the Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI), an Indigenous organization based out of New Brunswick, issued the *Elder Protocols for the Wabanaki Homelands* (2024). This document is intended to be a guideline for how to properly engage Elders. It includes a discussion on honorariums, with recommendations for appropriate financial compensation. While my own research was confined to talking to the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, this document is an important contribution to this discussion. To not reference this document would be a tremendous oversight to the conversation.

New Brunswick is part of Mi'kma'ki. Not only is it home to Mi'kmaq, but also Wolastoqiyik. JEDI represents both Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik communities in the province. It felt it was important to include a discussion about the significance of JEDI's Elder Protocols, not only because of the cultural connection and overlap with the demographic, because it provides relevant published documentation outlining expectations and echo what I heard during interviews. JEDI states that when engaging Elders or Knowledge Holders, "…you are asking them for a personal aspect of their lives that cannot be purchased by monetary agreements. Therefore, you give them an honorarium as a sign of appreciation for their lived experience and wisdom" (JEDI, 2024, p.4). Although this sentiment was nuanced during my interviews, particularly on views of reciprocity in return for the wisdom and teachings provided, compensation should cover more than travel, meals and hotels.

While most of the Knowledge Holders I spoke with struggled with the idea of putting a price tag on their knowledge, the consensus was they all deserved to be compensated for their time. What differs from what was published by JEDI, and what I heard from Knowledge Holders, was the recommendation in the Protocols to never ask an Elder if they want to receive

an honorarium. I have wondered, given my own professional background, the possibility that JEDI wrote the statement so Western audiences would not think that paying an honorarium could be an opportunity to bargain. Another possibility could be to prevent Knowledge Holders from feeling compelled to sacrifice payment for the comfort of others. JEDI is correct that it should not be a conversation about whether to pay a Knowledge Holder or not. I would caution to assume a conversation should not occur on what is an adequate honorarium. Some of the Knowledge Holders I spoke with were very confident in understanding the value of their time, wisdom and energy.

Being open to having conversations with Knowledge Holders on how they might want to be compensated, should not be prohibited or considered awkward. In some cases, they may want to engage in conversations with organizations and individuals on what they feel is appropriate or fair for request(s) to share their knowledge or teachings. As described by Knowledge Holder, Pasty Paul-Martin, and the example about a justice circle she participated in. If she was offered the half-day fee laid out in JEDI's schedule, she may not feel sufficiently compensated for the type of work she was being asked to do. Realistically, to ask how much Patsy would require in compensation, in that circumstance, would be no different than asking the lawyer what their daily fees are. A restorative justice circle is a very specific situation. It is common knowledge that situations can vary. Not every situation holds the same intensity or falls within the same curve. It is for this reason that a conversation with a Knowledge Holder is not only considered prudent, but also critical. They should be given an opportunity to share what they feel is appropriate for the service they are providing.

It is not my intention to duplicate the work of JEDI in the development of their Elder Protocols, but it is important to note that the publication of this document did close a gap that

was glaringly present when I started my work, especially for my literature review. I have included this example because it emphasizes how important this conversation is, people are talking about it, and the dialogue continues to grow. I am honoured to be a voice in this important work. I acknowledge that I am not alone in this conversation and there are others who consider this conversation, with regard to Elder and Knowledge Holder compensation, to be relevant, important and essential.

Has reconciliation made things better?

There is much talk about reconciliation in Canada today. It has become an endeavor of governments, organizations and institutions across the country. But what it is, and whether it has made an impact on how IK is perceived, understood and valued, needs much deeper consideration. According to the Government of Canada (2024) reconciliation is about building a renewed relationship with First Nations, Métis and Inuit, based on respect, partnership and the recognition of rights. Lawyer and historian, Dr. Bruce McIvor, states that "reconciliation is Canada's attempt to legitimize its ongoing colonization project" (2022). Based upon discussions during my research, I would have to say that Dr. McIvor's definition is likely closer to the truth.

There is little debate that the concept of reconciliation in Canada is a good one. What continues to arise in conversations, primarily with the Mi'kmaw organizations, is reconciliation may be better in theory than it is in practice. Those interviewed from Mi'kmaw organizations have expressed how supporting reconciliatory efforts, in many ways, has become a financial and administrative burden for their organizations. Well-intended organizations, entities and individuals want to do their part to work towards reconciliation. In the absence of real awareness or understanding on what one can/should do, the appropriate action is to always reach out to Indigenous organizations and people for guidance. However, the restoration of these relations

should not rest upon the shoulders of Indigenous people. When speaking about the ongoing efforts of reconciliation and namely the work stemming from the TRC's *Calls to Action* (2015), organization director Tim shared "the unfortunate part and the biggest complaint I have is, it didn't provide us on our side… the [Mi'kmaw] nation side, additional supports to beef up our teams to help people with reconciliation…. I'm not exaggerating when I say, I get three to four emails a week, could be more from somebody wanting help to support, to engage in reconciliation, or to know more about Mi'kmaw culture and history".

Despite the underlying concepts of equity and equality, the effort towards reconciliation is often being placed on the people who have already been negatively impacted by the factors reconciliatory actions called for in the first place. It is counter intuitive. This way of thinking has left Indigenous people and organizations feeling forced to be the ones to reconcile the good intentions, along with the extra work required to make the process work, in their jobs and daily lives. What is clear from my conversations with the directors is when organizations are already feeling like they are up against nearly impossible challenges to improve the colonial relationship in Canada, they continue to be stretched further to ensure they do their part to make reconciliation happen. Even with the best of intentions, there must be understandings that social movements come with an expense for everyone who is involved. Without acknowledgement of the financial and emotional costs of Indigenous nations and groups, then the act of reconciliation is nothing more than an additional burden that Canada's First People must navigate.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

This research aimed to fill a gap in current academic literature about the value and perception of IK in a post-colonial world. Through a case study on compensation, financial

remuneration, and the experiences of Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders and organizations, I learned there was value in IK at the time of colonization. Those perspectives have been severely impacted by colonial federal polices in Canada. Federal and provincial government policies intending to eradicate and assimilate Indigenous people and cultures, as well as messages in media, history and textbooks, continues to influence the CSM about Indigenous people. This is still being felt in Indigenous communities today and affect the value of Indigenous contributions in the Western world.

In Nova Scotia, we understand 'peace and friendship' are foundational to the treaty relationship. Originally, Mi'kmaw understandings were shared with settlers with these concepts in mind. Historically, the willingness of Indigenous people to share their knowledge and understandings led to it being stolen or misappropriated. Despite the Indigenous experience, Knowledge Holders today, are still motivated to share. Sharing ensures cultural understandings continues to survive. This is why Knowledge Holders are so willing to share with anyone who wants to learn.

There is a deep, culturally rooted desire to share in the Mi'kmaw nation. Seeing the knowledge being passed down to the next generation is a priority for Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders. Also, sharing understandings with non-Indigenous populations helps to educate and inform. Knowledge Holders believe that as carriers of the knowledge, passing it on is their duty and responsibility. But in this willingness to share, it surprised me to find a 'grey area' where Knowledge Holders continue to be taken advantage of or, in their own words, "abused". Their willingness to share, is being misunderstood as an opportunity to get something for free.

This research revealed the discrepancies in remuneration of Knowledge Holders in comparison to those who gained their knowledge through academic learning. Mi'kmaw

organizations are forced to adhere to financial policies set by federal and provincial governments on how their funding can be dispersed. This includes establishing rates for remunerating Knowledge Holders for their time and expertise. The individuals and organizations who are directly impacted by these financial limitations, have very little say in what those rates are. Thus, federal and provincial government policies continue to control the value of IK and the worth of Indigenous contributions. The days where the treaty relationship in Mi'kma'ki was also about reciprocity and economic development, for both parties, appears to have been forgotten.

When sharing understandings, Knowledge Holders expressed they want to be made comfortable. This can include a cup of tea, a meal, and paying for their kilometres and accommodations. But remunerating Knowledge Holders for their time and experience must also be a consideration. In the Western world, comfort, in a financial sense, is about having an adequate amount of money to meet one's needs. There is also a belief in the Western world that those with higher education should receive higher compensation as a reflection of their expertise and credentials. However, expertise does not only come from classroom education. In Indigenous communities, expertise also comes from experiential learning, and building upon decades, or centuries, of understandings passed down from generation-to-generation. The different perspectives between Indigenous and Western nations, on education, expertise, financial comfort and compensation, must be reconciled through Etuaptmumk. There are merits in both, but the differences further widen the gap on understanding the value of IK, outside of Indigenous communities.

There continues to be talk across Canada about reconciliation and the importance of creating better understandings with, and about, Indigenous people. What emerged in this research is that, for these efforts to be successful, the imbalance of authority, understanding, and value

must be reconciled first. Government policies and indoctrinated beliefs about Indigenous people continue to impact perceptions. Right now, reconciliation is working both for, and against, Indigenous people. To better understand why this is, future research could analyze how reconciliatory efforts could be improved upon for Indigenous nations to benefit, rather than being burdened by yet another federal undertaking. In addition, as noted in my literature review, the development of a sociology of IK could help enhance the understanding of this knowledge, outside of Indigenous communities.

For Indigenous people, value is not necessarily found in dollars and cents. It is in often embedded in the feelings of worth, appreciation, and acknowledgement. But that does not imply that when a Knowledge Holder is asked to provide their expertise and understandings, monetary compensation should be overlooked. In the Western world, experts are financially rewarded for their knowledge and contributions. That must also be upheld for Indigenous expertise. Knowledge Holders, organization representatives and JEDI all acknowledged it is essential and a manner of 'reciprocity' for what is provided. Discussions and examples in this research show that when we fail to recognize the impacts that CSM has on diverse perspectives, it can continue to marginalize other understandings, impact identity, and ignore humanity. This is where Etuaptmumk can come in. But, until there is a willingness to understand other perspectives, then we will continue to view the world as we always have.

Although attempts are being made in Canada to grow, learn, and evolve, the foundation of reconciliation still stands on policies that continue to impact and marginalize Indigenous people. Reconciliation must not be a top-down approach from settler governments but rather, an opportunity to support Indigenous people to get back on equal footings, as we once were, Nation-to-Nation, with the signing of our treaties.

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Appendices

Appendix A: *Certificate of Completion: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*

PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE 2022

Certificate of Completion

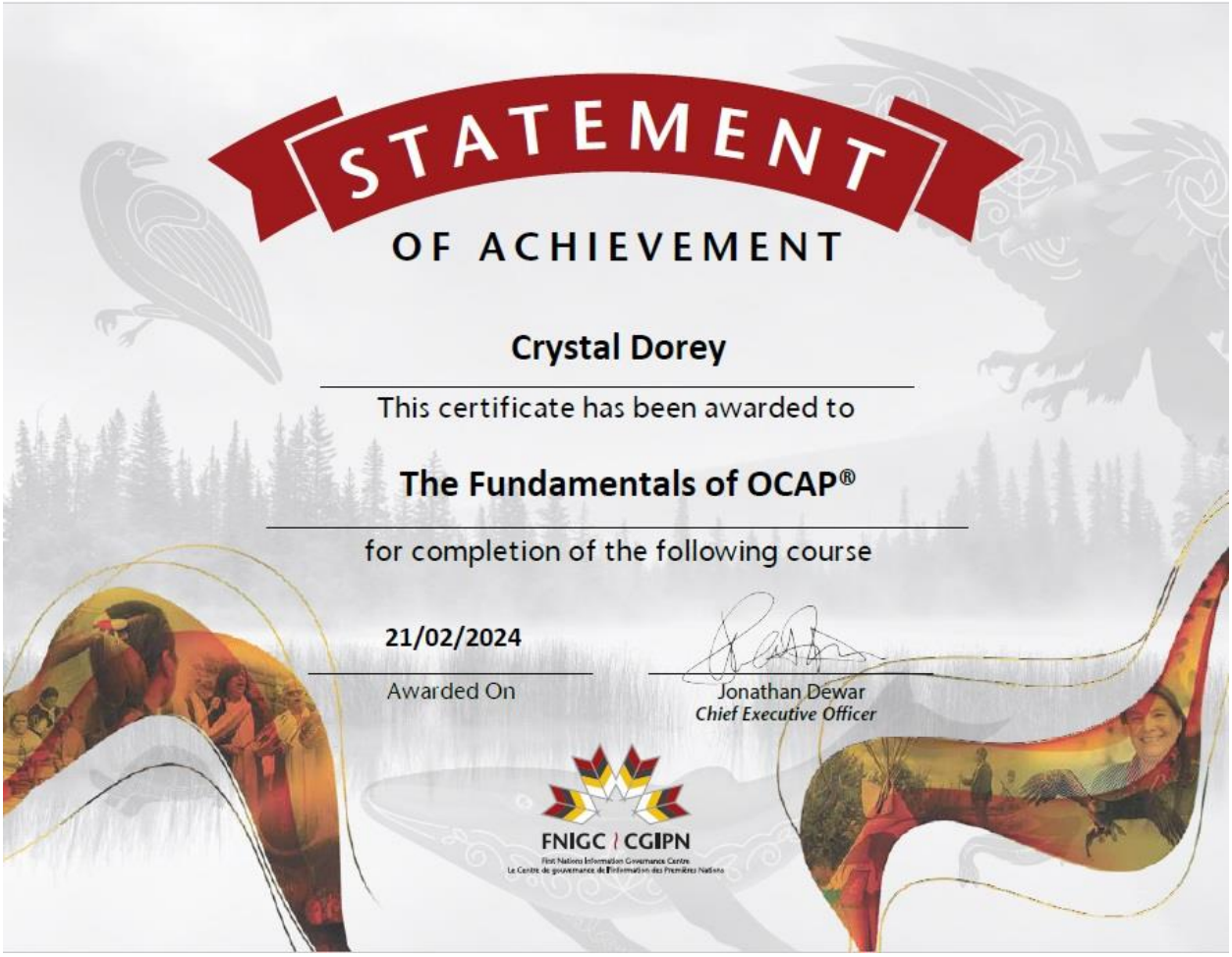
This document certifies that

Crystal Dorey

successfully completed the Course on Research Ethics based on the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2: CORE 2022)

Certificate # 0000842382 **3 October, 2022**

Appendix B: *Statement of Achievement: Fundamentals of OCAP*



Appendix C: *Informed consent*

Project Title: Knowing our worth: An exploration of how Indigenous Knowledge is perceived and valued in a colonized world.

Student Researcher: Crystal Dorey
Department of Communication Studies
Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
Email: crystal.dorey@msvu.ca

Introduction
You are invited to participate in a research project conducted by Mi'kmaw student, Crystal Dorey, who is enrolled in the Master of Arts – Communication program at Mount Saint Vincent University. The purpose of this study, how it may affect you, the risk and benefits of taking part in this study, and what will be asked of you, before you decide to participate are all outlined in this document. You do not have to take part in this research. Participating in this research is completely voluntary. If you have any questions that this form does not answer, the researcher will be happy to give you further information.

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of how Indigenous knowledge is viewed and valued in today's world. You are invited to participate in an informal interview (either in person or by video conferencing) to gather your experiences as a Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holder or someone who works for a Mi'kmaw organization.

Study Design
If you agree to enter into the study, you will be asked to participate in an interview to discuss your experiences as a Mi'kmaw knowledge holder, or as an individual who works with the finances of a Mi'kmaw organization. The interviewer will ask questions about your experiences. With your permission, discussion will be recorded for accuracy and typed onto paper for analysis. The interview will be conducted in English and will last approximately 30 minutes. Confidentiality is assured. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Potential Harms
No potential harms are anticipated from this study however, there is also a possibility that recalling past experiences could be triggering or upsetting to some participants. To help minimize those concerns, you will receive the questions in advance and are free to refuse to answer any question at any time without having to give reason. If there are also concerns that you may be identified in the research, confidentiality is discussed below.

Potential Benefits
You may not experience any direct benefits from this study, however the information gained in this research may provide a better understanding of Indigenous Knowledge and contribute to academic literature in this area.

Withdrawal from Participation
Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you choose to decline participation confidentiality is assured and the decision to participate (or not) will in not be shared with others. You may withdraw from the study at any point until prior to final submission of the thesis paper, (approximately November 1, 2024) by contacting Crystal Dorey, via phone or email, and asking to have your interview transcript removed from the data.

Your participation is confidential. Although the researcher will know the identity of interview participants, this information will be kept confidential. The information you provide will be stripped of all identifiable data, and you will be referred to by a pseudonym in the final report.

If you would prefer to have your real identity (name, community/organization, etc.) included in the research, rather than a pseudonym, check here: ☐

If you have any questions, please contact me, Crystal Dorey at (902) XXX-XXXX, crystal.dorey@msvu.ca If you have any questions about how this study is being conducted and wish to speak to someone who is not directly involved in the research, you may contact the MSVU University Research Ethics Board (UREB), at 457-6350 or via e-mail at research@msvu.ca or the Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch at Cape Breton University via email at mew@cbu.ca or at 902-574-4158.

By signing this document, you are not waiving any of your rights. By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you fully understand the above information and agreed to participate in this study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of this form will be provided to you for your records.

I would like to receive the completed thesis and/or an abbreviated version of the main findings:
Full version ☐ Abbreviated version ☐

CONSENT FOR AUDIO RECORDING OF INTERVIEWS

This study involves an interview of approximately 60 minutes. During the interview you will be asked general questions about your experiences related to Indigenous knowledge. With your permission, the interviews will be audio recorded and then transcribed for analysis.

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later on about the research, I can ask the researcher identified above. If I have questions about how this study is being conducted and wish to speak with someone who is not directly involved in the study, I may contact the MSVU University Research Ethics Board (UREB), at 457-6350 or via e-mail at research@msvu.ca or the Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch at Cape Breton University via email at mew@cbu.ca or at 902-574-4158.

I give my permission to be audio taped as described above. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

___ I give you permission to audiotape my interviews.

___ I DO NOT give you permission to audiotape my interviews.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date:_____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date : _____

Appendix D: *Data sharing agreement*

Data-Sharing Agreement
Knowing our worth: An exploration of how Indigenous Knowledge is perceived and valued in a colonized world

Date

The Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO) and the researcher, Crystal Dorey, at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) agree to conduct the named research project with the following understandings:

1. This research is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the Master of Arts – Communication degree at MSVU by student, Crystal Dorey of Millbrook First Nation.

   The purpose of this study is to explore how Indigenous Knowledge is perceived and valued in a colonized world, using the remuneration of Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders as a case study.

2. The methods to be used, as agreed by the researcher and her thesis committee are a literature review and interviews.

   The development of this project is based on sincere communication between MSVU, KMKNO and the researcher. All efforts will be made to incorporate and address local concerns and recommendations at each step of the project.

   At the end of the project, the researcher will participate in meetings to discuss the results of the analysis with KMKNO staff, and at their discretion, their board members.

3. Information collected is to be shared, distributed, and stored in these agreed ways:

   - During the study, all electronic records will be kept secure in an encrypted file by the researcher on their password-protected computer and a backup copy will be kept on MSVU OneDrive, with the permission of the KMKNO Executive Director.
   - In the event there are times the researcher uses paper for analysis, these documents will be stored in a filing cabinet. All paper records will be kept secure in a locked filing cabinet located in the researcher's home office with the permission of KMKNO and MSVU.
   - The transcriptions will be kept for a minimum of three (3) years in a password-protected file at KMKNO.
   - After the completion of the thesis document and any other KMKNO and MSVU approved communication, all data files will be given to the KMKNO on behalf of the researcher and MSVU to hold in a password protected storage.
   - Following the research period and intended thesis dissemination, the researcher will only use the data with permission from KMKNO.

4. Informed consent of individual participants is to be obtained in these agreed ways:

   An individual consent form will be used by the researcher for the interviewees where the contact information for the researcher can be used at any time, should the participant wish to contact the researcher for additional information. Consent will be sought: 1) verbally in the video/audio recording, and/or 2) written consent before an in-person interview is conducted.

5. The names of participants and of the community are to be protected in these agreed ways:

   Quotes may be selected to emphasize an element in the themes that does not reference the source. The principal researcher will be responsible for ensure this element.

Commitments

The researcher's commitment to MSVU and KMKNO is to:

- Inform MSVU about the progress of the project in a clear, specific, and timely manner.
- Ensure the data is transferred to KMKNO at the end of the project.
- Data will only be used with the permission of KMKNO.

Signed by:

MSVU:	**KMKNO:**
Crystal Dorey Position: Principal Researcher	Janice Maloney, K.C. Position: Executive Director
Dr. Amy Thurlow Position: Thesis Supervisor	

Appendix E: *Interview Guide*

Questions for Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders:

1. You are known in our communities for your knowledge on (subject). As a Mi'kmaw knowledge holder, where or how did you learn the information you possess?

2. What do you do to keep that knowledge alive?

3. Do you have any examples of how Mi'kmaw knowledge or understandings had to change or evolve over time to stay up to date?

4. According to your understandings, how do the Mi'kmaq determine who can be considered an Elder or a Knowledge Holder?

5. Are there different levels of Knowledge Holder status? For example: in universities different degrees can be earned; are Knowledge Holders considered to have different levels of knowledge?

6. Do you think there is a difference between how Indigenous Knowledge is valued or understood, compared to the knowledge of a non-Indigenous expert?
    a. (if a discrepancy is noted) In your opinion, why is there a difference?
    b. What do you believe some of those differences are?

7. Have you ever been invited to share your stories and knowledge by:
    a. Mi'kmaw/Indigenous organizations?
    b. Non-Indigenous organizations?

8. How are you usually compensated for those presentations?
    a. (if they haven't said) Is it usually money or gifts you receive?
    b. Generally, do you feel those compensations are fair or would you like to see changes in what is offered?

9. What is your belief on knowledge holders being paid for their expertise?

10. Do you have any final thoughts you would like to share on the importance of Mi'kmaw knowledge?

Questions for those who work in the finance department for a Mi'kmaw organization:

1. Are your financial policies guided by any external organisations or agencies?
    a. If yes, by whom?
    b. If no, who created your organisation's financial policies?

2. Have you ever received requests to pay Mi'kmaw/Indigenous Knowledge Holder(s) for their expertise?
    a. If so, what are the guidelines you follow for how these individuals are remunerated?

3. Have you ever encountered any challenges with what you pay an Indigenous Knowledge Holder?
    a. If yes, can you provide an example(s) of what some of those challenges were?

4. In your opinion, are any cultural considerations taken into account by funders on how Indigenous organizations manage and disperse their funds? Do these considerations, or lack thereof, pose any challenges for you or your organisation?

5. Have you ever been questioned by funders on the amount that you have paid a Mi'kmaw/Indigenous Knowledge Holder?
    a. If yes, can you please explain a little bit about what happened?

6. From your knowledge and experience, are there different rates for how non-Indigenous and Indigenous experts/consultants can be paid for their participation in projects that your organisation oversees/works on?
    a. If yes, can you share what some of those differences are?

7. Do you have any final thoughts you would like to share on compensating Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders for their expertise?

Appendix F: *Codes generated from coding process*

- Grew up/childhood
- Having first-hand experiences
- The importance of Two-Eyed Seeing
- Ideas of how knowledge is formulated
- Protecting Indigenous Knowledge
- Who has historically benefitted from sharing the knowledge
- Seven Sacred Teachings/ Humility/ Acknowledgement
- Connection to the Treaties
- Charging for knowledge/being paid
- Impacts of Residential School, 60's scoop, racism and colonialism.
- Equality or in-equality
- Importance of sharing
- New ways of sharing
- Survival
- The value of Indigenous Knowledge
- The teachings embedded in our language and culture
- Pride and self-worth
- Funded by federal or provincial governments
- Restrictions imposed by funding agreements/governments
- The need for Mi'kmaw professional insight
- Frustration/Fear
- Building understandings/relationships with government employees
- Discrepancies in what is funded/payments & equity
- Value/Undervalued
- Fighting for funding dollars/Fighting for what they feel is right
- Reconciliation
- Finding ways to work around the system
- The importance of compensation
- Colonized mindset
- Protections
- The role of the Elder/Knowledge Holder
- Lack of resources
- Motivation for change
- Understanding Mi'kmaw principles

Appendix G: *Sub-themes that emerged from coding process*

1) Growing up and learning through first-hand experience is key
2) Knowledge can develop outside a classroom
3) Grandparents/parents taught us to share
4) Sharing is part of Mi'kmaw cultural survival
5) The principles of the Mi'kmaw culture and ways of seeing the world are embedded in you from childhood.
6) I am proud of who I am because I was raised to feel that way.
7) I was taught to believe that the non-Indigenous way was better and the only way to get ahead in life.
8) Equality means sharing and being open to seeing other's points of view.
9) We gain knowledge when we value what others know and don't diminish their points of view.
10) We learn by doing.
11) We have experienced hurt and trauma
12) Learning how the world around us works is essential to our survival
13) To have a full understanding, we must be open to see how others have experienced the world.
14) Sharing what we know, as Mi'kmaq, is part of who we are.
15) It is important to find new ways to teach and share.
16) We keep our cultural ways through hands-on learning.
17) Non-Indigenous speaking about our experiences.
18) To keep the knowledge alive, you have to share it.
19) Elder teachings are so important because they come from lived experiences.
20) When we compensate those we learn from, we benefit too.
21) Indigenous Knowledge was seen as a free commodity for too long. It's time we got paid.
22) If there's value in what we share, then we should be paid as others would be.
23) Learning from Mi'kmaq but publishing work under their own name.
24) We had to learn new ways to pass on knowledge because of impacts of colonization.
25) We started publishing our own information to keep our knowledge alive.
26) We were made to believe that the non-Indigenous ways were better.
27) We deserve better. We deserve to be paid and have gone without for too long.
28) There are hesitancies in sharing because aspects of our culture were illegal or stolen.
29) We helped people survive but they stole that knowledge and made money from it.
30) We're expected to host and feed researchers who are studying us, but they never treat us to dinner.
31) Traditionally we had philosophies of reciprocity and payment. It was part of our means of survival.
32) When it comes to research today, we have to ask, who benefits? Who controls it? Whose knowledge is affirmed?
33) Our people have been treated poorly for too long. We are now standing up for ourselves and expecting more.

34) Paying us for our time should become a standard.
35) Mi'kmaw Knowledge Holders should not be paid like a charity case. They should be valued as a consultant would be.
36) There are times when appreciation is payment enough.
37) We do feel a sense of responsibility to teach and educate people.
38) I find it difficult to put a price tag on my life teachings. But I incur expenses when I go places to speak. Those should be covered.
39) When a Knowledge Holder's time and contributions are not valued or compensated accordingly, it feels like abuse.
40) Our Treaties were not just peace and friendship; they were also about economic development.
41) Gifts and gestures are lovely, but I would prefer to be paid in something that is useful.
42) Knowledge Holders shouldn't feel like they need to only accept what is offered to them. They should be made to feel empowered and confident enough to set their own rates.
43) Knowledge Holders sometimes have to use their formal education as a bargaining tool to be compensated properly for things they learned outside a classroom.
44) Within our own communities, acknowledgement is almost like compensation. Sharing with our own people is so important.
45) Everything was Indigenous Knowledge before colonization.
46) We understand life in and outside our communities. We have unique perspectives on the world.
47) Just because we don't have a degree in it, doesn't mean there's no value in our knowledge.
48) I sometimes feel worthless or not worthy, but I also know that's just the IRS demon coming out of me.
49) Sometimes people treat us like the education we receive has been watered down. But we meet the same criteria they do, and we are also learning about our own history, language and culture on top of it.
50) Indigenous people were always described in a negative light. It is time we rewrite those chapters of history.
51) Indigenous and Western education does not need to be seen as competing interests. Indigenous learning is education.
52) Many Indigenous people have felt that when they provide their thoughts and understandings, especially to government, it only gets ignored.
53) Sharing knowledge can also be seen as protecting knowledge.
54) Passing on the teachings that were given to me is my duty and responsibility. I want to share with anyone who wants to learn.
55) We are taught to acknowledge where we've learned our teachings. We verbally cite our sources and credit those who taught us.
56) Government funding is often restrictive and has discrepancies.
57) We had to figure out ways to deal with government funding restrictions.
58) We are challenged by the restrictions of government funding.

59) Some government employees understand the value and importance of our Knowledge Holders.
60) It is frustrating when government does not recognize the need for Mi'kmaw insight.
61) Knowledge Holders have an important role and when there are restrictions, I feel like I'm being blamed.
62) Reconciliation has become an endeavour that is most often at the expense of Indigenous organizations.
63) Most government employees have no cultural understandings, which impacts our funding.
64) Government authorizations and authorities are still rooted in colonial mindsets.
65) We are now seeing individuals who see the value of our Knowledge Holders and that has helped to loosen the government wallet.
66) It is wrong to see the major discrepancies in how non-Indigenous experts can be paid versus our own experts.
67) The hoops we go through to apply for funding are a waste of our finite resources.
68) Nationally they are becoming more tuned into decolonizing their programming
69) We don't have to hide behind allowable expenses anymore. We can openly say that we are paying Indigenous people.
70) We know how important it is to pay our people, but they're not coming to meetings because we are dangling money in front of them.
71) It is frustrating when we don't have the dollars to do what we need to get done.
72) Capturing information from Knowledge Holders would help towards reconciliation.
73) I feel like I'm being blamed for not being able to pay Knowledge Holders fairly, when it's because of government policies that have been imposed on us.
74) Knowledge Holders must be paid for their valuable contributions.
75) We understand who the best people are in our communities to talk to about certain subjects.
76) Knowledge Holders want to provide their insight and unique perspectives to help shape the government's decision-making processes.
77) Just because we share information, does not mean it becomes the property of other governments.
78) There needs to be mutual respect to see true reconciliation and reciprocation of knowledge.
79) We are constantly fighting for recognition of our understandings and points of view, yet we are still seen as less-than.
80) Value is seen in degrees and pieces of paper. Indigenous people need to be compensated more because they have a lifetime of knowledge.
81) Decolonization is a process that needs to be undertaken in order for people to truly understand that there is more than one world view to gain insight from.
82) In terms of compensation, it is important that Knowledge Holders have a say in what is fair to them.
83) We don't have power when it comes to our own knowledge.

84) Our knowledge systems may not fit neatly into the government's boxes, but it doesn't mean that there's no value in it.
85) Knowledge does just come from school – that's a colonial bias. There is an observational science that needs to be valued as knowledge.
86) Knowledge Holders are not demanding to be paid; it's a matter of reciprocity.

Appendix H: *L'nuknek Kina'masuti'l/Seven Sacred Teachings*

1. **Kitpu/Ksalstui** – Wije'we'm ksalsuti. Ksal Kisu'lkw. Ksate'n Wksitqamu, ksalsi, ksal kikmaq, aqq msit wen wksitqamu'k.
   Eagle/Love *– always acting in love. Love the creator, love the earth, love yourself, your family and your fellow human beings.*

2. **Mestapekiejit/Kepmite'taqn** – Kepmite'te'n Wksitqumu, kepmite'lm kisiku'k aqq ta'n tel-milamuksultijik wskwijinu'k. Kepmite'taqn wejiaq natuo'tekemk.
   Buffalo/Respect *– respect all life on Mother Earth, respect Elders and people of all races, the essence of respect is to give.*

3. **Muin/Melkita'suqn –** Wije'we'n kkamlamun, mel-kita't wen tetpaqa'teket.
   Bear/Courage *– listen to your heart. It takes courage to do what is right.*

4. **Kekwes/Ketlewo'qn –** Mukk ewlew kisna winaknutmu. Teliaq telimsin aqq weniq pilue'k. Kkamlamunk wjiaj ta'n teuen. Aqq mukk eksuew.
   Sabe (Sasquatch)/Honesty *– never lie or gossip, be honest with yourself and others. Speak from your heart and be true to your word.*

5. **Kopit/Nsituo'qn –** E'tasiw wen ala'toql keknue'kl iknmatimkl, Nsituo'qn ta'n tel-wekasin iknmatinkeweym kisi'tu'n naji-wlkaqniktn wksitqamu.
   Beaver/Wisdom *– everyone has a special gift. Show wisdom by using your gift to build a peaceful world.*

6. **Paqtism/Wanqwajite'taqn –** Ankite'lm kikma'j ke'sk mna'q ki'l ankite'lmsiwun. Penoqite'lsin Kisu'lkw kis-wla'lultew.
   Wolf/Humility *– think of others before yourself. Humble yourself to the Great Spirit by being thankful.*

7. **Mikijikj/Ketlewo'qn –** Ne'kaw kwile'n Ketlewo'qn, Ketleweyin na wije'wtesk L'uiknek Kina'masuti'l.
   Turtle/Truth *– always seek truth. Living the truth is living Seven Teachings.*

Eskasoni Cultural Journeys, n.d.