International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies

Critical Indigenous ways of knowing: Research, narratives, and self-actualisation

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About the author

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Abstract

The process of Indigenous research methodologies has existed within the Anishinaabe worldview for over a millennium. The Anishinaabe-centric author presents and highlights a pathway of Indigenous research methodologies, and critically analyses research, pedagogy and attachment through an Indigenous research methodology. Indigenous research lives within the Anishinaabe language as a cultural process for understanding purpose, in addition to understanding the specific gifts unknown to the researcher. This article identifies *Anishinaabe Gikendaasowin* as a manner of centring oneself within one's cultural worldview. Indigenous research methodologies contain intrinsic processes of critical cultural construct development, critical content analysis, ceremony and cultural attachment. This article further explores colonial worldview impacts on Indigenous peoples and the misapplication of that research and its influence on educational paradigms. Finally, an Anishinaabe scholarly exemplar is presented that provides tangible steps for incorporating spirit knowledge into positive, innovative and pedagogical Indigenous lessons.
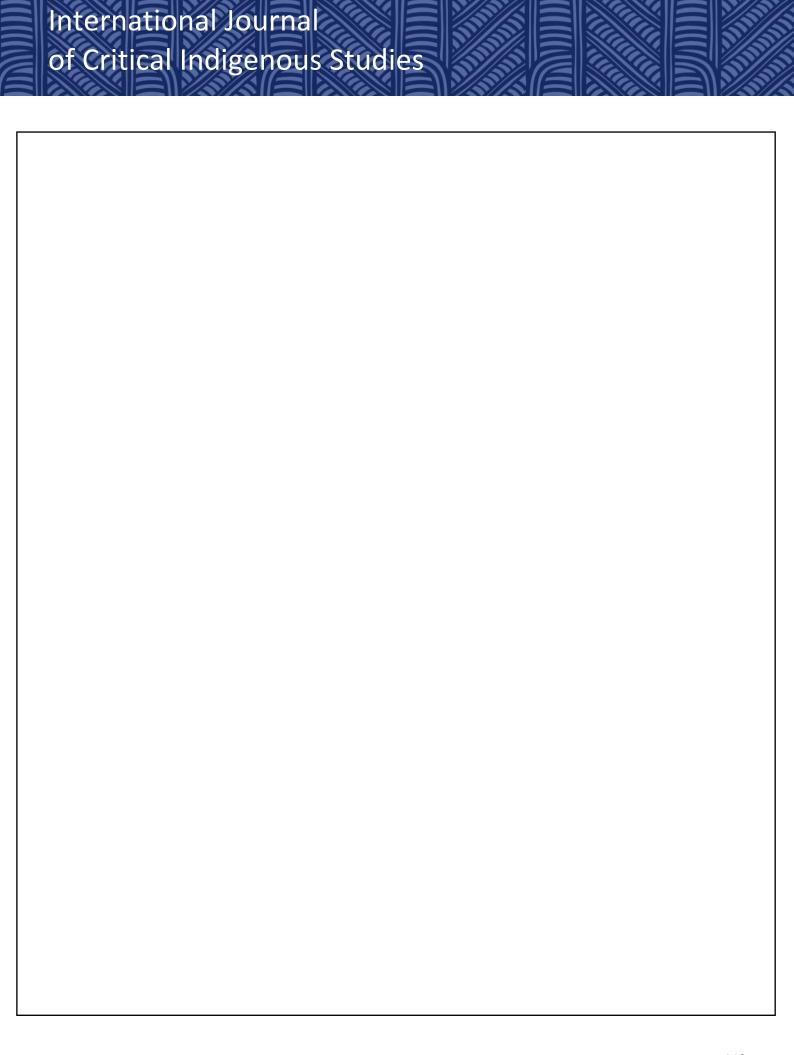
Keywords

Indigenous research methodologies, Indigenous pedagogy, cultural attachment, Anishinaabe

Indigenous research sovereignty requires consent when researching our Anishinaabe sacred practice-based evidence. As a result, Indigenous research methodologies will often start with the act of cultural grounding. Cultural grounding in research is not a new concept. In the Anishinaabe language, *manidoo waabiwin* can translate into seeing things in a spiritual way. This spiritual way is the bridge to understanding, appreciating and attaching to a construct or phenomenon within an Indigenous way of knowing journey. There are many different manners to grounding one's spiritual research work that range from offering tobacco to the *aatsokaanug* (inadequately translated as spirits), and to the participation in cultural activities, both of which will often promote spiritual awareness or *manido waabiwin*. This critical Indigenous research methodologies article highlights *Anishinaabe Gikendaasowin*, or Anishinaabe knowledge or ways of knowing that centres within Anishinaabe worldview. This article is embedded in Anishinaabe knowledge and can be considered Anishinaabe-centric.

Critical theory

Critical theory gives voice to Indigenous Nations across Turtle Island, because it comes from the premise of challenging settler states, norms and foundational ways of knowing (Denzin, 2008). "Critical theory views ideologies as a broadly accepted set of values, beliefs, myths, explanations, and justifications that appear self-evidently true, empirically accurate, personally relevant, and morally desirable to a majority of the populace, but that works to maintain an unjust social and political order" (Wang, Torrisi-Steele, & Hansman, 2019, p. 237). Critical theory examines oppression and unsettles power systems while engaging in dialectical discourse (Wang et al., 2019). Further, critical theory invests in dissecting a common socialisation assumption and moves towards critiquing this assumption through a lens that constantly challenges the socialised status quo that maintains unearned power and privilege. Critical theory challenges dominant settler worldviews and settler monolithic truths, thereby providing new knowledge, new pedagogy, and intersectional, epistemological and ontological ways of knowing (Denzin, 2008). Critical theory brings to life the untold narratives of settler-colonial legacies on Indigenous bodies and shares the voice of that survivance.

Critical Indigenous chronicles and constructs

A critical approach to the Indigenous worldview begins with history. In presettler colonial times, Indigenous peoples had a society that was shaped by cultural and ceremonial ways; economic, legal and social systems; warfare; and sustainable ways of being. Much of the knowledge of this society is portrayed in Anishinaabe pictographs and scrolls, and oral transmissions of cultural experience throughout the centuries. Yet, however accomplished and set these ways were, centuries of colonisation and settler colonial infiltration and monolithic development has created altered Indigenous societal structures. Contemporary Indigenous history and the transmission of Indigenous knowledge still rests within settler colonial narratives of erasure, romanticised or demonised identity fabrication, social justice, equity, and trauma. As a result, "history" has started with the colonisation of Turtle Island, treaties, the Sovereign Status of Indigenous Nations, federal policy, and the history of laws and their impacts on Indigenous peoples. Knowledge of historical context is vital to understand the effects of oppression, colonisation, government policies and the losses on all levels that Indigenous peoples have endured. Weaver and Yellow Horse Brave Heart (1999) believe it is crucial to understand the history of Indigenous people and the plight of their trauma, and to understand healing efforts related to violence, substance misuse and suicide. Discussions on the contemporary realities of Indigenous people and the need for a culturally restorative approach to systems of care must be presented within a historical context. Any person involved in helping Indigenous people must understand the impacts of history and the

multigenerational grief that has resulted in response to extermination policies and attempts at cultural genocide on the part of lawmakers (B. Duran, Duran, & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1998). Although the elements listed below are not a complete description of events, these historical factors have influenced the nature of Indigenous development and achievement in Canada.

Indian Act of 1876. The Indian Act was legislation to assimilate First Nation peoples of Canada. The act imposed full economic and political control of Indigenous lands, resources and operations (Joseph, 2018).

Reservation system. The process of land acquisition was a critical settler-colonial tool in the application of colonisation and its narratives. The land was "set aside" for Indigenous communities, yet legal title to the land remained with the Crown. Land, status and dispossession became a plight for First Nations people, especially women (Bhandar, 2016).

The Indian Agent. The act permitted the Agent to have total economic and decision-making power over Indigenous communities. Indigenous peoples were forbidden to leave the reservation without the written permission of the Indian Agent (Steckley, 2016).

Enfranchisement. Enfranchisement was a civilisation policy, a citizen policy, a status policy, an Indigenous treaties policy, but mostly a relational policy between Canadians and First Nations peoples. If an Indigenous person attained a university degree that qualified that person to become a minister, doctor, lawyer, or teacher, the person lost Indian Status and membership within Indigenous communities. Women who married out of the Indigenous community also lost Indian Status (Kirkby, 2019).

Governing structure. The Indian Act imposed an electoral system and designated the structure of that system, allowing for the superintendent-general to depose a chief. The active disregard for people of the lodges, traditional clan governance, and clan matriarchies' government became common practice (Alfred & Alfred, 2009).

Banning of congregation and ceremony. In the 1920s, "Indians" were banned from gathering in groups of three or more persons. During this era, Indigenous people's ceremonial dress and items were confiscated (Edwards, 2020). According to oral tradition, the life-giving spiritual ways and systems of the Anishinaabe went underground.

Residential schools. Residential school included the abduction of Indigenous children and placement in church-run and government-funded schools far from their homes. Parents faced imprisonment if they failed to comply. In 1993, there were more than 150,000 residential school survivors living in Canada (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2005). Fournier and Crey (1997) documented historical information on "internment camps" and the evolution of cruelties perpetrated on Indian children throughout Canada. They discussed the death toll, citing a 24% national death rate of Indigenous children in the schools, and 42% counting the children who were sent home when critically ill and died at home.

Isolation. Separation from home, community and family as early as three years old, with no correspondence or visits, was a significant tactic of residential schools. The pattern of separation continues today through the dominant protection paradigm of child welfare.

Abuse. The residential schools came with a recorded history of abuse (Johnson, 2018; Regan, 2010; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). For example, repeated, systematic,

sadistic and humiliating trauma to the physical, sexual, spiritual and emotional health of a person included: disrobing, shaving of the head, uniforms, cultural shame, racist, degrading names and comments, physical abuse, neglect, humiliation, threats if the child would tell, spiritual abuse, sexual abuse, indoctrination to Christianity, unequivocal discipline and punishment, regimented and rigid rules, unrealistic work/chore expectations (slave labour), malnourishment, and the omnipotence of priests (Johnson, 2018; Regan, 2010; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). This list is not exhaustive.

Child Welfare Project— a.k.a. Sixties Scoop. From the early 1960s to the early 1980s, there was a period in Canada called the Sixties Scoop, when thousands of First Nation children were adopted across Canada and abroad. During this time, 35% of First Nation children were taken from their parents, whose only crime was being Indian and being poor (Fournier & Crey, 1997). The majority of these children had intercultural placements with no connections to community and culture (B. Duran et al., 1998).

Although the dominant protection paradigm across Canada has attempted to move towards reconciliatory practices, it has sadly failed as Indigenous scholars highlight the continued gross over-representation of Indigenous children in care across Canada (Blackstock, Trocme, & Bennett, 2004).

Historical trauma

As a direct result of their history, Indigenous people have suffered from historical trauma and demonstrate historical trauma responses. "Historical trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences" (Brave Heart, 2003, p. 7). The Historical Trauma Response (HTR) manifests as substance abuse, suicidal thoughts and gestures, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, anger, and difficulty recognising and expressing emotion. Further, historical trauma manifests as unresolved, delayed, fixated, impaired or disenfranchised grief symptoms (Brave Heart, 2003). Historical trauma relates to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), although the PTSD diagnosis does not capture all features of HTR. PTSD diagnosis among Indian people is 22% compared to 8% for the general population (Brave Heart, 2003). Understanding historical trauma response is critical for preventing or limiting transfer to subsequent generations (Brave Heart, 2003); however, the nature of intervention must not revictimise the client, or their family, or their extended family, or their community. E. Duran (2019) identified psycho-spiritual responses to historical trauma and discussed healing the soul wound as a part of trauma therapy responses. These included (a) working with the individual and the trauma; (b) working with the individual's community as a part of outreach; and (c) "heal the land" activities with the individual, family and community (E. Duran, 2019). E. Duran, Firehammer, and Gonzolas (2008) described a new form of helping oppressed populations, called liberation psychology. Liberation psychology involves the helper and client attaining a new level of consciousness by deconstructing the life experiences and historical impacts of oppression, healing the soul wound, and liberating oneself. The goal of liberation psychology is to provide a culturally relevant intervention, and liberation from the effects of historical trauma on the part of the culturally diverse person and the oppressor (E. Duran et al., 2008).

Current issues

The establishment of cultural revitalisation in Indigenous Nations is included in the literature (Simard, 2019). Indigenous scholars have raised issues about historical effects, cultural identity, cultural competence, Indigenous peoples' overrepresentation in child welfare systems, and strategies for culturally restorative practices (Blackstock et al., 2004; Simard, 2019). Proposals for alternative strategies for working with Indigenous populations is presented in the literature (E. Duran, 2019; E. Duran et al., 2008). These scholars have recognised the damage of government policies, procedures, regulations and laws that do not work for Indigenous people. The success contained within the paradigm of cultural revitalisation exists in the establishment, promotion and acknowledgment of culture as the foundation for positive change with Indigenous populations. Culture as the foundation will then extend to all developmental ways of knowing with Indigenous children and youth. Indigenous scholars have suggested that the misapplication of pedagogy and practice contributes to continued legacies of settler colonialism (Simard, 2019). This misapplication of pedagogy and practices is defined as educational systems that do not focus on Indigenous worldviews or pedagogies as mechanisms of interventions for Indigenous stakeholders. Colonial-based pedagogical approaches are not centred on Indigenous worldviews although the receiver of the intervention is an Indigenous stakeholder. When the educational pedagogy does not match or fit the worldview of the Indigenous stakeholder, this is a misapplication of pedagogy. This is because the education and pedagogical approach provided to the learner will not adequately meet the cultural needs of the Indigenous client. Misapplication of pedagogy results in Indigenous peoples lobbying across Canada to apply continual pressure for government bodies to change the child welfare educational paradigm by helping social work practitioners understand their part in this child welfare dilemma.

The absence of context, history, historical effect and the link to culture has established a pedagogical crisis for Indigenous peoples across Canada, as our past and current social work education and pedagogy does not promote alternative strategies for attempting to engage with Indigenous clientele. This pedagogical crisis comes in the form of white pedagogical approaches not meeting the cultural needs of Indigenous stakeholders, or the lack of Indigenous pedagogies within colonial educational systems. Although more progressive postsecondary institutions endeavour to advance Indigenous worldviews, they are the minority in a system that relates mostly to a positivist framework. As a result, there is a misapplication and misinterpretation of issues from the outset, which, combined with historical effects and current socioeconomic drivers, have led to a disparity and subsequent overrepresentation of children and youth involved in child welfare (Lavergne, Dufour, Trocme, & Larrivee, 2008), judicial systems (Canadian Criminal Justice Association, 2011; Fournier & Crey, 1997) and children's mental health centres (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2011). In addition to socioeconomic disparities and the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in foster care, the pedagogical drivers that promote and sustain inappropriate practices with Indigenous populations continue to promote ineffective tools. Indigenous pedagogical drivers are the foundational teachings that all Indigenous Nations have. These include Creation stories, language, naming ceremonies, rites of passage ceremonies, or any teaching or ceremonial activity that produces wellness. Indigenous pedagogical drivers continue to be wholistic, with an essential focus on land, location, nation-based, life experiences or social group interactions. Further, these Indigenous pedagogical drivers focus on a conceptually whole being, and pay attention to the emotional, mental, physical, contextual and spiritual parts of being. But, Indigenous pedagogical drivers are absent in colonial pedagogies, which are unable to strengthen successful relationship building with Indigenous people. This is not the fault of Indigenous people or non-Indigenous people; it is because of a lack of education and the lack of a

reconciliatory process. Historical and contemporary issues need to be a part of a continuous courageous dialogue in educational and pedagogical development (Rothkopf, 2009).

Discussing history and bringing about understanding to develop a postmodern educational framework for successful engagement is necessary for Indigenous education efforts to promote developmental success. Manuelito (2006) suggests that "worldviews of any culture and society are explicated through epistemological principles which frame the way one sees the world" (p. 8). Indigenous knowledge and education begin with securing a child's spirit as the foundation and builds non-Indigenous paradigms as secondary information for the child's contemporary context. Further, Indigenous identity and the Indigenous spiritual core are necessary for the transformation of a person and also for a Nation of its people. The next section discusses the importance of Indigenous research methodologies at an intrapersonal level.

Indigenous research methodologies

Indigenous research methodologies are a type of knowledge that exists outside the norms of typical academic research; however, it is a research practice that has existed in Indigenous communities for a millennium (Spaulding, 2010; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Tuhiwa Smith, 2002). Indigenous research methodologies are how we come to know a phenomenon, how we come to understand a fundamental purpose, and how we apply it within ourselves, our families, our communities and our nations. Indigenous research methodologies become a part of our natural intrinsic desire to attach to our cultural worldview. They begin with a practice of coming to understand a phenomenon by including all the cultural structures, variables and knowledge of the individual asking the question. Indigenous research methodologies are inclusive of ethics and responsibilities (Spaulding, 2010; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Tuhiwa Smith, 2002).

Further, Indigenous research methodologies are inclusive of the lived experiences of the Indigenous peoples for the direct purpose of creating a better life for future generations. The ethical responsibility inherent in Indigenous research methodologies rests in knowing the history of a people as far back as seven generations before and seven generations into the future. Conscious development from the past, the present and the future continues to support this ethical threshold. Indigenous research methodologies are valued and are respected as critical thought, to influence change within the context of prevailing laws and policies. Through research, Indigenous research methodologies can drive a theoretical practice to empower children and youth to thrive in our society.

Indigenous research methodologies allow Indigenous peoples to understand themselves within their own context. They also provide an opportunity to deconstruct and construct new ways of knowing and being, and build on the idea of lived experiences shared through relations with family, extended family, community, one's Nation, the land, the elements, the people and the spirit side, as accessed through the innermost self and traditional knowledge keepers or healers. Indigenous research methodologies are inclusive of spirit and the infinite access to ancestral knowledge it presents. Indigenous research methodologies provide the people with connections to the land and elements. Also, these methodologies provide opportunities to examine how we view the world critically. In turn, this critical examination becomes our reflexive praxis, which internalises our Indigenous understanding and pedagogy.

Unique to this body of knowledge, critical thought and spiritual inclusion is an essential driver for Indigenous research methodologies. Wilson (2008) declared that research is ceremony, and storytelling is ceremony; therefore, storytelling is part of Indigenous research methodologies.

Indigenous research methodologies, like storytelling, are a powerful influence on Indigenous learning. Learning is due to the ideology that promotes storytelling structures with the active intertwining of cultural rules, rites, protocols, procedures, responsibilities and sacred laws or the formalities within these laws. For the writer, this includes sitting within the natural environment, humbling the spirit to the Creator, and offering tobacco to ensure this work completes with the highest of Indigenous research standards. As an ethical practice, the storytelling approach consists of enriching resistance and resurgence, spirituality, reciprocity and relationships that will extend beyond family and community, and ultimately link to the land. This deep and rich practice supports Indigenous pedagogy and wields a different knowledge set, as it rests within the spirit. As a result, storytelling as an Indigenous research methodology becomes a sacred transcription of the lived experience of one's spiritual quest of knowledge.

Storytelling as Indigenous knowledge

Storytelling is a legitimate academic approach in qualitative interpretative inquiry (McKeough et al., 2008; Spaulding, 2010; Weeks, 2009). Koch (1998) and Lekoko (2007) discussed storytelling as a narrative inquiry that is validated by the academic rigor of practice-based evidence that exists with various phenomena. Koch (1998) explained interpretative research as "an interactive process shaped by personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, biography, gender, social class, race and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting" (p. 1182). Further, Koch stated: "people live stories and in their telling of them, reaffirm them, modify them, and create new ones" (p. 1182). Through reflection and praxis, storytelling methods allow for the discovery of social meanings related to the natural process of cultural development. Indigenous storytelling is not a new phenomenon in Indigenous research methodologies, as Indigenous peoples have been telling Creation stories, legends, myths and analogies as a mechanism for healthy development for a millennium.

From an Indigenous perspective, storytelling can come through the lived experiences of the people and their place, or through spiritual helpers, as described in the original legends or teachings of the people. These legends or teachings are often intertwined with a vivid imagination, full of emotional response and highly therapeutic; but, more often than not, it can be problematic to allow for the skill of spirit and/or moral development to evolve within the listener (Chang, Chou, & Yang, 2011; Spaulding, 2010; Weeks, 2009). According to Koch (1998), storytelling is a lived process designed to facilitate change, whether internal or external, within an individual, family, community, nation or environment.

Storytelling is the opportunity to communicate valuable knowledge about the challenges faced by Indigenous communities (Lekoko, 2007). Often, stories or legends in an Indigenous nation are relevant to the land, and they can have mythological creatures that guide Indigenous development—for example, the Indigenous legend, *Memengwaawid to be a butterfly, the mythological creature guides development* (Farrell-Morneau, 2014). Further, these legends can have connections to family or community and describe a collective social experience in which these experiences guide future decisions. Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T'lakwadzi (2009) published *Indigenous Storytelling, Truth-telling, and Community Approaches to Reconciliation* as an example of how storytelling designs can provide strategies and approaches for reconciling the effects of colonisation. In addition to the storyline, the storytelling methodology is relational in that it can be dyadic or include a storyteller with an audience (Corntassel et al., 2009). In either event, the story moves each individual in different ways. The responsibility involved in listening requires a high-level skill of critical analysis, praxis, reflection, self-analysis, and an Indigenous perspective that guides one's regulatory value systems involved in self-actualisation. Storytelling allows

discussion of the problem to form and apply solutions as a process of reconciliation within oneself and within a colonial context (Corntassel et al., 2009). Further, storytelling allows for the opportunity to explore one's attachment to their culture.

Storytelling exemplar—The Seven Manidoog

It is essential to have culturally safe spaces for Indigenous research methodologies. These safe spaces allow for the self-study of the sacred teachings of Indigenous peoples. Culturally safe spaces and practices mean the *transmission of knowledge* from a teacher to the learner is free from violence or power of any kind (McKeough et al., 2008). Culturally safe spaces and practices include the opportunity to transmit knowledge with kindness and love. This transmission of knowledge is considered the most vulnerable time of the seeker of this knowledge. The vulnerability at the early stages of spiritual development is regarded as the most sacred learning time as it connects to the spirit. Two-spirit friendly traditional knowledge keepers will often promote gender-free associations with storytelling. These knowledge keepers will give voice to the teachings and say the stories, legends, and teachings that come from the Manidoog (or the spirits), so that not all stories, legends or teachings are necessarily associated with gender labels. In creating spaces free of colonial gender-based teachings, the author has chosen to share the original story of the seven manidoog (spirits) in replacement of the seven grandfathers.

In keeping with the original thoughts of the writer, we will begin our exploration of Indigenous research methodologies with a modified teaching of the Seven Manidoog, or seven spirits. The Seven Manidoog is a story of the Anishinaabe people of Turtle Island (North America), and is the original teaching of the Seven Manidoog. Often, the Seven Manidoog is expressed as the seven grandfather teachings; however, traditional knowledge keepers have advised that these spirits are gender-free as they are not of this world. Although the author would like to quote the exact words of Benton-Banai (1988), the researcher chose to build upon his works and expand upon the oral traditions as taught through two-spirit friendly Anishinaabe traditional knowledge keepers. The storytelling approach promotes spiritual awareness and is central to the discussion of Indigenous development.

The paraphrased story is as follows:

> It has been told that the original people of the land were plentiful on Turtle Island. The people worked hard to survive for the subsistence of the earth, and more often than not, the people succumbed to the hardships of this world because of the weakness that existed within.

> Creator, in their wisdom, gave the people the gift of the Seven Manidoog. These Manidoog were given the primary responsibility to care over each one of us on this earth. The Manidoog were beautiful spirits, who bestowed gifts beyond our understanding and knowledge—they were a powerful being designed to help us find our way. In watching over the people during this time, they noticed the sickness and called upon a helper to look for someone they could teach and, in turn, for him to teach the people how to live in harmony within themselves, with each other, and in sacred unity with the world.

> It is said that the spirit helper searched the earth to find a person worthy of the teachings of the Seven Manidoog. Upon the spirit helpers' seventh attempt, he roamed the four corners of the earth to find a newborn boy who was virtuous and uncorrupted by the complexities of life. He took the boy to the land of the spirits to meet with the Seven Manidoog at their lodge, but the boy was so young that he would not meet with the Seven Manidoog without peril. The Manidoog instructed the helper to take the boy and teach him about the universe and to return when the boy was older.

When the helper brought back the young boy to the Seven Manidoog lodge, he had within him the sacred teachings of the universe taught to him by his helper. The young boy was ready to meet with the Seven Manidoog. What he saw was a beauty within them. The Manidoog were kind, protecting, and loving to the boy. They embodied a love not of this world, a kindness not of this world, and a language that seemed to be spoken through spirit. The Manidoog sat with the young boy and told him he would one day return to the people with the gifts they would give to him.

In the lodge, the Manidoog had a vessel that had cloth made of four colors that represented man—White (North), Yellow (East), Red (South), and Black (West). The cloth and its vessel signified that we are all Creator's people, and the gifts are for all. The boy removed the cloth and was told to look into the vessel. In this vessel, he saw beauty beyond words. He felt the colors he has never seen before. He heard sounds so beautiful, and most importantly, he felt a serenity he had never known previously. In a glimpse, the boy saw his life, his future, purpose, struggles, and accomplishments, and all that he could visualize in that short glimpse. Each of the Manidoog reached into the vessel, placed in the young boy's hand a spiritual gift that absorbed into his physical being. The Manidoog then instructed the helper to find someone to help the boy return to his people—to his family. The otter was the animal that came forward for the young boy to help him in his journey home. The otter came to the sacred lodge of the Manidoog and was instructed on the journey ahead.

The boy and the otter had a bundle of gifts for the people. They travelled home, stopping seven times, and each time a spirit came forward and told them about the gifts the boy was given. The gifts were called love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility, truth, and wisdom; further, he was told they rested within his spirit. The spirits talked about the gifts and spoke about the opposites that existed—hate, disrespect, fear, dishonesty, ego, lies, and ignorance. The spirits spoke about the need for balance that existed between these two extremes.

The boy, who was now a man, returned to his people's village. He gave his people the gifts given to him from the Seven Manidoog—the gift of love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility, truth, and wisdom. He also taught them the importance of balance and understanding. There are always opposites that exist in our world. He continued to educate his people about these crucial teachings of the Manidoog and how this will provide the people with the opportunity to have a robust physical presence because the spirit within them would be stronger now. "For the people to be completely healthy, they must seek to develop themselves spiritually and find a balance between the physical and the spiritual worlds". The boy, now a man, stated the Creator allowed the people to do a vision quest to seek this balance. The man said, if the people follow the path the Creator set out for spiritual development, the healthier their lives will be. (Benton-Banai, 1988)

Seven Manidoog teaching as pedagogical transmission of spirit knowledge

The Seven Manidoog are the gifts to all peoples of Mother Earth. When we come from the land of the spirit, the Manidoog go with us, as they rest within our soul. They are indeed the first gift received by the people.

A part of storytelling is understanding the internalised messages, meanings, and inquiries into self or spirit development. The colonial legacies result in not being able to know and understand these teachings. We will often read these teachings in books or journals, but do not have the inspired and loving transmission of knowledge that existed during storytelling times with parents, grandparents or our closest spiritual family. Being denied the thoughtful transfer of knowledge through dyadic or group storytelling experiences is a legacy of colonisation, and, as a result, it

requires Indigenous peoples to be diligent in the transmission of the knowledge with our loved ones from this point in time.

The *Seven Manidoog* teachings are much more than the colonial legacies portrayed on the classroom walls in elementary education settings—they are the Manidoog that protect, love and guide our lives. The Manidoog teachings are our first original gift from the Creator. They exist as a guide to self-development, in addition to guiding our relationships with each other. The Manidoog lessons provide the theoretical development of one's spiritual core. Academics such as Simard and Blight (2011) have supported the psycho-spiritual development of self through the use of Manidoog teachings by providing pedagogical approaches to understanding how they work within a clinical framework. In Simard's (2016) curricular work entitled *Self Efficacy and Indigenous Development™,* this same teaching presents as a pedagogical narrative approach to spiritual discovery. An example provided within this Manidoog teachings' narration is as follows:

Imagine you are going to have a conversation with the *Manidoog of Love* and write your answer to the first questions:

1. What would you tell the Manidoog who bestows the *gift of love* about your life and your love?

Imagine the Manidoog who *embodies the gift of love* were to talk back to you. Write and answer their response to question two:

2. What would the Manidoog who *embodies the gift of love* tell you about your life and your experiences?

The questions can be interchanged with any of the Manidoog. However, the questions then become a mindful narrative between yourself and your spirit. This exemplar can further espouse techniques within the gestalt *two-chaired approach* (Greenberg & Clarke,1979). This clinically based approach should be understood and the basic principles of that approach adhered to prior to proceeding in a culturally safe manner. Either through the narration or the gestalt two-chair approach, the discussion with the Manidoog is comparable to a theoretical model to engage the psycho-spiritual developmental tasks associated with spiritual development. Knowing the Seven Manidoog as spirit gifts allows *the people and the village* to be empowered and succeed in all sustenance activities. Working within this model provides narratives and intrinsic conversations within a spiritual development research model. Fundamental questions of purpose, balance, understanding, acceptance, and the processing of trauma as a result of colonisation exist within this framework, and the narration will bring the learner to a place of inner knowing.

Manidoog teaching began in the spirit world and evolved into a spiritual being having a human experience. Within this Manidoog teaching, Indigenous peoples sit with the Manidoog in their sacred lodge. The Manidoog shows us beauty beyond our understanding, and throughout the encounter with that vessel, the Indigenous peoples see their purpose and what they will do with their sacred lives. When we come into this existence, we as Indigenous peoples bring with us the Manidoog. The Manidoog are our protectors and guide our thoughts and actions. The Manidoog teaches us about spirit purpose and governs our physical existence. The Manidoog guides us in our deepest despair, but more importantly, in the joys we are yet to experience. The Manidoog is with us always as they are a part of us. The Manidoog teaches us how to live with others—family, extended family, community, Nation, nationhood, and even our Canadian context. All relations evolve through our relationship to the seven Manidoog—all of which begin with the Manidoog of love.

Constructing concepts in Indigenous knowledge and research

Indigenous concept analysis

Indigenous research methodologies, like storytelling, construct knowledge. Constructing knowledge through academic literature is not a new concept (Dudas, 2012). Concept analysis is a specific research technique that is found in the literature to be an effective manner that describes concepts that are unclear and ambiguous (All & Huycke, 2007; Axley, 2008; Baldwin, 2008; Dudas, 2012; Burchum, 2002; Purdy, 2004; Simonelli, 2005). Concept analysis has its roots in constructivist theory, but more importantly, it seems to build a theoretical bridge of understanding for Indigenous concepts. Concept analysis and constructivism are theoretical models built on a Western knowledge base, but they can provide a theoretical framework for understanding Indigenous cultural concepts. Further, concept analysis and constructivism allow critical reflection and praxis necessary for the developmental skill of dialectical learning; or, more simply, the education associated with heart or spirit knowledge. Concept analysis and constructivism by themselves *do not fit* Indigenous worldviews because they are more about determining the phenomenon under study:

- Concept analysis is the construction of knowledge,
- Indigenous concept analysis is the construction of Indigenous knowledge,
  - o the deconstruction of knowledge through reflection and praxis, and
  - o the reconstruction of new intrinsic and spirit knowledge collapses into personal meaning, spirit knowledge, or one's cultural attachment.

In Anishinaabemowin, we call this concept *kinimaatiziwin*—education—not to be mistaken with Euro-Canadian educational systems. These two additional steps are necessary processes in understanding Indigenous concepts as they are deeply personal, because it becomes an attachment to one's culture. Cultural attachment theory was first described in Simard's (2009) thesis entitled *Culturally Restorative Practice—A Special Emphasis on Cultural Attachment Theory*. Simard described cultural attachment theory as a way social work practitioners and services can provide cultural attachment opportunities for staff, community, children and families, if services are constructed with a lens of culturally informed practices. Cultural attachment is an individual process of attaching to the various pieces within a culture (Simard, 2019; Simard & Blight, 2011). Cultural attachment is the step before cultural identity, as it is the active act of determining what part of culture the individual is transcending into their spirit or soul (Simard, 2019; Simard & Blight 2011). This act is a deep-seated, inseparable and intrinsic process within a cultural attachment action and can be called Anishinaabe *kinimaatiziwin*. This action can take the form of reflection, praxis, and informed conscious reasoning. More simply, it is our thinking and decision-making processes about a cultural research. The end result is a decision to take on or not take on a cultural attachment opportunity. See Table 1.

Table 1. Research process of Indigenous concept analysis with example

Research concept	Dialectical learning	Result	
Western research concept Indigenous research concept	1. What does this mean to me? 2. How does it fit within my being and my spirit? 3. What do I want to explore and take on as a new cultural attachment opportunity?	Chosen research concept	Cultural attachment
What is an Anishinaabe name?	1. To connect to my cultural identity 2. I will feel whole 3. Why do I not have one? What is my belief system? How will it change me? Who will give it to me? What do I need to do to get one? Who needs to be there? Why do we need one? Am I ok to get one?	Natural process of questioning and answering these introspective questions Confidence and allegiance to receiving an Anishinaabe name	Cultural attachment

This process of dialectical learning allows for internal processing of the research concept. It further allows for the opportunity to form fond attachments to the cultural structure called an Anishinaabe name.

The second Indigenous concept analysis process involves participation in ceremony, which is pivotal to securing an "attached" bond with the cultural activity. As an Anishinaabe researcher, there are always cultural protocols to learn and follow when working with Indigenous peoples. Researchers cannot ask for spiritual knowledge without first following the protocols of a Nation and its communities, Elders, families and individuals. Not all cultural protocols are the same, so we must establish a relationship with the people or have a "host" when engaging in the spiritual acquisition of knowledge. In Anishinaabe culture, there are many different methods for acquiring spiritual knowledge, including offerings, pipe ceremonies, vision quests, sweat lodge ceremonies, shake tent ceremonies, traditional knowledge keepers or healers' knowledge, or specific teachings related to one's name or clan. All produce a personal spiritual experience necessary for wellbeing. All gather information from the spirit world and enrich one's spirit and life's path to support a person in their *purposeful development*. See Table 2.

Table 2. Applied spiritual process of Indigenous concept analysis and example

Ceremony			Spirit knowledge
Preparation for ceremony	Offerings, pipe ceremony, vision quests, sweat lodge ceremonies, shake tent ceremonies, traditional knowledge keepers, healers, or specific teachers for one's own name or clan	Dialectical process and spirit learning	Cultural attachment
Anishinaabe naming ceremony	Giving tobacco to Elder Preparing food dish or feast Inviting your namesakes or those that will take the lead in your cultural development Receiving your name Receiving your teaching with your name Sometimes having an item or a song with your name Learning it all with your namesakes, family, and friends Welcoming by your namesakes, family, and friends	Understanding the meaning of your name Feeling connected to your name Knowing who you are as Anishinaabe Exploring your purpose Firmly attaching to the ceremony of your name	Cultural attachment

Research knowledge and spirit knowledge build educational Indigenous constructivism models of learning. Indigenous constructivism is the building of knowledge through the use of Indigenous language. For example, in Anishinaabe language, a construct is more than a word and its definition. Sometimes an Anishinaabe construct carries a meaning or a breakdown of several different concepts to make one meaning; or it might come with a teaching, or a colour, or a direction. The construct could come with song or a legend. The construct can also come with a sacred item. Indigenous constructivism is the building of knowledge through the use of and understanding of language and the sacred bundles of knowledge that are associated with the original construct of interest. For Indigenous peoples, constructing this knowledge about ceremonies is more than just reading academic literature; it is the experience of the ceremony, and the personal acquisition of that knowledge into one's identity.

Differentiating concept analysis from Indigenous concept analysis

It is challenging to fit non-Indigenous research methodologies into Indigenous research methodologies. However, working with the research methodology concept analysis has helped to expand bicultural research processes. Concept analysis describes a phenomenon (Baldwin, 2008). Further, concept analysis brings about structure, understanding and salient attributes to a phenomenon (Dudas, 2012). Concept analysis is used within nursing literature as an ideal learning opportunity for nursing students and staff who enter the workforce (Dudas, 2012). Concept analysis has its theoretical roots in "constructivist theory, cognitive continuum theory, and experiential learning theory" (All & Huycke, 2007, p. 218). The leading theorists associated with concept analysis are Rogers and Knafl (2000) and Walker and Avant (1995). Jones (2020) discussed Walker and Avant's research process of concept analysis:

1. Select the concept
2. Determine the purpose of the analysis
3. Identify uses of the concept
4. Determine defining attributes
5. Construct a model case
6. Construct borderline and contrary cases
7. Identify antecedents and consequences, and
8. Define empirical referents. (p. 31)

Burchum (2002) defined Rodgers and Knafl's (2000) concept analysis research process as:

1. Identify and name the concept
2. Identify surrogate terms
3. Identify relevant use of the concept
4. Identify and select an appropriate sample for data collection
5. Identify the attribute of the concept
6. Identify the reference, antecedents, and consequences of the concept
7. Identify related concepts, and
8. Identify a model case of the concept. (p. 7)

Dudas (2012) utilised Rogers and Knafl's (2000) approach to determine the concept of cultural competence and found that "concepts are dynamic rather than static …, and concepts are heavily influenced by socialization and public interact" (p. 317). Critical analysis "incorporates the realization that concepts change over time and across situation relative to associated contextual factors" (Burchum, 2002, p. 5). The factors of static versus dynamic, socialisation, public interaction, time, situational effect and context are extraneous variables that influence the phenomenon under study. One manner of visually describing a concept is through serial concept maps. The use of serial concept maps is an "effective tool for gathering information on a concept under analysis" (All & Huycke, 2007, p. 217). Further, a serial concepts map "organizes knowledge on a particular subject …, concepts are identified, attributes listed, a hierarchical order established, the relationship amongst the elements depicted" (All & Huycke, 2007, pg. 217). These maps create a visual representation of the concept under study and provide an overview to topics not clearly understood—such as Indigenous knowledge and its phenomenon. In Indigenous practices, serial mapping is called the visual whiteboard or flipchart collaboration.

Indigenous research collection is comprised of research ethics, traditional protocols and due diligence. Indigenous concept, construct and phenomenon analysis entails academic rigour and vested interest in the collective wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. Indigenous concept analysis requires truth-seeking through spiritual preparedness and understanding that the author's research is much more than "their publications", but also a collective information portal for youth, parents, students and workers seeking to know who they are as Indigenous peoples. As a result, this becomes an incredible responsibility to promote Indigenous research methodologies in manners that are meaningful, achievable and transformational to the readers.

Elders promote Indigenous research methodologies—for example, by researching names, clans, purpose, health, and sacred bundle items. During ceremony, the Elders do this through vision questing through fasting, and through dialogue with the spirits. Their works are the original works of Indigenous construct analysis and highlight accurate Indigenous conceptual analysis. Indigenous concepts and constructs, the phenomenon under study, will encompass all variables, seen and unseen, describable and indescribable. Because culture is always closely associated with language, the concepts when translated to an Indigenous language can be challenging to describe. The language is deeply personal and will come with an attachment to a definition, a

meaning, a story, a legend, or a teaching, and often require dialectical change through reflection and praxis in the formation of this new Indigenous findings. More specifically: *How does this new knowledge fit intrinsically within one's being, and how has this been defined?*

Researching academic Indigenous knowledge concepts or phenomena is similar to concept analysis but, most importantly, includes ceremony, reflection and praxis, and cultural attachment. Further, it is the understanding that spiritual and cultural knowledge is *personal power* to live a life's purpose. Table 3 outlines a comparative analysis process to determine Indigenous constructivism's concept, construct or phenomenon analysis.

Table 3. Comparative analysis in Indigenous concept analysis

Academic author	Walker and Avant (1995): Research process to concept analysis (Jones, 2020):	Rodgers and Knafl (2000): Research process to concept analysis (Burchum, 2002):	Simard : Researched Indigenous concept analysis:	Simard: Applied spiritual Indigenous concept analysis
Steps in the process	Select a concept	Identify and name the concept	Define the concept and attributes	Determine the cultural concept
	Determine the purpose	Identify surrogate terms	Deconstruct the concept	Determine cultural protocol
	Identify all uses of the concept	Identify relevant use of the concept	Determine meaning for self	Prepare for Ceremony
	Determine the defining attributes	Identify and select an appropriate sample for data collection	Dialectical process	Engage with traditional knowledge keepers or ceremony
	Construct model case, borderline case, related case, contrary case, invented case, and illegitimate case	Identify the attribute of the concept.	Integrate into self	Participate in ceremony
	Identify antecedents and consequences, and	Identify the reference, antecedents, and implications of the concept	Cultural attachment	Integrate new knowledge into being
	Define empirical references	Identify related concepts, and		Follow through with cultural requisites as directed by TKK or ceremony
		Identify a model case of the concept		Cultural attachment

It is essential to look at the critical differences between Rodgers and Knafl (2000), Simard (2020), and Walker and Avant (1995). These differences include the premise that Indigenous research methodologies include the acquisition of spiritual knowledge to support one's cultural identity

development. Further, the goal to acquire spiritual knowledge to produce wellbeing and concept analysis provides a roadmap to achieve the goal. The purpose of concept analysis includes self-knowledge, self-application and self-efficacy; this will lead to more than one way to describe a concept in Indigenous concept analysis. A major tool used to deconstruct an Indigenous concept is the use of serial concept maps. These maps show interactions and variables associated with the concepts during its deconstruction process.

Personal meaning and spiritual acquisition of knowledge

Personal meaning evolves through the process of concept deconstruction and reconstruction of spiritual knowledge. The personal meaning and spiritual acquisition advances through experimentation, reflection and praxis, and learning. The individual process of personal meaning and spiritual acquisition includes the personal critique of the antecedents and consequences associated with the individual's acquisition of spirit knowledge**.** The achievement of spiritual knowledge is deeply personal. Spirit knowledge requires direct ceremony and the application of cultural research activities and participation rather than academic research. All intrinsic spiritual understanding that is self-directed, self-accessed and self-explored will result in cultural attachment. Indigenous researchers using Indigenous concept analysis concepts, especially if it is self-directed, will experience the same result as the average Indigenous person seeking cultural attachment opportunities. The systematic purpose of concept analysis is to provide academic knowledge to teach an Indigenous concept to students regarding Indigenous professional duties within the workforce. Finally, the end result of Indigenous concept analysis is for seekers to strive for Indigenous spiritual knowledge to live a well and purposeful life.

Conclusion

Indigenous research methodologies are a reflexive pedagogy; they are about coming to understand yourself within your cultural context. Indigenous research methodologies are attached to culture and finding out what is essential for wellbeing and sacred purpose. Indigenous research methodologies are a critical investigation of culture and how this culture fits within oneself. This process is a sacred experience because it is personal, profound and transformational to the individual exploring their culture. Indigenous research methodologies are a person's journey of the experiences of the legacies of colonisation, and the sanctuary culture that provides for oneself and their relationships within their culture. Finally, Indigenous research methodologies provide the opportunity to attach to culture and actualise one's spiritual journey.

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