Department of Justice Canada | Ministère de la Justice Canada

Exploring Indigenous Approaches to Evaluation and Research in the Context of Victim Services and Supports

2020

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Papers Submitted to the Department of Justice Canada
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Canada

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J2-495/2022E-PDF
978-0-660-45027-8

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Introduction

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada released 94 Calls to Action (CTA) to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation. In CTA 40,[1] the Commission focussed on victims' programs and services by calling on all levels of government, in collaboration with Indigenous[2] people, to create adequately funded and accessible Indigenous-specific victim programs and services as well as appropriate evaluation mechanisms to measure their effectiveness. There are several elements to this CTA, and this collection of papers is focused on the component of CTA 40 that calls for "appropriate evaluation mechanisms" within a victim services context.

The Department of Justice Canada (the Department) engaged with four Indigenous evaluation subject matter experts to explore Indigenous approaches and methods used in evaluation and research. These experts submitted individual papers intended to increase awareness, knowledge and understanding about Indigenous perspectives and models of evaluation and research. This is to help increase levels of cultural competence within evaluation policy and practice, program design and development, and amongst researchers.

The four expert papers are introduced in this summary report, prepared by the Department to pull together common themes from the four individual papers. The thoughts and ideas are those of the subject matter experts, not the Department. Readers are encouraged to refer to the four appended papers (see the Appendices), for more in-depth information and context related to Indigenous approaches an methods used in evaluation, research, and program design and delivery.

Indigenous approaches to evaluation and research

Western approaches to evaluation tend to focus on objectively assessing the relevance and performance of programs through frameworks that seek systematic collection and analysis of evidence on the outcomes identified during the design of the program. They focus on the outcomes and metrics of programs and on topics of study, respectively, without an in-depth understanding of a communities' perception of these issues. Western-based evaluations tend to assess programs from the perspective of the funding agency, which is often given more value than the community perspectives. Indigenous communities, organizations, and researchers have been vocal in the misalignment of these western methods in terms of their ability to identify meaningful outcomes that contribute to wellness and a holistic understanding of results.

[1] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action [PDF file]. Retrieved from http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.
[2] This paper uses the term Indigenous to refer to Canada's first peoples, the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations. The term Aboriginal may appear in some direct quotes.

The four expert papers highlight how Indigenous evaluation approaches enable communities to identify relevant program and community outcomes that respond to the needs of their community rather than the needs of the funding agency. They also provide insight into mechanisms and processes that are meaningful for individual and collective healing, health, and wellness, and that make space for stories that share the complexities of transformation and innovation – rather than a linear reporting of outcomes.

The expert papers highlight how Indigenous approaches to evaluation are about uncovering the truth about how an issue, program, or system functions from different perspectives. Specifically, an Indigenous approach to evaluation:

> is a process of deep reflection and contemplation, a process of looking back and seeing what worked, what didn't and then determining the path ahead … [it] does not employ an external set of indicators upon these questions of where you 'should' be. Rather this creates space for people to learn from their experiences, reflect on what has worked for them, celebrate the journey, and take that learning into their future (Rowe, 2019, p.10).

More broadly, Indigenous approaches to both evaluation and research are about:

> determining who will set a knowledge seeking agenda, whose voice will lead the process, whose knowledge will be sought and valued, what methods will be used to gather the knowledge, and the ultimate use and distribution of the results of the knowledge gathering are all important elements (Rowe, 2019, p. 3).

In this way of looking at evaluation, Indigenous people are actively involved in conducting the evaluation or research rather than subjects of the work. The evaluation becomes a process of self-determination and self-governance, which becomes a decolonizing approach.

Indigenous peoples of Canada have many different languages and cultures. While there are many common elements to Indigenous worldviews such as spirituality and relationality, there is no one approach. Indigenous worldviews and ways of knowing are rooted in their individual contexts, histories, locations and experiences. Indigenous approaches to evaluation and research are grounded in, and inseparable from, Indigenous ways of knowing, worldviews and perspectives.

This highlights the importance of considering a community's unique context *at the outset* of a project and that a one-size-fits-all approach to evaluation and research will not work when designing, implementing, or sharing the findings of a study. Context includes the unique economic, environmental, institutional, social, spiritual, and political realities of each community. Evaluators and researchers need to take care to appreciate why and how generalizations can reduce the truth and value of a given community's positive contributions and dynamics. Individually tailored evaluations allow for the unique aspects of the community and program to determine the approach, methods and questions. It is essential that time and

resources are set aside to understand and build competency about the local context in advance of determining the approach.

The following sections provide a brief summary of some of the key principles in Indigenous approaches to evaluation and research from the four expert papers.

Guiding principles

While recognizing that each Indigenous community possesses unique views, involving unique cultural, political and historical contexts, the four subject matter experts highlighted the following broad guiding principles as especially important to Indigenous approaches to evaluation and research. This list is not exhaustive, and additional detail with respect to the guiding principles presented here are included in the four papers appended to this report.

Relationships are central

Relationships are central to Indigenous approaches to evaluation and research practices. This includes relationships with the land, culture, community, people, ancestors, and spirituality.

Respect, trust, and responsibility are key factors when it comes to building relationships. Evaluators and researchers have responsibilities in the relationships they create in the community that includes how they remain accountable to those who have shared their knowledge. Developing trusting and respectful relationships with community members, program staff, and program participants can be achieved by participating in face-to-face meetings, listening and speaking, sharing and hosting, being generous and respectful in sharing one's own knowledge. Evaluators and researchers can also demonstrate accountability by being actively present during the sharing of information, allowing time for reflection after information is shared, and ensuring that the information will serve the community and organization in the end.

Reciprocity is also a key part of being respectful and accountable to the relationships developed through the evaluation or research process. Evaluators and researchers have the opportunity to build capacity in a community, and it is important that they determine what will be left behind to ensure a deeper understanding of the role of evaluation or research and the skills necessary to do this work. This is also important when it comes to sharing and disseminating the findings; it is important to ensure that the results are disseminated in a way that is meaningful to the community. This can be done through community events or gatherings, videos or user-friendly materials.

Culturally responsive and community driven

Culturally responsive means that programs and services are respectful and relevant to the beliefs, practices, culture, and linguistic needs of diverse client populations and communities. It also requires the knowledge and capacity to respond to these needs. A culturally responsive evaluation or research study

recognizes the need to bring to the forefront the land, language and cultural practices that are specific to those involved.

Recognizing the importance of community and the context of a program, community leaders as well as program staff and/or participants need to be engaged *at the outset* of a project. This means that members of the community would be the ones to determine the purpose of the evaluation or research study as well as the methods that will best capture information that would be most useful. This would ensure that the study meets the needs of the program and community. They would then be involved in all aspects of the research or evaluation from planning the scope and methodology to sharing the findings.

A key aspect of community-driven and culturally responsive approaches to evaluation and research is engaging an advisory group throughout the process. This approach recognizes that although the evaluation or research team may bring technical expertise to the project, it is the community and program that provide direction throughout the process. The advisory group can include program staff, community leaders, Elders, knowledge keepers, and other partners directly involved in the program. The role of the advisory group can include determining and validating the approach, the questions, and the evaluation/research results. They should also determine the best way to share the information among members of their community. This ensures that a community-driven approach is ultimately used.

Elders, knowledge keepers, and healers

Developing partnerships with Elders, Indigenous knowledge keepers, and healers is essential because it ensures that their insights guide the work of the evaluation or research. It also allows for the inclusion of ceremonies and the sharing of medicines or sacred objects that are appropriate given the community context (Johnston, 2019; Rowe, 2019), and ensures that knowledge and sacred stories shared are not given away without permission.

Respecting community protocols is also important when in communities. This may include the giving of tobacco or wild rice to show respect and to ask for guidance during the study or the use of a talking piece/stick in talking circles. Elders, knowledge keepers, and healers can provide guidance with these protocols as it is also important that the person who is giving these medicines/gifts understands the teachings related to the offering.

Sharing personal experiences

Holding and honouring the stories of participants, communities and organizations is sacred and not to be taken lightly in Indigenous methods. How a community's stories are used and presented is crucial to being accountable to the relationships established during the process. Evaluators and researchers have a responsibility to ensure that personal experiences and stories are represented accurately. This can be done by sharing preliminary findings with participants and asking that they review the draft report to validate the findings.

Strengths-based perspectives

Indigenous approaches to evaluation and research use strengths-based perspectives rather than deficit-based ones. A strengths-based perspective focuses on identifying the resources available to address problems in a positive way. Whereas, deficit-based perspectives focus on problems with outcomes, without taking into account the social or structural issues underpinning the conditions for Indigenous peoples. Evaluation must focus on strengths, recognize challenges, but also consider individual and community resilience. Strengths-based perspectives look for opportunities for growth, emphasize a community's assets, and identify solutions to issues.

Decolonized approach

Indigenous approaches and methodologies to evaluation and research must take a decolonized approach that recognizes the intergenerational impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples, their families and their communities. These approaches must consider the historical trauma and cultural repression experienced by Indigenous people.

Trauma-informed approach

Evaluators and researchers need to be aware of and understand a community's history and understand the intergenerational impact of colonization and its associated negative impacts on the lives of Indigenous people. This will help to ensure that evaluation and research approaches or processes that have alienated Indigenous peoples in the past can be avoided. When a trauma-informed approach is used, the process can contribute to the well-being of the community, decolonization, and reconciliation.

Ensuring appropriate timelines and resources

Indigenous approaches to evaluation and research cannot be rushed. It takes time to understand the context of a community or program; build meaningful, respectful and trusting relationships and approaches; allow for community engagement, hosting and attending ceremony; undertake meaningful data collection and analysis of results; and fulfil the need for reciprocity not only of the results but also for capacity-building. There also needs to be a sufficient budget to allow for relationship building, food, cultural protocol items, knowledge keeper and Elder gifts as well as travel.

Ways of knowing: Evaluation and Research Methods

Community context should inform the methods used for evaluation and research. Given the diversity of Indigenous communities in Canada, it is critical for evaluators and researchers to become familiar with the community's past and current context, and understand community protocols, social, cultural and spiritual values before beginning a project. This will help to inform the process and more specifically, what methods or approaches should be used.

The following are a few examples of methods that the subject matter experts highlighted in their individual papers.

Case studies

A case study approach allows for an in-depth understanding of a program or community and how it operates. This method recognizes the uniqueness of programs and communities, and allows for an exploration of the ways that individuals experience a program.

Participant observation

Participant observation uses techniques to gather information without influencing the environment studied. In an Indigenous context, participant observation requires the building of reciprocal and respectful relationships through face-to-face interactions and the sharing of daily-lived experiences.

A form of participant observation can also be used as a conversational tool in discussions with program staff, to cross check lists completed by a researcher or evaluator through observing a program or process. This ensures validity of the check list and supports the building of a healthy line of communication between the researcher and participants. Doing this exercise early-on allows the process to act as a tool that contributes to gaining buy-in into the evaluation process. This also serves as a means for continued healthy communications through the longer evaluation process.

Dialogue and conversational methods of knowledge gathering

Conversational methods include such tools as facilitated self-reflection, storytelling, land-based activities, participation in ceremony such as the use of sacred fire, drumming, singing and the use of traditional medicines. These methods contribute to building relationships and are in line with the oral nature of Indigenous ways of knowing. These methods require a commitment from all participants to learn and share within a collective tradition.

Storytelling as a method is a form of decolonizing research because it supports Indigenous ways of knowing. By asking others to tell their stories, the evaluator or researcher must also share their own which demonstrates respect, reciprocity, and relationship building. This can be done by developing evaluation tools that allow evaluators to share their personal story at the same time as sharing teachings on conducting evaluation, such as self-assessment or self-evaluation. This can support and enhance the goals of the program, since this process contributes to capacity building to share data in an organized fashion, such as using a medicine wheel, basket teaching, blanket teaching, or tree of life teaching.

Talking circles, which involve individuals sitting in a circle to discuss a topic, is a newly accepted research technique. Unlike focus groups, talking circles allow each participant to have an opportunity to take an uninterrupted turn to discuss a topic. Another method involves walking around communities and talking to individuals, which provides an opportunity for listening and learning.

There are also visual or arts-based methods that use photos or drawings to facilitate a group dialogue about a topic as well as facilitated self-reflection.

Importance of ethics

Subject matter experts emphasized the importance of ethics when undertaking evaluation or research. There is an inherent duty to ensure that no harm is caused, that respect guides all the work, that knowledge is protected, and that those involved in the process benefit from their participation.

The *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996)* includes[3] guidelines for research sponsored by the Commission to ensure that the appropriate respect is given to cultures, languages, knowledge, and values of Indigenous peoples to legitimate knowledge.

In 1998, the First Nations Information Governance Centre established the Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP®) principles,[4] as a standard on how research should be conducted with First Nations and how data should be collected, protected, used, or shared. The principles influence how research ethics boards conduct ethical reviews of Indigenous related research, how community-based research information is accessed, and how research is conducted.

In 2010, the *Tri-Council*[5] *Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans* published a specific chapter outlining core principles when engaging research with Indigenous participants, which includes reference to OCAP® principles. The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that research involving Indigenous people is undertaken through respectful relationships and encourages collaboration between researchers and participants.

Questions to consider when planning an evaluation or research study

The authors identified questions for consideration to help guide the planning and implementation of an evaluation or research study. While not an exhaustive list, these are some key questions to be asked throughout the process to ensure that the approach is community driven and prioritizes relationship building. These questions provide another way to emphasize the key principles that the authors identified.

1. How will the community and program staff be engaged at the outset and throughout the study to ensure that they are contributing significantly to the evaluation or research? How will these relationships be developed?

[3] See page 294 of VOLUME 5 Renewal: A Twenty-Year Commitment, found at the following link: http://data2.archives.ca/e/e448/e011188230-05.pdf

[4] Information on the OCAP® principles can be found at the following link: www.fnigc.ca.

[5] The Tri-Council is comprised of representatives from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). The 2010 Policy was updated in 2014 and 2018, which can be found at the following link: http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/documents/tcps2-2018-en-interactive-final.pdf.

2. What are the reasons for undertaking the evaluation or research study? How does it give back to the community or address the needs of the community or program?

3. Who are the intended audiences?

4. What is your role as evaluator or researcher? How will you fulfil this role and obligations to those involved? What are you contributing or giving back?

5. What is the role of program staff, participants and community in the design and implementation of the study as well as dissemination of the results? How will they be engaged to ensure a partnership is fostered?

6. Who will be part of an advisory group or actively involved in the study? Are there leadership, community members, Elders, knowledge keepers or healers, other professionals or organizations that should be involved? How will these relationships be fostered and nurtured to ensure that the needs of the community are at the core of the work being completed?

7. How will you ensure that you have a deep understanding of the program, community, their current and historical contexts prior to designing the evaluation or research study?

8. What appropriate methods or tools can be used to document the story of the program?

9. Do you understand the meaning of protocols and how values and principles are placed into action within local cultures? How will you incorporate protocols, ceremony, and spirit into the evaluation or research study?

10. How will ethics and respect guide the study?

11. How will the principle of reciprocity be implemented? How will you give back to those involved in the process (e.g., gift giving, capacity-building through mentorship, hiring or training of those within the community)?

12. How will the holistic experiences of the program be shared? What type of follow-up will be used with the program, participants and community (e.g., written report, video, presentation, meeting, town hall)?

13. Do you have the necessary budget and time to conduct the evaluation or research study in a good way?

Individual Expert Papers

The individual papers included in the appendices were written by Indigenous evaluation and research experts and they speak to their own experience and expertise. They go beyond the information highlighted in the summary report and thus provide a valuable resource to learn more about Indigenous approaches to evaluation and research.

Appendix A – *Exploring Indigenous Evaluation* by Larry K. Bremmer

Indigenous evaluation approaches take time because there is a need to build meaningful, respectful and trusting relationships. To better understand the current context, the past cannot be ignored, as it is necessary to put into perspective the realities of today to create the vision for tomorrow. Evaluation should be directed by the community, possibly through an Indigenous advisory committee, as it is important for communities to take control of the research agenda.

Indigenous approaches must take into account historical trauma and cultural repression and consider how the work will benefit the community and its people. An Indigenous approach is one of relationality; relationships with the land, culture, community, people, ancestors and spirituality. Evaluation should build on the communities' cultural, social and spiritual values, and support cultural resurgence. The focus of an Indigenous approach should not be on individuals and independence, but on relationships and the community/collective. There are many different methods that can be utilized; however, they must be based on an Indigenous research paradigm. "The need to ground the work in Indigenous culture and community make it impossible to select one predetermined methodology to accommodate this paradigm," (Easby, 2016, p. 2).

> The value of the Indigenous critique of the Western world view lies not in the creation of false *dichotomies* but in the insight that the colonial attitudes and structures imposed on the world by Europeans are not manifestations of an inherent evil. They are merely reflections of white society's understanding of its own power and relationship with nature (Alfred, 2009, p. 45).

Prologue

I am Métis. My great-grandmother, Rose Boucher, was born in 1867 in St. Francis Xavier Manitoba. She moved with her parents by ox team to St. Louis Saskatchewan in 1882. In 1883, she married Moise Bremner. On November 19, 1883, Moise, his father William and 28 other Métis signed a petition, protesting the 1883 Order in Council transferring the Métis lands at St. Louis to the Prince Albert Colonization Company; the petition was ignored by the Canadian government. Moise was a member of Captain Baptiste Boucher's company, one of the 19 dizaines (groups of 10 people) led by Gabriel Dumont during the 1885 Métis Resistance. After the resistance at Batoche, the family moved to the United States and returned to what is now Saskatchewan after the Canadian government granted amnesty. They homesteaded in Domremy, Saskatchewan, in 1905.

Introduction

The intent of this short paper is meant to help the Research and Statistics Division (RSD) and the Policy Centre for Victim Issues (PCVI) of the Department of Justice Canada implement Call to Action (CTA) 40 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which states: "We call on all levels of government, in

collaboration with Aboriginal people, to create adequately funded and accessible Aboriginal-specific victim programs and services with appropriate evaluation mechanisms" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015, p.325). It should be remembered that this work is not intended to provide "templates," but rather "guiding principles" that will help to guide work undertaken in partnership with Indigenous peoples and communities.

The term Indigenous used throughout this document follows the United Nations approach, which argues it is more beneficial to identify, rather than to define Indigenous peoples. This approach is based on self-identification and takes into account the diversity of Indigenous peoples. As noted by Wilson (2008):

> Terms such as Indian, Métis, Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander do nothing to reflect either the distinctiveness of our cultures or the commonalities of our underlying worldviews. [The term] Indigenous is inclusive of all first peoples – unique in our own cultures - but common in our experiences of colonialism and our understanding of the world (p. 15).

Furthermore, one must keep in mind that Indigenous peoples in Canada are not a homogenous group. There are more than 630 First Nations communities in Canada, representing more than 50 First Nations, many of which have experienced different political and contextual realities. Furthermore, Statistics Canada (2017) estimates there are approximately 70 Indigenous languages that can be grouped into 12 language families, while UNESCO estimates there are approximately 90 Indigenous languages in Canada. As pointed out by Chouinard and Cousins (2007), these differences make it extremely hard to generalize from one community to another. Therefore, efforts by RSD and PCVI in reconciliation will need to be as diverse as the populations with whom they are privileged to work.

Canadians frequently are told how Indigenous people are over-represented as victims of crime. However, as noted by Jillian Boyce (2016) victimization rates may be related to Indigenous people being more vulnerable, given other risk factors among Indigenous people. One might argue that the victimization of Indigenous people in Canada is not only related to crime, but also to past injustices regarding a range of services and supports. The interrelationship of inter-generational trauma, wellness, education, employment, language, mental health, and crime must be considered when looking at victimization.

According to Alfred (2009) the Western concept of justice differs from the Indigenous view. He argues that the dominant Western perspective is based upon "idealistic, materialistic ideal of equity or sameness," whereas the Indigenous concept is based on a belief of a "relationship among all elements that make up our universe ... the imperative of respectful, balanced coexistence among all human, animal, and spirit beings, together with the earth" (p. 66). Justice is viewed as maintaining that balance; injustice is viewed as dysfunction and occurs when this crucial balance is disturbed. The goal of Indigenous justice is to restore "harmony to the network of relationships and renewed commitment to ensuring the integrity, and physical, emotional, and spiritual health of all individuals and communities" (p.66).

As noted by Cram, Tibbetts and LaFrance (2018) "the time is now for Indigenous Evaluation (IE)" (p. 11). They argue that over the past 15-20 years the capacities of Indigenous evaluators have increased, as have the capacities of Indigenous communities to understand formal evaluation requirements. Due to these

changes, they argue, "the time is right for asserting Indigenous paradigms, methodologies, and methods for evaluation, evaluation capacity building, and research on evaluation" (p. 11).

The following discussion provides an overview of some of the processes that should be kept in mind when undertaking evaluation with Indigenous peoples and communities.

Culture and Context

One must understand that Indigenous evaluation approaches are "inherently rooted in community and cannot be conceived of otherwise," (Easby, 2016, p. 1). The evaluation approaches need to support the improvement of community well-being in terms of the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development of individuals, and families. This perspective has been articulated by Mann who states:

> As Indigenous researchers, we are the researchers of our respective homelands. We need to bridge the gap between theory and practices. We need to add the dimension of culture to what is researched and produced so that it benefits our communities and families. We need to hear the voices of children and Elders and, most important, the voices of our interpreters across cultures. We are obliged to our communities to do the work and to engage in research that helps to sustain our ways of life (in Padeken and Nee-Benham, 2008, p. 260).

In February 2019, the author (Larry Bremmer) attended the Mā te Rae Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Evaluation in Rotorua, New Zealand. Approximately 120 individuals attended, the majority being Indigenous. Participants came from Aotearoa (NZ), Australia, Continental United States, Africa, Canada, Alaska, Hawaii, Samoa, and within the Arctic Circle. There were over 100 tribes/tribal Nations represented.

Much of the discussions dealt with the need to acknowledge, own, and understand our history, in order to better understand the present and move positively into the future. One Māori Elder stressed that, as Indigenous people, we have to go back to define our space going forward because if we don't know where we are coming from, how can we know where we are going? This theme of embracing the past was mentioned throughout the conference. Another presenter reinforced this notion stating that we cannot talk about today or tomorrow without understanding our past. It was argued that connecting to past traditions will enable us to find our "authentic self." Finding one's self is critically important as it will allow us to better understand what is happening today, helping us to move into the future in a positive way. We were told that the further back we look, the better we will understand today's context. There is a belief that we have endured a loss of connection to place and high-level relationships, so we need to create places of connection in order to transition out of darkness (discussions at Mā te Rae Indigenous Peoples' Conference February 2019)

For too long evaluation has looked at an individual's or community's current context without looking to the past. The importance of time and community in Indigenous research is mentioned throughout the literature. The past cannot be ignored; it is necessary to put into context the realities of today and the visions for tomorrow (Allan and Smylie, 2015). Eber Hampton (1995) "advises researchers to go back in time to unfold the sacred medicine bundle that holds memories and consider how memory shapes personal truth," (in Kovach, 2009, p.114). As stated by Alfred (2009):

> it is impossible to understand an Indigenous reality by focusing on individuals or discrete aspects of culture outside of a community context. …our peoples' reality is communal. To know Indigenous people, those seeking knowledge must interact with Indigenous communities, in all their past and present complexity (p. 14).

Relationship Building

> Researchers must work to respect, appreciate, and understand Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing—and how they apply in research. Indigenous knowledge is based on the collective wisdom of ancestors and built through careful observation and experiences of natural patterns of life. It is often learned, transmitted, and retained in the telling of stories, (NCAI Policy Research Center and MSU Center for Native Health Partnerships, 2012, p.11).

Indigenous evaluation approaches take time. Once invited to the community, evaluators need to build meaningful, trusting relationships with Elders and other Indigenous community members, which requires time. For Indigenous people, identity is based on their relationships with the land, culture, community, people, ancestors, and spirituality. It is essential to build and maintain trusting and reciprocal relationships throughout the evaluation (Easby, 2016). As noted by Rowe and Kirkpatrick (2018), trust and the value of the relationship "are mutually nurtured values to ensure that an Indigenous evaluation is meaningful for participants and organizations" (p.13).

Relationship building is viewed as being an important ethical aspect of Indigenous evaluation and is the foundation for Indigenous inquiry (Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2009). According to Kovach (2009), "Given the egregious past research practices in Indigenous communities, earning trust is critical and may take time, upsetting the efficiency variable or research timelines" (p. 98).

What sometimes works against taking the required time is that "timelines for consultations and evaluations are often decided according to government needs and priorities rather than in a culturally appropriate and flexible way" (INAC 2016, p. 2). This report discusses the importance of taking the time to build relationships. It also suggests that evaluators can show their commitment to the community by participating in traditional activities.

Relationships should also be respectful in that the evaluators should understand and practise community protocols, listening to the stories and building on community cultural, social, and spiritual values. For example, the gift of tobacco or wild rice at the end of a story/interview is a way I try to show my respect for their truths, as is the use of a "talking stick" in talking circles. "The term "respect" is consistently used by Indigenous peoples to underscore the significance of our relationships and humanity" (Smith, 1999, p.120). "Through these long-term engagements, evaluators and participants co-create detailed and culturally-appropriate structures of accountability which are particular to the evaluation context. Conducting evaluation, and oneself, within these structures of accountability is one of the most crucial elements of IRMs [Indigenous Research Methodologies]" (Easby, 2016, p. 5).

To make evaluation more respectful of Indigenous needs, take the time to establish meaningful, respectful relationships based on truth. Recognize the power relationships. The Indigenous individuals and communities' have the power and knowledge; you are a visitor in their community. Take the time to listen and learn. Respect that individuals are taking time from other things to meet with you and recognize that the priorities they have may be different from yours. Try to obtain an understanding of the communities' past and current contexts, prior to arriving. Understand that their realities and lived experiences will likely be different from yours. What are you doing that is going to make it better for the community? What are you leaving behind? Is it relevant to the life of the community? Be aware of how your work can contribute to the well-being of the community and decolonization, while on the path to reconciliation.

Decolonizing Evaluation and Research

> Merit and worth is the culmination of a lifelong journey towards self-actualization that is realized within the shared meanings and cultural parameters of community. Historical trauma must be addressed and evaluation must contribute to learning that supports cultural renewal and revitalization. Self-determination must be understood by the evaluators as a necessary condition of good evaluation (LaFrance and Nichols, 2011, p. 3).

Poka Laenui (2000) suggests five phases in the process of decolonization:

- Rediscovery and recovery - which refers to the rediscovery and recovery of their own culture, language and identity.
- Mourning – forms an important part of healing and moving to dreaming.
- Dreaming – the colonized Other explore their cultures and invoke their histories, worldviews and Indigenous knowledge systems to theorize and imagine other possibilities.
- Commitment – where researchers define the role of research in community development and their roles and responsibilities to the communities and scholarship of research.
- Action – when dreams and commitment translate into strategies for social transformation (in Chilisa, 2012, p. 15).

When discussing decolonization, Smith (1999) suggests that, while decolonization was once viewed as a formal handing over of the instruments of government, this is no longer the view. The process of decolonization is now recognized "as a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power" (p. 98). She refers to the methods traditionally employed by the world's scientific and research community as "the open-cast mining approach to research (see, take and destroy)" which she states are "absolutely unacceptable" (p. 118). She lists some culturally specific ideas that guide Maori researchers, referred to as Kaupapa Maori practice, which were adapted by Cram, Pipi and Paipa (2018). These include:

1. Aroha ki te tangata - Respect people – allow them to define their own space and meet on their own terms.
2. He kanohi kitea - Meet people face-to-face, and also be a face that is known to and seen within a community.

3. Titiro, whakarongo … korero - Look, listen (and then maybe speak) – develop an understanding in order to find a place from which to speak.
4. Manaaki ki te tangata - share, host people, and be generous.
5. Kia tupato - be cautious – be politically astute, culturally safe, and reflective about insider/outsider status.
6. Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata - do not trample on the "mana" or dignity of a person.
7. Kia mahaki – be humble – do not flaunt your knowledge; find ways of sharing it (pp. 70-72).

Kaupapa Maori approaches are intended to make a positive difference and seriously address "the cultural ground rules of respect, of working with communities, of sharing processes and knowledge" (Smith 1999, p. 191). Elements of the research are negotiated with the community and the researcher shares control in order to maximize the participation and interest of Maori. Five principles have been applied in deciding which methods are appropriate for helping to make a positive difference for Maori. These include whakapapa (genealogy), whakawhanaungatanga (making connections), whakawatea (a cleansing approach), whakaae (agreement), and whakamana (enhancement of authority), (Cram, Pipi, Paipa, 2018 p. 69).

Gaudry (2011) argues, similarly to Smith, that research is often an "extractive" process in which individuals are seen as "participants" or "informants." Knowledge is extracted and, in the process, "context, values, and on-the-ground struggles" are lost. He believes this approach is particularly damaging to Indigenous communities. Communities are rarely involved in the development of the research/evaluation questions or in the validation of the findings. "This means that extraction research, rather than affirming and validating Indigenous worldviews, instead judges them by the standards of the dominant culture (often confirming that they are dated and obsolete)" (Gaudry, 2011, p. 115). He suggests that insurgent research should operate from a different set of values which are primarily determined by relationships with Indigenous communities, as members or allies and by "an ethical motivation in search of more egalitarian and autonomous social, political, and economic relations" (Gaudry, 2011, p. 116).

Insurgent research challenges colonialism and works from within Indigenous frameworks and is grounded in an Indigenous resurgence ideology. It has four main principles:

- Research is grounded in, respects, and ultimately seeks to validate Indigenous worldviews;
- Research output is geared toward use by Indigenous peoples and in Indigenous communities;
- Research processes and final products are ultimately responsible to Indigenous communities, meaning that Indigenous communities are the final judges of the validity and effectiveness of insurgent research; and
- Research is action-oriented and works as a motivating factor for practical and direct action among Indigenous peoples and in Indigenous communities.

Wilson (2008) believes that spirituality "is an integral, infused part of the whole in the Indigenous world view" (p. 89). He goes on to mention how Canadian and American researchers have shown the importance of spirituality in the rehabilitation of prison inmates "and the need to include Indigenous spirituality and notions of reality in the legal justice system" (Ross 1992 in Wilson 2008, p. 89). The relationality of the

Indigenous world view is mentioned throughout the literature. As noted by Kirkhart, LaFrance and Nichols (2011), Indigenous researchers must "appreciate that ancestral, kinship and community relations are fundamental to personal identity. Outcome variables that presume individualism and independence may be less relevant than focus on relationships and collective impact" (p.3).

Decolonizing the evaluation relationship involves developing evaluation strategies with the community and might involve Indigenous advisory committees and tribal ethics review boards.

Kovach (2009) argues that Indigenous research frameworks value "cultural sustainability." She suggests there is common agreement that Indigenous research which emerges from tribal practices share some broad considerations. These include:

- That the research methodology be in line with Indigenous values,
- That there is some form of accountability to the community,
- That the researcher gives back to and benefits the community in some manner, and
- That the researcher is an ally and will do no harm.

Approaches

> An Indigenization process challenges researchers to invoke Indigenous knowledge to inform ways in which concepts and new theoretical frameworks for research studies are defined, new tools of collecting data developed, and the literature base broadened, so that we depend not only on written texts but also on the largely unwritten texts of formerly colonized and historically oppressed peoples, (Chilisa, 2012, p. 101).

In their recent writing, Bowman and Dodge-Francis (2018) talk about Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation (CRIE). CRIE originated as a strategy that would ensure that research, policy and evaluation studies include "culture, language, community context and sovereign Tribal governance … CRIE uses traditional knowledge and contemporary Indigenous theory and methods to design and implement an evaluation study, so it is led by and for the benefits of Indigenous people and tribal nations" (Bowman and Dodge-Francis, 2018, p.22). CRIE is a flexible four-part framework allowing for adaptations for community context/building community, use of cultural responsiveness/traditional teachings for resolving issues, documenting strengths, as well as challenges and needs, and the flexibility to meet local and funder needs for evidence-based evaluations.

Easby (2016) suggests that, while community-based research (CBR) has some similarities to Indigenous research methodologies (IRM), there are differences. She suggests that while not inherently "Indigenous," CBR is supportive of many of the goals of IRMs. While IRMs do not use the language of CBR, she proposes that this may be a reflection of language differences rather than community-based approaches not being used in Indigenous communities. "There are two different (but related) languages, which reflect different orientations in relation to indigeneity" (p. 1). According to her, the increased profile and discussion regarding Indigenous research methodologies has resulted in increased institutional support for and use of Indigenous research methodologies. The increased profile of IRMs and the subsequent support has resulted in the realization that traditional evaluation/research approaches need to be revised using an

Indigenous lens. These revisions will help to ensure that evaluation undertaken in Indigenous communities will be meaningful and contribute to community physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

The Indigenous Evaluation Framework (IEF) has four core values, the foundation upon which the framework rests: being people of a place, recognizing our gifts, honoring family and community, and respecting sovereignty (Kirkhart, LaFrance and Nichols, 2011). This framework is not linear, but does involve four distinct types of activity:

- Creating the story;
- Building the scaffolding;
- Gathering information; and
- Engaging community and celebrating learning.

The intent of this model is to address historical trauma and cultural repression and in doing so contribute to cultural revitalization and sovereignty. Again, the importance of relationality and community is stressed as they argue the focus of Indigenous evaluation should not be on the individual and independence, but more on relationships and collective impact.

Kovach (2009) suggests the key difference between IRMs and CBR is that Indigenous research methods emphasize relationality, self-location and accountability. IRMs pay a great deal of attention to an evaluator's own personal identity and how that helps to guide the evaluation process. Furthermore, the remoteness and closeness of many Indigenous communities results in community awareness of the evaluator's behaviour and conduct while in the community. She suggests that Indigenous research frameworks ask for clarity of purpose and that the purpose statement within Indigenous research asks:

- What is your purpose for this research?
- How is your motivation found in your story?
- Why and how does this research give back to the community (p. 115)?

She says that "Indigenous research frameworks reference cultural grounding specifically or generally, and permeate the research in a manner consistent with the researcher's relationship with his or her culture" (Kovach, 2009, p.116).

Chouinard and Cousins (2007) in their review of *Culturally Competent Evaluation for Aboriginal Communities* discussed the Tribal Participatory Research (TPR) approach, which was intended to be a refinement of community-based participatory research (CBPR). As outlined by Chouinard and Cousins, the four principles of TPR are:

- Establishing tribal oversight of the project;
- Using a cultural facilitator;
- Training and employing community members as project staff; and
- Using a culturally specific intervention and assessment (p. 48).

They note that one of the challenges that emerged had little to do with the actual methods evaluators used, that is "the mechanics of the specific participatory approaches" (p.48). In fact, the challenges are

mainly related to the processes for developing participatory evaluation approaches in Indigenous communities .

They also discussed participatory action research (PAR) which develops a formalized partnership with community members to help guide the evaluation. Again, PAR is culturally grounded and the formalized partnership also helps to identify possible areas that might pose challenges to collaboration. In their review, Chouinard and Cousins (2007) found that, regardless of differences in "names given to the evaluation approaches, most of the cross-cultural evaluations reviewed did develop processes to enable relationships between the community and the evaluator and to further facilitate the participatory process" (p.48). It also became apparent that the literature is quite clear on the need for Indigenous communities to take control of their research agenda. In doing so, they will determine critical areas and set their research priorities.

As noted earlier, it is important to understand that communities differ and, as such, will have different protocols, contexts, and priorities. Indigenous researchers have been calling for control of the research agenda for a long time. Over 20 years ago, Rigney stated that:

> Indigenous people are at a stage where they want research and research design to contribute to their self-determination and liberation struggles as it is defined and controlled by their communities … Indigenous peoples think and interpret the world, and its realities in differing ways to non-indigenous peoples because of their experiences, histories, cultures and values," (Rigney, 1997 in Wilson, 2008, p. 54).

Rowe and Kirkpatrick (2018) highlight the work of the Indigenous Learning Circle (ILC) in Winnipeg's North End. Language is important! Over a series of circle discussions, participants explored the meaning of terms such as: evaluation, framework, and toolkit and it was decided that from "an Indigenous foundation these terms are not congruent with Indigenous ways of understanding progress or learning" (p. 5) and as such the ILC moved away from terms, such as framework or toolkit, they instead choose the term "bundle" as the concept of bundle "makes an important connection with the values and principles of Indigenous worldviews" (p. 5). The Indigenous Evaluation Bundle is based on the following ten principles to support the vision of Indigenous evaluation.

1. Community must be the driver of evaluation. Evaluation must focus on strengths, recognize challenges, but also consider individual and community resilience.
    - Engage the community in the planning and implementation of evaluation.
    - Cultural and lived experience must be respected.
2. Evaluation must be developed from an understanding of the broader context of systemic, recurring, and intergenerational trauma.
    - For example, the damaging effects of residential schools and the sixties scoop have been shown to have left a legacy of trauma for individuals, families, and communities.
3. Evaluation must take into consideration the broader social and economic context.

- Interventions at the community level cannot resolve broader social and economic issues such as poverty, lack of housing etc. on their own.

4. Evaluation must take a comprehensive approach to assess broader community impact.
    - Recognize that while programs have individual mandates, funding arrangements etc., they do not work in isolation of other programs.
    - Aligning with the goals of comprehensive community approaches, evaluation must also recognize the needs and aspirations of individuals and families who have their own hopes and dreams.
5. Evaluation must take a holistic and relationship based approach.
    - Aligned with holistic programming that focuses on cultural, spiritual, physical and mental well-being of individuals, families, and communities.
    - Nurtures the time and space to build the relationships necessary to design and implement meaningful evaluation that honours reciprocity.
    - Honours the interconnections that exist and facilitates exploration of relationships with self, others, and the natural world.
6. Evaluation must recognize that meanings of "success" are self-determined.
    - Success is not an objectively defined concept.
    - Individuals have their own ideas of what "success" means to them.
    - "Success" is not static – often re-defined as individuals proceed along their personal journeys.
    - Evaluation must capture the growth along the journey as it is a measure of "success."
    - Evaluations must capture unanticipated outcomes as examples of success.
7. Evaluation models must place program participants at the centre of evaluation.
    - Each individual journey involves multiple and interconnected factors/programs/events.
8. The purpose of evaluation should be to improve the collective impact of individual program and coordinated program response.
    - If individual community members, rather than individual programs, are at the centre of evaluation, it will be more likely to identify gaps in service and how they might best be filled.
9. Evaluation should be continuous and adequately funded.
    - Evaluation is not an add-on and should be embedded into program design and delivery.
    - Individual and community input should be ongoing.
    - Evaluation should be seen as a cyclical process of reflection and action involving a network of CBOs (community-based organizations) working toward collective impact.
10. Evaluators must demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the importance of local hiring, local training, capacity building, and mutual support (pp. 10-11).

The ILC believes that evaluations frequently fail to identify the broader benefits which result from holistic community-based planning. It is their hope that evaluation outcomes should become aligned with the seven sacred teachings: Respect, Truth, Honesty, Wisdom, Courage, Love, and Humility (Rowe and Kirkpatrick, 2018).

Hatcher, Bartlett, Marshall and Marshall (2009) have talked about the challenges of building bridges between Western sciences and Indigenous sciences. To bring these two different worlds together they use as a guiding principle "Two-Eyed Seeing" which is "to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western ways of knowing, and to use both of these eyes together" (p. 3). They suggest that, through focusing on commonalities and respecting differences, they are able to build a bridge between the two ways of knowing. Peltier (2018) has discussed how she has applied this approach pairing Indigenous research methods with participatory action research (PAR). She explains, how the use of traditional Indigenous knowledge and Western theory has enabled her to examine "the potential benefits, challenges, and contributions of Indigenous healing to cancer care and mno-bimaadiziwin (an understanding of wellness)" (p. 2). Her research is rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and relational connections.

Prior to the development of her research proposal, Peltier met with three Elders to help determine the relevance of the topic to the community. She negotiated formalized partnerships with health agencies and formed a community advisory committee. The advisory committee provided her with guidance throughout the research process including; planning implementation and knowledge production and action to move forward. The advisory committee also directed the hiring of a community-based research assistant, reviewed and refined interview instruments, analyzed the stories and provided input on dissemination. She believes that working from a Two-Eyed Seeing approach, grounded in Indigenous research practices, allowed her "to share a collective story of cancer and *mno-bimaadiziwin* [an understating of wellness] to honour family and community members who walked with cancer" (*Peltier, 2018, p. 2)*. The research journey involved self-revelation and learning which she believes she would not have been possible without Indigenous methods.

Argo-Kemp and Hong (2018) in their work Bridging Cultural Perspectives, discuss the "Braided River" concept developed by MacFarlane (2009) which is a model to reconcile prevention science and kaupapa Maori perspectives. In the braided river metaphor, each stream represents two knowledge systems equally;

> both streams start at the same place and run beside each other in equal strength. They come together on the riverbed and then they move away from one another. Each stream spends more time apart than together. In the model when they do converge, the pace created is one of learning not assimilation (p. 8).

It has been noted that, while the braided river is the conceptual model, a Negotiated Spaces model is used as a dialogue tool in order to provide a process for respectful negotiated conversations. The Negotiated Spaces model was developed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Maui Hudson and colleagues "describing the interface between different worldviews and knowledge systems. This is primarily a conceptual space of intersection in-between different ways of knowing and meaning," (Mila-Schaaf and Hudson, 2009, p. 113).

Methods

Wilson (2008) suggests some Indigenous scholars believe evaluation methods need to be decolonized to be useful to Indigenous peoples. However, he argues that using an Indigenous perspective is not enough; Indigenous research must leave behind the dominant practices and follow Indigenous research techniques. He suggests that Indigenous research can be a circle made up of four interrelated entities: ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology.

> The entire circle is an Indigenous research paradigm. Its entities are inseparable and blend from one to the next. The whole paradigm is greater than the sum of its parts. … Relationality seems to sum up the whole Indigenous research paradigm … an Indigenous research paradigm is relational and maintains relational accountability (p. 70).

According to Wilson (2008), respect, reciprocity, and responsibility must be incorporated into an Indigenous methodology. When looking at Indigenous research plans, he suggests the researcher must ask:

- How do my methods help to build respectful relationships between the topic I am studying and myself as researcher (on multiple levels)?
- How do my methods help to build respectful relationships between myself and the other research participants?
- How can I relate respectfully to the other participants involved in this research so that together we can form a stronger relationship with the idea that we will share?
- What is my role as researcher in this relationship, and what are my responsibilities?
- Am I being responsible in fulfilling my role and obligations to the other participants, to the topic and to all of my relations?
- What am I contributing or giving back to the relationship? Is the sharing, growth and learning that is taking place reciprocal? (p. 77).

While Wilson (2008) takes issue with trying to insert an Indigenous perspective into usual practice, he believes “if one starts from an Indigenous paradigm, then one can choose any tool from within that paradigm that may be effective” (p. 39). In this vein, Wilson utilized participant observation, individual interviews, and focus groups as methods while undertaking his research. As he suggested, “in Indigenous research the topic being studied becomes a major key to the process being used” (p. 41).

Wilson talks about how traditional Indigenous research is based on learning by watching and doing. For example, when an Elder describes the process of beading, individuals are taught how to bead by watching and doing and then doing over again. According to Wilson, the scientific term for learning by watching and doing is participant observation. He believes that being a participant observer enabled him to take a more action-research approach to his work. It also allows him to build relationships based on the face-to-face interactions and the sharing of daily, lived experiences. But the way he practises participant observation differs from that based on Western practice in that; “relational accountability requires me to form reciprocal and respectful relationships ... the methodology is in contrast with observational techniques that attempt to be unobtrusive and not influence the environment studied” (Wilson, 2008, p. 40).

Rather than focus groups, he uses talking circles, which involve individuals sitting in a circle with each having the opportunity to take an uninterrupted turn to discuss the topic. He makes the point that while they are being newly accepted into evaluation, talking circles are not a new idea for Indigenous people. Chilisa (2012) argues that using Indigenous interview techniques, such as talking circles, as well as using Indigenous knowledge to inform alternative methods is, in fact, a process of decolonization.

The importance of storytelling is well documented. The importance of culture, including language, customs, spirituality, history, and locality, all add to the authenticity of the stories we have to tell (Benham, 2008; Chouinard and Cousins, 2007; Kirkhart, La France and Nichols, 2011; Wilson, 2008). Bowman, Dodge-Francis and Tyndall (2015) highlight how Tribal Critical Theory (TCT) recognizes the importance of stories. As TCT suggests, not only are Tribal beliefs, philosophies and customs important for understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, "it also recognizes the importance of story as a legitimate data source and building block of theory and insists that the interconnected nature of theory and practice demands that researchers work towards social change," (p. 338).

Kovach (2009) asks if research is a form of knowledge-seeking that is amenable only to quantifiable generalizations?

> If that is the belief, it shuts out the possibility of Indigenous research frameworks where generalizabilities are inconsistent with the epistemic frameworks. If research is about learning, so as to enhance the well-being of the earth's inhabitants, then story is research. It provides insight from observations, experience, interactions, and intuitions that assist in developing a theory about a phenomenon (p. 102).

According to Kovach, storytelling as a method constitutes a decolonizing research approach. In asking others to share their stories, the evaluator must share their own process of respect and *reciprocity*. The storyteller must know/feel/believe the evaluator is willing to listen to the story. The storytellers, by listening to one another, use story as method that "elevates the research from an extractive exercise serving the fragmentation of knowledge to a holistic endeavour that situates research firmly within the nest of relationship" (Kovach, 2009, p. 98).

In addition to the methods discussed above, there are other methods, such as learning walks, which consist of walking around communities and talking to individuals you meet to provide an opportunity for listening and learning. Examples of other methods include; visual-based methods such as photo-voice and/or drawings, observation, facilitated self-reflection. The methods utilized may be limited by one's imagination. However, regardless of methods used, they must be set within an Indigenous paradigm. Furthermore, it should be remembered, as noted by Hermes, 1998), *"*the need to ground the work in Indigenous culture and community render it impossible to select one "predetermined methodology to accommodate this paradigm" *(*Easby, 2016, p.2).

Guidelines and Ethics

Indigenous research protocols have been developed to safeguard against ethical misconduct and to decolonize the research relationship. These protocols provide guidelines "that counter objectionable research practices around governance, consent, ownership, and use. Furthermore, protocols stress the responsibility on the part of the researcher who seeks to work with Indigenous peoples who hold their cultural knowledge sacred" (Kovach 2009, p.143).

Kovach (2009) has identified a number of research protocols that exist in Canada. For example, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples' Ethical Guidelines for Research (1996); the Mi'kmaq Ethics Watch (1999); the Standard of Conduct for Research in Clayoquot and Northern Barkely Sound Communities; and, The Canadian Institute of Health Research's Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal People (2007).

> Schnarch's 2004 article on ownership, control, access and possession (OCAP) details a well-known statement of principle that, if followed, can offset extractive research practices … The phrase ownership, control, access, and possession (OCAP) was first coined by the First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey Working Committee, and was brought into further awareness through the article by Brian Schnarch for the First Nations Centre, National Health Organization's (Schnarch 2004). While the article was written with on-reserve communities in mind, it has applicability for the larger Indigenous population. (Kovach, 2009, p. 144)

Conclusions

Indigenous evaluation approaches take time because there is a need to build meaningful, respectful and trusting relationships. To better understand the current context, the past cannot be ignored, as it is necessary to put into perspective the realities of today to create the vision for tomorrow. Evaluation should be directed by the community, possibly through an Indigenous advisory committee, as it is time for communities to take control of the research agenda.

Indigenous approaches must take into account historical trauma and cultural repression and how the work will benefit the community and its peoples. An Indigenous approach is one of relationality; relationships with the land, culture, community, people, ancestors and spirituality.

Alfred (2009) suggests that the interrelationship between politics, morality and economies are treated separately by Western justice. In contrast, in Indigenous societies "right or wrong is determined by broad effect of a specific action on all elements of the universe. Justice consists in maintaining the state of harmonious coexistence that is the goal of all political, spiritual, and economic activity" (p. 67).

Evaluation should build on the communities' cultural, social and spiritual values and support cultural resurgence. The focus of an Indigenous approach should not be on individuals and independence, but on

relationships and the community/collective. There are many different methods that can be utilized; however, they must be based on an Indigenous research paradigm.

Evaluation dealing with Indigenous victims' services and supports must move from being an extractive process to a decolonizing one. Relationships must be respectful and reciprocal. Evaluation must become more holistic, taking into account the relationality of Indigenous worldviews so that evaluation contributes to cultural revitalization and sovereignty. In so doing, evaluation becomes a process of affirmation and validation that gives back, rather than taking from, Indigenous communities.

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Appendix B – *Evaluation from a Place of Reconciliation* by Andrea Johnston

Since 1991, Andrea L.K. Johnston has been employed full-time in working towards a future that changes the relationships between Indigenous Peoples and funding agents to operationalize an environment in which Indigenous Peoples can set their own parameters. In 2016, she launched the first-in-the-world training curriculum in Indigenous evaluation practice, titled "Honouring Reconciliation in Evaluation." Andrea seeks to deconstruct the language and assumptions behind evaluation to support the unfolding of a reconciliation process that changes the ways evaluations are operationalized.

Andrea L. K. Johnston continues to develop and launch Tools for Change, to meet the goal of Indigenous-led evaluation. Andrea has worked on Indigenous programs and services evaluations, full-time, for 20 plus years. Andrea L.K. Johnston is a Credentialed Evaluator with the Canadian Evaluation Society (since 2011), descendant of Chippewas of Nawash, graduate of the University of Toronto, and member of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business.

Introduction

This paper was written for the Department of Justice Canada for a project that explores, considers, and identifies Indigenous approaches and methods for evaluating services and supports for Indigenous victims and survivors of crime. This project also explores principles and methods that ought to be considered in designing evaluation frameworks and methods (including tools and processes). There is also interest in understanding how these approaches could be used to inform social science research studies.

There is a need to reconsider our approaches and methods to evaluative practices. There have been many adaptations made to the field of evaluation; however, these have been made by Western technicians. Current publications around Indigenous evaluation have centered on the augmentation and Indigenization of evaluation practice. However, what we really need are transformative and wholistic[6] [sic] conceptualizations of Indigenous evaluation. When we speak of reconciliation, we are referring to a two-way street or river, upon which the two-worlds glide by, each strong and independent of the other. At the crux of the issue is the fact that evaluations are still done to Indigenous Peoples. Western practitioners can craft an evaluation and mold it into whatever form they want, but at the end of the day, if it is Western practitioners steering and directing the evaluation – then evaluations are still being done to Indigenous Peoples, and reconciliation is never realized. The difficulty is that many Indigenous Peoples cannot untangle their minds from Western thought – many wear a colonized mind, largely from the Residential School System and its intergenerational impacts. However, the Elders say that without Indigenous culture and traditions, Indigenous Peoples cannot become whole, independent, and strong again. This paper will

[6] The Indigenous Elders that discussed this term with the author insist that it must remain with the 'w' included as not to lose its connection to wholeness and the general sense of being whole and circular in nature, in that it resembles a circular path that can be repetitive and long-lasting.

discuss several ways to bring Indigenous knowledge and culture into evaluation practice, including the *Waawiyeyaa Evaluation Tool*[7]. It has changed the focus of data collection to an intervention method, since it incorporates Indigenous knowledge and culture and encourages individuals to share their experiences while they sit in the driver's seat of the data exchange exercise.

Working from a place of reconciliation in evaluation methodology starts with discussions on what constitutes truth. Truth occurs from many perceptions and dimensions. Truth is the essence of what evaluation is designed to uncover. Scientific inquiry seeks to uncover the physical truths of an object that is being studied. However, Indigenous Peoples are challenging evaluation to go beyond the physical understanding of whether an intervention is deemed successful or not. Given the complexity of understanding truth, evaluation too must challenge itself to embrace this complexity. By embracing the complexity of truth, evaluation can begin to operate from a place of reconciliation. It is within the path of reconciliation practice and understanding that we can begin to truly understand why and how some programs are well-oiled machines and others struggle.

Incorporating reconciliation practice brings a unique understanding to every evaluation. It is these special insights which ignite the alternative experiences of individuals impacted by the evaluation. Reporting must reflect this diversified knowledge. This paper describes a unique Indigenous framework of understanding from approach, evaluator roles, program design, and management, while contextualizing each area in the context of evaluating Indigenous specific victims' services.

When thinking about how we bring reconciliation into evaluation practice, one must first recognize Indigenous evaluation practice not as a destination, but rather a journey. This exercise is not easy. It is about having a deep, grassroots understanding of ways of knowing, ways of being, ways of experiencing, and ways of doing. While knowing refers to a frame of mind, being refers to trauma informed relationships and practices, experiencing is contextualized within one's spiritual connections, and doing refers to the actions one is willing, able and competent to undertake. Decolonization, even for me, an Anishnawbe-que, is a journey, an ongoing process. The more we decolonize, the more we can support and implement evaluations that honour reconciliation.

One method of decolonization is coming to understand how communities view evaluation and change the ways evaluation impacts upon community members. Sitting together and discussing the aspects of a program is a rare luxury in an environment that is challenged by continual crisis management. Many communities are under-staffed, under-resourced, and find evaluation confusing and taxing on their time. Many staff resent evaluation practice since they view it as taking time away from the clients they are serving. In many cases, staff have to book off one day of the week for administrative duties and evaluation is one of many items on that day's agenda.

Another challenge is that while there is a lot of knowledge built-up documenting evaluation, it is an evolving practice. This makes it difficult for communities to keep up-to-date and learn new concepts. Another reality is that evaluation has only been a requirement built-into funding agreements of the

[7] Johnston Research Inc. (2010). Waawiyeeyaa Evaluation Tool. Unpublished. https://www.johnstonresearch.ca/the-waawiyeyaa-evaluation-tool/

Canadian federal government for the past 20 years. Evaluation took on a narrow definition of conduct with the onset of the logic model; however, it took about 10 years to popularize the logic model.

To understand what changes need to happen in evaluation practice, we must first understand how we got to the point evaluation practice is at right now. Evaluation has held tightly onto logic models and the 'theory of change'[8] for the past 20 – 30 years. These evaluation methods have the pre-conceived notion that the logic model must be built prior to program implementation, rather than built at the program development stage. Many federal government programs have a logic model developed in a centralized office, which has its input facts primarily based within a theory of change model. The theory of change which helps to predict the path of behaviour change in program participants is often developed without sufficient insight from those delivering the program or service.

The field of evaluation changed drastically in the early 1990s when the theory of change (1990) and the logic model (1997) became exciting, new and interesting topics at the American Evaluation Association conference in Chicago, Illinois, 1997. While, Chen in 1983 was among the earliest to document an evaluation that applied the theory of change, in 1991 Rush and Ogbourne were among the first to publish the use of logic models. It was more common for articles to discuss theory of change from 1998 onwards (Francis 1998, Barley & Phillips 1998). As well by 1997 numerous articles on logic models had been published (Alter 1997, Funnel 1997, Julian 1997, McEwan & Bigelow 1997, Moyer 1997). Subsequently, Carol Weiss published the 2nd edition of "Evaluation" in 1998, a text that supports the logical reasoning of the logic model and defines a common approach for theory of change.

While Canada published logic models in the early 1990s (Corbeil 1986, Wong-Reiger & David 1995, 1996), logic models were not yet adopted into federal government systems. It was not until the early 2000s when the Canadian federal government introduced the logic model and its reasoning into program work plans and requests for proposals. This created an environment for conformity to the new logical sequential reasoning of logic modelling. It is also significant to report that the early publications on logic models used language such as "program's performance story" (McLaughlin & Jordan 1997), "focus health services on population health goals" (McEwan & Bigelow 1997), "strengthen service program development" (Hermann 1996), and "adaptable tool for designing and evaluating programs" (Funnell 1997). By 1998, the publications on logic modelling evolved to focus on outcomes and indicators (Francis 1998, American Cancer Society 1998, Bell & McLaughlin 1998).

Starting from a place of reconciliation and understanding provides an in-depth understanding of the role and function of the program in the larger community and national environments. The focus of a single evaluation needs to be bigger than a single program and a single community. In Indigenous teachings there is the idea of a Spirit of a People and a National Spirit. There is also a global spiritual connection and even connections to the universe and across time. The majority of current evaluations assess programs from a funder's perspective, which values the funder's perspective over the community's values and priorities. The reconciliation of evaluation demands that the spiritual essence of a program is the starting point for evaluation practice (Public Safety Canada 2014; Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada 2013). Taking an approach that starts in a place of reconciliation is truly wholistic and ensures that

[8] Theory of change refers to how and why a desired change is expected in a particular context.

every step in the evaluation is related to this basic onset. This beginning stage also considers many variables and factors influencing the program. However, this exceeds the current methodology of typical evaluation practice. There are a few instances of evaluations from a place of reconciliation; however, there are few evaluations that are based in a broader community or national context. It is these evaluations that we want to discuss in terms of a model for the next wave of evaluation transformation.

We are at a precarious stage of examining Indigenous evaluation. The following are questions and actions that come from a place of reconciliation. These would guide an evaluation process to be more inclusive of Indigenous thought and actions.

1. **How do I begin the evaluation process, what are the factors important to Indigenous Peoples?** *Suggested action*: Identify the key evaluation contributors that can be involved in the design of the overall evaluation approach and methods.
2. **How do I go about learning about the program being evaluated and its broader story?** *Suggested action:* Have a desire to go beyond your current knowledge and bias of what is currently perceived to be relevant. Undertake a discovery of what the appropriate concepts of outcomes might be as you and your key evaluation contributors uncover the narrative of the program, before any tools or evaluation questions are created.
3. **How do I identify an objective or goal to which the program can be measured against?** *Suggested action:* Such goals are not absolute. Discover concepts of appropriate objectives to guide the data collection; however, do so with the key evaluation contributors. Ensure they have time to dedicate to such discovery work – analyzing the data collected above.
4. **How do I determine the indicators that will tell the story of the ways in which the program worked to address the objective(s)?** *Suggested action:* The key is not to take a narrow scan of the information; the goal is to always be open to re-interpretation and expansion of the information in the above previous steps.
5. **What tools and strategies will best assist in implementing an evaluation from a place of reconciliation?** *Suggested action:* Focus on what methods will serve as a record of the information that tells the story. This decision-making should be made in conjunction with the key evaluation contributors.
6. **Is there a different and appropriate method for documenting and designing a system for recording, storing and analyzing/realizing the story of the program?** *Suggested action:* The key evaluation contributors can be a valuable source for innovative and creative ideas on these questions.
7. **What method can be used to record the information/story?** *Suggested action:* This will naturally follow from the above step and should be discussed during that discourse.
8. **How can the story (evaluation results) be shared broadly?** *Suggested action*: Again, these actions will naturally come out of a broader conversation initiated in step 6 above.

It is important to consider who the key evaluation contributors are – these are a variety of individuals and those who receive some form of compensation for their "professional services." If one does not value such

expertise and experience within a bartering relationship that expresses value for their time and effort, the productivity will suffer, as it has in the past. Instead of igniting creativity and ingenuity, we will produce a mediocre evaluation project that does little to create change and inspire transformation.

The rest of the paper will focus on the previously mentioned eight questions. These eight questions are discussed as a set of guiding principles for evaluation practice. These principles each discuss a step-by-step descriptive guide for bringing reconciliation practices into evaluation methodologies and approaches.

1. **Identify the key evaluation contributors that can be involved in the design of the overall evaluation approach and methods**.

There is no question that an Elder, knowledge keeper, traditional healer must have a highly significant role in the evaluation process. For example, any evaluation department that has any involvement with Indigenous Peoples must employ an Elder, knowledge keeper, traditional healer to inform not only their evaluation practice but also the interpretation of results and application of results into actions and follow-through activities. Many organizations and government departments conduct evaluations internally, as well as contract out evaluation projects. When these evaluations intercept with Indigenous Peoples the inclusion from a place of spiritual knowledge must be in effect.

There are many different levels of colonization among Indigenous Peoples. As well, many levels of cultural sensitivity and humility among Western evaluators. However, the goal of this paper is not to determine what level of decolonization is necessary, but rather to focus on what Indigenous evaluation can do and contribute to Western evaluation. In terms of what Indigenous evaluation can accomplish, my goal is to see the focus of evaluation transform until the primary outcome is at the national level of all Indigenous Peoples, united on several indicators of success. These would speak to what is valued most and provide a roadmap for reaching those goals. For practical terms, this work would be undertaken by the evaluation contributors, recognizing that the evaluation can occur in many ways. For example,

a) One way is to look for documentation, written or oral, such as a Traditional Scroll document, traditional stories, traditional teachings, and traditional medicines to name a few; however, each of these sources of knowledge would require interpretation and analysis from an Elder, knowledge keeper, or traditional healer to apply this knowledge to the evaluation.

b) If the vision and spirit of a program cannot be realized through an Elder, knowledge keeper, or traditional healer, their involvement should continue in an in-depth approach. However, the evaluation would also need to collect information or stories that assist in understanding the model of care of the program. In this instance, if a logic model was already developed prior to the evaluation, it may require modifications as per the new insights gained when looking at the program through a new light. Talking circles and other modes of data collection that ask out-of-the-box questions, may have different results as to the program design.

2. Learn about and document the overall and broader story of the program.

This is a critical step, particularly if there is a logic model in-place for the program. This is not a lip service activity. This is undertaken with a determination to discover the essences of the program and truly understand not just what it does but rather a larger concentration on how it does what it does. These questions ask about the management style, perceptions of staff under that management style, procedures for the program, and how the program operates. Thus, these process questions are the real story. Indigenous Peoples have called for the focus of evaluation to shift from outcomes to a focus more centered on *process* (NCCAH, n.d., Saini & Quinn, 2013, Van der Woerd, 2010; Chouinard & Cousins, 2007; Fetterman & Wandersman, 2004).

There is a sense among communities with significant challenges that outcomes are extremely difficult to measure, particularly the fact that it is unreasonable to expect decisive outcomes from a community that is classified as being a small population, such as 500 or fewer residents. In some of these communities the birth rate is anywhere from two babies to ten babies a year. In these cases, assessments cannot be made from numerical data. A case study approach will be necessary to differentiate between the many confounding variables. This has two major implications, 1) specific program sites should have the option to collect completely different data sets and 2) and the roll-up of information should be flexible in the manner by which it draws conclusions, where conclusions are not made on the number of xx and yy, but rather a more substantive conclusion is drawn that speaks to the varied and multiple ways individuals have experienced the program. Aiming to gather information that is experiential-based is far more valuable in determining future directions and continued funding for Indigenous Peoples.

Instead of focussing on the mechanisms (processes of programs) that give birth to creative and innovative thinking and that generate processes and policies that target these underlying issues, we have spent the past twenty years measuring outcomes in a meaningless and unrewarding manner. What have these outcomes done for Indigenous Peoples to improve their health and wellness outcomes? Many of the key damaging statistics have actually risen over the past twenty years, instead of declining. The greatest damaging legacy of the past two decades has been Indigenous Peoples and Western medicine working in silos – neither sincerely trusting the other. But evaluations over the past twenty years have not addressed these factors, instead they narrowly measure participant outcomes in a vacuum (this is a meaningless exercise). The rates of diabetes and cardio-vascular disease are not going to dramatically drop until Indigenous Health Practitioners and Western Medicine Practitioners come together in an effective and meaningful manner. Addressing the underlying mental wellness and inter-generational trauma issues are key factors in the solution. Bringing Western and Indigenous medicines together is a huge factor in initiating the needed and desired healing of a person, a family, a community and a nation.

It is these underlying and systemic issues that make the measurement of outcome data so difficult, particularly for promotion and prevention focused programs. These programs scratch at the surface, without actually addressing the systemic issues and problem solving at the heart of the issues affecting victims and their families. This significant constraint is particularly harsh on staff and must be included as a primary focus of program outcomes – not what the program has done for clients, but rather, what has the program and its constraints done to the staff and the vision and heart of the community? The question of absolute importance, then is what has the program done to support or hinder the People or the Nation,

and in what ways do the staff and management implement the program that support these notions of community-building and transformation? These are the valuable questions that need to be asked and that would further support the development of community vision that can lead the People into a path of healing and strength-building. Evaluation then is a tool not only for documenting accountability to government, but it has a responsibility and the means to support the development of these visions and report on the underlying and systemic issues.

3. Identify an objective or goal against which the program is being measured

This is typically, in the era of the logic model, an outcome-related statement in the context of impacts on program participants in expectation that the intervention would yield some sort of change in socio-economic condition. However, as discussed above, while participant outcome goals and objectives are laudable, there is a time and place for such endeavours. The goals and objectives must suit the community, not the community suit the goals and objectives.[9]

There is no place for participant-outcome objectives if the community involved in the program does not see their program as suitable for such measurements. And this does not mean they won't, but the issue is, has anyone bothered to ask and ask in a way that is meaningful and makes sense to community?

But first, the ice must be broken, community members think evaluation is a black hole and it has all the answers, answers they cannot create themselves. This myth must be broken before a truly community-focused conversation can be had.

In a truly community-focused conversation, a variable goal and related objectives could be created, ones that accommodate the scale suggested and varies across communities, from zero participant outcomes to numerous participant outcomes. The priority for the objective and goal statement is that it reflects the vision for the community and the essence of the program. It is not up to one individual or a single grouping of individuals to determine how that objective should read. This is a complex task and is best sought from Indigenous Peoples participating as key evaluation contributors. They know programming and now they should also know evaluation very well.

The funder may have a notion as to the program goal and objective. However, when community is left to determine the program goal, it is far often rooted in a spiritual reality and has roots tied to the land and a significance that is grounded in the teachings and knowledge of spirit. To operate in a manner from a place of reconciliation, the goals and objectives must reflect both realities and these decisions must be made in a meaningful and truth-seeking way by community. These types of exercises can serve as a tool to bring about change and transformation.

[9] Adapted from a conversation with Standup, Geraldine (Standup, 2002), Elder in Residence, Aboriginal Health Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

4. Determine the indicators that will tell the story of the ways in which the program worked to address the objective(s).

The measurement of program objectives is often a complicated process regardless of evaluator. The identification of indicators differs significantly when one is coming from a place of reconciliation. Such indicators are more descriptive and have greater depth than the typical logic model indicator. Indigenous indicators must reflect the language of the People. In our experience we have witnessed community-identified goals and objectives defined in Indigenous languages. The goals and objectives therefore have elaborate meanings and are action-oriented. These goals and objectives can then be translated into indicators.

Ojibway, for example, has two-thirds verbs, whereas English has two-thirds nouns. Therefore, one rule is that the indicators must be action-oriented. As well, the Ojibway language is primarily learned orally in Anishnawbe communities, so the indicators should be easily understood from an oral perspective, in other words inspire a visual. And, the Ojibway words have elaborated and complex meanings, in other words the language is multi-dimensional. Further, the majority of Ojibway words support critical thinking, foster empathy and emotional intelligence because the language is composed of two-thirds verbs. The verbs reflect the actions of human beings and animals. All of these Indigenous language considerations are critical to identifying indicators that honour, respect, support, and aspire to bring reconciliation into the evaluation design. Once Indigenous indicators are known, new concepts can be developed for evaluation practice.

At the inaugural University of Toronto Indigenous Health Conference in 2016, Chief Wilton Littlechild spoke to an audience of 400 plus health professionals and stated that, "**We need to hold each other up.**" This is essential because it applies to the room of students and professionals in the health field, but it also applies to women, men, nurses, Indigenous Peoples, and the applications are almost endless. It supports critical thinking because it makes you think about the possibilities and, makes you visualize what it means to hold each other up. It can mean horizontally, vertically, and unilaterally. The statement supports empathy, in terms of caring for your fellow colleague or human beings, in general. It succeeds in spanning through time, in that it suggests we need to do something, now and in the future. The phrase is action-oriented because it refers to the act of supporting one another, and ensuring our livelihood is intact and we are fully cared for by one another. This type of objective restores honour, respect, support, and aspires to bring reconciliation into the evaluation design. The indicators that could be thought to fall from this objective can include the following set of triangulated evidence:

a) Staff storytelling experiences reflect:

- Tool bundles[10]
- Support at work
- Positive views of workplace

[10] Tool Bundle refers to not only physical items such as a drum, but also spiritual connections such as spirit helpers, emotional referring to skillsets that focus on maintaining a balanced composure that among other things reflects wisdom, and mental skillsets that support a balanced way of being and way of doing.

- Positive feelings of management
- Feelings of strength
- Feelings of being respected
- Feelings of equality and reciprocity

b) Documents reflect much of the same.
c) Observations reflect much of the same.

5. Develop tools/strategies that will serve as a record of the information that tells the story.

It is important that Indigenous tools act both as interventions and data collection devices. When the data collection tool acts as an intervention, it should support the documentation of experiences that matter in the minds of the program individuals and the whole – that they identified without the use of more than 1 – 3 very broad questions and without any probing. This step needs to be agreed to by Elders, knowledge keepers, and or traditional healers before proceeding. This process also requires an education process where such Elders etc. are exposed to a broad-based set of tools that are creative, and intervention focused. Blindly having people talk in a story-like fashion runs the risk of leaving the person hanging – rather 1 – 3 broad based questions enable a semi-structured process to engage the participant; however, these need to be carefully considered within a framework of experienced and informed individuals. In the remainder of this step an example of such an intervention-based tool is given.

Intervention-based creative tools such as the Waawiyeyaa Evaluation Tool[11] foster the development of local ideas and tools that allow respondents' voices to be heard and inspire them to think creatively about the one or two questions at hand, instead of asking a list of 20 – 30 questions in a typical survey tool. It allows respondents to express their experiences in a manner that they wish. They are steering the data collection process.

What has been key is that people can hear their voice in the data design and the ultimate findings resonate with people's beliefs about change. When engaged in the application of the *Waawiyeyaa Evaluation Tool*, respondents are drawn into a creative process of thinking about change, self-discovery of their own journey and the turns and changes they experienced.

By utilizing Indigenous-based tools, frameworks, and traditional storytelling and teachings, we have learned the following from program participants. While these can certainly be learned from other means, these were learned on a single page directed by each participant, by them answering one single broad question; whereas, in other means the following would take a detailed series of questions to obtain.

1. Reasons for coming to the program
2. Experiences at the program
3. Results of the program

[11] Johnston Research Inc. (2010). Waawiyeeyaa Evaluation Tool. Unpublished. https://www.johnstonresearch.ca/the-waawiyeyaa-evaluation-tool/

4. Satisfaction with the program
5. Demonstration as to whether the participants are or are not on a healing journey
6. Details as to what constitutes a healing journey
7. Self-discovery of what cause change and the ways they have changed over time

6. Document and design a system for recording, storing and analyzing/realizing the results of a program.

This step should be determined by the Elders, knowledge keepers, traditional healers and others participating as key evaluation contributors. According to statements made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015), a very important social responsibility of an evaluator is to shed their bias, engage in introspective thinking, and become an active participant in the healing and reconciliation process:

> *We should do no less. It is time to commit to a process of reconciliation. By establishing a new and respectful relationship, we restore what must be restored, repair what must be repaired, and return what must be returned.*

Indigenous communities are very concerned with process and less interested in documenting outcomes. This reflects the focus of Indigenous systems. While individuals have different short-term to intermediate-goals and have different outcomes, an outcome conceived within an Indigenous system for a human is to nurture the spirit – that means living a life with respect for all life, and more, and to live through the lessons thrown at one's self in order to support the spirit in its intended journey (which is largely unknown). Indigenous systems are more complex than this example alone. For example, another factor which makes outcomes less important, are the fact that Indigenous systems value opportunity seeking and engaging in new opportunities as they randomly and unpredictably arise. There is so much more to learn about Indigenous ways of being and ways of knowing. The epistemological perspective is entrenched in a dynamic complex pedagogical system. This is why it is so difficult for reconciliation practices to do justice to evaluation practices. Without a complete change in the lens and the manner by which the evaluator understands truth there is no place for the evaluator to undertake the design of a system for recording, storing and analyzing/realizing the results of a program.

One project allowed us to gather data that demonstrates this TRC recommendation in action – this information was only gathered and documented because the evaluator was experienced in the Indigenous pedagogy described next. In the north, a health authority has entrenched culture into the program and management framework. This northern organization has completely embraced the act of providing an "experience" not just for clients, but most importantly for staff as well. The organization provides its staff and management an inductive learning experience. A critical component of the approach is the culturally safe knowledge bundles each staff person is given. The physical component is the giving of a sacred bundle they carry with themselves on the job to utilize within their practice. For each of the sacred gifts

they are given (such as medicines, drums), they received the teachings alongside their colleagues at the office.

The organization normalizes their traditional ways of being and ways of knowing. At this organization, the big drum greets you when you enter the building; it sits in the front in the waiting room, so clients can sit with the drum. This is the meditative process spoken by Dr. Yellow Bird -- to sit with the drum, to experience it, to feel it, to observe and to communicate with it, and bond with the drum. Yellow Bird's work has examined brain scans that indicate prayer outcomes in the brain activity, show-up with increased creativity in the right side of the brain. Yellow Bird further explains that these ceremony participants experience significant development in the pre-frontal lobe of the brain, in addition to the occipital lobe and experience significant growth in an area of the brain that allows for connections beyond the self – such as increased empathy. Yellow Bird has validated prayer as a guaranteed outcome for increasing brain activity and brain development (Yellow Bird and Wilson, 2005)

Smudge and use of the pipe are "in the open" at this organization, and available for everyday use. The smudge and bowl are not decorations -- they are a living substance one greets when entering the room, and his or her experience is enhanced as they engage with the smudge: smelling, seeing, and opening spiritual-touch. It is not uncommon for someone to walk into the building and use the pipe, and all the staff have teachings on the use of the pipe. This is an instance of Dr. Yellow Bird's engagement of the occipital lobe within one's brain (Yellow Bird and Wilson, 2005).

7. Record the program's information.

If the steps above are undertaken, the final information documented with the help of Elders, knowledge keepers, and/or traditional healers will reveal an understanding from a place of reconciliation. The remainder of this step provides a project example of the type of in-depth Indigenous pedagogy that is revealed. In the organization described in the previous section, the learning environment was described as having a deeply healing and culturally affirming impact on the employees and the management. A term such as 'normalizing cultural practices' was very profound in that it describes the organization as embedding cultural practice throughout the organization. In this case the cultural pedagogy directed the training approach and the whole work experience of the organization's personnel. The managers were responsible and entrenched in the cultural ways and knowing whereby they carried their own cultural bundles and therefore could engage their staff in ongoing on-the-job inductive learning in the cultural pedagogy. The organization engages in Anishnawbe ceremonies and conducts its meeting from their entrenched cultural approach. These epistemological understandings are not easy to uncover and document, it takes a keen ear and insight from experience. So, either the external evaluator is skilled in this area and or the data collection tools support the respondent to illicit their own insights into the impacts of the program from their definitions and perspectives, entirely.

8. Share the program evaluation results broadly.

The sharing of the process information is vital to Indigenous Peoples who make requests at government organized meetings for increased time for networking to allow for the sharing of stories about each other's programs. Networking is considered the most important function of such meetings. There is a lot to learn about community processes and Indigenous knowledge to inform evaluation practice. The concept of holism is certainly not isolated to Indigenous knowledge systems. However, despite a sense of universality across many nationalities confirming holism is a valid understanding, this seems to fail to inform evaluation indicators and outcomes. Western interventions are typically designed to treat the absence of something, therefore evaluation seeks to measure the increase in the presence of the absent variables. Rather, humans are dynamic and not unidimensional, thus when thinking about explaining the impacts of a program, yes, everyone wants to hear about the value of the program – what makes it relevant and significant. Using a wholistic format allows for program processes to be explained, but not just the physical calculations one can make about the impacts, but also the other aspects. Remembering humans are not unidimensional, factor in the emotional environment such as what it evokes and what it reminds staff and clients about; the mindful decision making around program design and day-to-day thinking that contributes to the program goals, and the spiritual connections the program creates for staff and clients. But, don't try to discover this on your own, use tools that support this type of holistic thinking about evaluation measurement and reporting. Community does not want to hear about rigid and narrow reports, they want to hear about the good, the bad and the ugly to remind us we are human, but also reports that are fun and even humorous. The reporting needs to have rhythm and be full of life, to inspire goodness and feelings of goodness and feelings of joy and pride in their community and the people in their communities.

This elaborate definition of evaluation practice significantly expands the story that needs to be told. It goes beyond the individual, to include a complexity within one person between spirit, mind, emotion and body, and the inclusion of community impacts and influencers, and environment impacts and influencers.

In our work sharing the story supports ongoing evaluation. This step is social-justice in action. This looks at the planning and implementation of actions by evaluation collaborators from the evaluation findings. This section highlights the opportunity present for one to learn and further develop one's evaluation practice of understanding the program from a place of reconciliation. This step calls for the evaluator to dialogue with the program, the funder, and Elders, knowledge keepers, traditional healers, and other key evaluation contributors, to determine if the vision and Spirt of a People were reflected in the final story.

We have worked on this leading innovative practice and seen it as elevating the function and role of dissemination into a validation procedure. Working with a community-based program a cultural celebration of the evaluation report included presentation, singing, raffle, dinner, and dancing. During the event about 2/3 through, children, handed-out surveys and collected 100 percent of the papers. The survey asked community members 6 questions that elevated their role and function to that of a decision maker and adjudicator. They were essentially asked if the results presented to them warranted the continuance of the program.

Conclusion

This path to reconciliation in evaluation is not for the lighthearted; it is a deep commitment to the course of decolonization in every means of the conduct and execution of evaluation practice. It is also understood that it is not a course of action that can be implemented instantaneously. Education is needed first and foremost, our next generation of evaluators should all be privy to such knowledge as contained in this article – such as this type of information being integrated into university courses by professors. We have several university professors that work with us keeping up to date on our innovative tool developments and educating their students on inspiring methods and approaches that honour reconciliation actions. At the very least, Elder and knowledge keeper involvement in the evaluation process should not be as a makeshift contributor but rather as a major decision maker as to its form and detailed conduct. The community voice is also an important, as to their voice being heard on what matters to them and the varied ways in which they have experienced the programs and services being evaluated. This involvement matters when executed at the start of the program and particularly in the design stage. While it is a common belief that program and evaluative practices are separate entities, they are in fact significantly intertwined. Take the case of the evaluation tool called the logic model, it is continually used to inform program design. Second, the evaluation practice should be used as a positive reinforcing tool of change. This can be in its overall conduct but also in its tool for data collection. The evaluation, therefore, is a means for informing and detailing program improvement and transformation. Finally, evaluation is an activity that communities look forward to and want to participate in, not because it rewards them with a form of payment for participation, but rather they want to participate because it leads to positive and ongoing growth and change in their community at-large.

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Appendix C – *Reflecting on Indigenous Evaluation Frameworks* by Gladys Rowe

Introduction

The development of the field of Indigenous evaluation is both an act of resistance and resurgence in response to inequitable and colonial relationships between Indigenous peoples and settlers in Canada. Simpson (2011) asserts that resurgence is a pathway towards reconciliation. "Anything less than space, recognition, and respect for the necessity of cultural resurgence is not reconciliation in its fullest sense," (Rowe & Kirkpatrick, 2018, p. 2). Making space and pushing back has occurred through the leadership of Indigenous people in many fields and professions. Recently, supported by the 94 Calls to Action (2015), organizations have also begun to recognize gaps in representation and the necessity to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing, being, feeling, and doing, including in the fields of research and evaluation.

This paper has been drafted in response to a request from the Research and Statistics Division (RSD) and the Policy Centre for Victim Issues (PCVI) at the Department of Justice Canada to explore and identify Indigenous approaches and methods for evaluating services and supports for Indigenous victims and survivors of crime. The intent of this paper is to share actions and processes that support the development of evaluation frameworks in partnership with Indigenous organizations and communities. It is clear there is great interest in how such a framework can be used as a resource to programs who work directly with Indigenous peoples.

In order to strengthen the field of Indigenous evaluation, space must be made, and it follows that evaluators must reflect deeply on what this looks like. TRC Call to Action #40 enlists all levels of government to work collaboratively with Indigenous peoples to ensure that in the development of adequately funded and accessible Indigenous-specific victim programs and services, appropriate evaluation mechanisms are also designed and employed. Therefore, funding bodies and evaluators are responsible for identifying what they can do to support the tenets and processes set forth in the following document. Meaningful community involvement in the design of Indigenous evaluation must occur at the beginning, must be fully supported with resources, and must be given the time and space to build capacity (Grover, 2010, Grover, Cram & Bowman, 2007; LaFrance, 2004).

In my own work, I can only speak from my experiences and location, as an urban, mixed ancestry, Swampy Cree woman, who has been trained in the field of evaluation and has been working with communities in Indigenous research that is grounded, community directed, and participatory for over ten years. I bring with me experiences from my education within post-secondary institutions, on the land, and in ceremony learning from Elders and traditional knowledge keepers. Coming from this location, I am able to share what I have learned with the hope that this provides something meaningful as the field of Indigenous evaluation continues to expand.

In this paper, I hope to provide perspectives in this pursuit. It will begin by outlining a background as to why Indigenous evaluation is a necessity, describing the learning that has taken place to date, and listing the considerations for evaluators and organizations who are seeking to use this framework. Guiding

principles and values will be outlined, sharing experiences and identifying areas one must ensure are addressed. This paper will share a challenge for knowledge users to consider using their role and this framework in relation to the Calls to Action (2015) and reconciliation. This can lead to personal and professional acts contributing to decolonization overall.

Background

Indigenous evaluation is intimately linked to assertions of self-determination and self-governance (Smith, 1999). Who will set a knowledge-seeking agenda, whose voice will lead the process, whose knowledge will be sought and valued, what methods will be used to gather the knowledge, and what will be the ultimate use and distribution of the results of the knowledge-gathering are all important elements that have been raised by Indigenous researchers for decades. The answers to the questions above are fundamentally about power over knowledge production and representation. It is important to consider these factors in the roles and responsibilities evaluators must adopt for decolonizing and reconciling.

Hart & Rowe (2014), in their examination of the field of social work, have asserted the necessity of working from an anti-colonial and decolonized space. They have provided guidance (see the list below) on individual and organizational responsibilities for helping professions. These recommendations also have important implications for research and evaluation by, with, and for Indigenous peoples. This is a starting point in the education and ongoing professional training that must be completed by evaluators working with Indigenous peoples and communities. The responsibility is held with each of us to examine the colonial lens upon which not only social work, but also research and evaluation, have been founded.

1. Educating self about oppression in general and colonial oppression specifically.
2. Learning about the untaught First Nations history that up to now has been absent from typical curricula.
3. Developing critical reflexive skills, as well as critical analysis skills.
4. Honestly looking at one's unconscious participation and erroneously informed participation in the oppression.
5. Educating others on oppression through social action, informal dialogues, and sharing of information.
6. Developing an understanding of First Nations Peoples, cultures, perspectives, and experiences.
7. Creating space for First Nations contributions and developments, which requires encouragement, acceptance of differences, and concrete support.
8. Challenging the profession in relation to its privilege, whether those privileges stem from the types of practices that are utilized, the theoretical perspectives that are taught and learned, or the values and belief system that is followed.
9. Supporting the continuing development of Indigenous social work practice, perspectives, and theories.
10. Making space for Indigenous participation in all segments of the profession (p.36).

These are issues and the necessary responses are not new. However, they have begun to receive more attention from various professions, including evaluation.

Similar to Indigenous peoples' history with research – the evaluation of programs, policies, and organizations serving Indigenous peoples has been fraught with challenges. Fundamental differences between Western and Indigenous ways of understanding the world, and the privileging of Eurocentric values and knowledge development have meant that Indigenous voices in evaluation have been lacking (Smith, 1999). Design of programs and the corresponding evaluations must reflect the values and principles of Indigenous peoples. Research continues to show that in order to provide meaning and assist in success, social services and health programs must include opportunities for connecting with traditional knowledge and ways of doing.

There are several challenges that have been experienced by Indigenous evaluators, programs, and organizations who have worked to incorporate Indigenous beliefs, values, and methods into their evaluations. One challenge has been in the philosophical foundations of evaluation and the methodologies used to design them. While conversations about cross cultural awareness and evaluation practice are starting to take place (i.e., by Linda Tuhiwai Smith in 1999), many Western trained evaluators remain unaware of these conversations and the need to address issues being raised. These issues include a long and challenging history of Indigenous peoples being objects of research whereby information was extracted for benefit of others. These discussions have moved from awareness to a call for culturally relevant evaluations, and then culturally competent evaluators (Barrados, 1999).

Even with the push for culturally competent evaluation, which was accomplished by training non-Indigenous evaluators to work with communities, challenges remain. One of the most glaring challenges is that evaluation is still being done on Indigenous peoples by non-Indigenous peoples. Indigenous evaluators continue to confront the status quo in evaluation. In Australia, an Indigenous Community Capacity Building Roundtable (2000) has developed the following eight principles to guide evaluations with Indigenous families and communities:

- encouraging partnerships between government and Indigenous people in program design and implementation;
- identifying positive role models and successful approaches;
- empowering Indigenous people through developing leadership and managerial competence;
- targeting youth and children in regard to leadership development, esteem building, etc.;
- building on the strengths, assets and capacities of Indigenous families and communities;
- empowering Indigenous people to develop their own solutions;
- giving priority to initiatives that encourage self-reliance and sustainability; and
- fostering projects that consider Indigenous culture and spirituality (Scougall 2008, p. 4).

By the early 2000s, Indigenous-led evaluation practices were being discussed. During the 2003 Australasian Evaluation Society International Conference in Auckland, Russell Taylor gave a keynote address, "An Indigenous Perspective on the Inter-Cultural Context." This was the first time that an Indigenous person spoke from centre stage about Indigenous evaluation (Hurwoth & Harvey, 2012). During the same event, discussions also included the development of a Kaupapa Māori evaluation framework, seminal work upon which many Indigenous communities have fashioned their own examples for evaluation and research.

Even with recognition and more space for Indigenous evaluation being made, the lack of training and expertise to address these issues within institutions remains.

Indigenous, culturally based, non-profit programs devote their limited resources to the delivery of services to underserved, low-income and special needs populations. Theirs is a constant battle to continue operating while persistently seeking financial support through either grant proposals, contributions, income development or other means. An equally critical need of these programs is dedicated infrastructure for program development and evaluation, without which best practices of these innovative community programs remain obscure and unsubstantiated (Morelli & Mataira, 2010, p. 1).

In addition to lack of institutional level training, granting organizations often provide another barrier in funding guidelines which hold specific measures of success, reporting, and evaluation expectations that do not align with the models upon which the programs are developed. The ways of working that could provide insight into successful outcomes are being lost due to this incongruence (Morelli & Mataira, 2010). In addition, evaluations within the typical scope of grant requirements provide a narrow view of program dynamics – with little understanding of the relational process and culture-based practices. This misses holistic connections and values-based practices that can impact long term outcomes and influence community well-being (Morelli & Mataira, 2010). Recognition of this misalignment in the field of evaluation dates back to the 1970s (Hurworth & Harvey, 2012). Requirements typically do not take into account the need for Indigenous evaluation frameworks, methods, evaluators, and the increased time required to build these models (Grover, 2010). This leads to evaluations that do not meet the underlying needs of the program or the mechanisms through which change typically occurs based on these models. This can mean that evaluations fail to adequately describe an Indigenous program's strengths, which can fall out of the scope of traditionally quantitatively focused results.

The necessity of evaluators to educate themselves and have a clear understanding of the impact of research and evaluation on Indigenous peoples has also been asserted by Indigenous scholars (Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2004; Kovach, 2010; Hart, 2010; Maitara, 2000). Community context, current and historical, are foundational elements for an evaluator to understand at the beginning of building a relationship with a program or organization. Bowman-Farrell (2018) cautions against entering a community as an evaluator and imposing a model, design, instruments, or tools. Similarly, an evaluator must not impose assumptions about the value of Western knowledge and ways of knowing over traditional knowledge shared through generations. This can mean the evaluator must broaden their understanding of subject matter experts, sources of meaningful knowledge, and mechanisms for dissemination of results of an evaluation. Inclusion of Indigenous traditions is a place to begin, but there is much more that must occur. Changing mindsets, belief systems, behaviours, and resources is required in order to create institutional and systemic change. This requires evaluators to engage in critical reflection about their practice:

As a profession, we need to critically question the structures and systems that perpetuate or legitimize implicit or explicit racism. Using a strengths-based approach, the evaluation field can start by including Indigenous SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) on key initiatives and make access and resources more available, so that truly collaborative studies with Indigenous scholars can contribute to the "evidence-based" policies, programming, committees, and practice. (Bowman-Farrell, 2018, p.6)

Taken as a whole, this produces culturally responsive evaluation that:

> …is a welcoming space where evaluators and evaluations honor the strengths, respect the diversity, and authentically include, engage, and empower evaluators and the communities they are working with (not "on") in the evaluative process, so they can be their own social justice and transformative leaders for creating and sustaining local change. (Bowman-Farrell, 2018, p.10)

In order to change we must first be aware that there is a problem. For non-Indigenous evaluators, education is key, but action is also required through continual and consistent engagement in knowledge and capacity building within the profession. There are two paths that can be taken. One includes the education of current non-Indigenous evaluators on the importance of working within this framework. Outreach and inclusion are actions required in the second path. This can mean creating requirements for inclusion of Indigenous academics and organizations in prominent positions and significant contracts for evaluation, policy or research studies, and related training and technical assistance contracts (Bowman-Farrell, 2018). The strategic inclusion of Indigenous evaluators and Indigenous theories and methods in evaluation will allow for a building and strengthening of this field.

LaFrance, Nichols & Kirkhart (2012) describe fundamental elements of Indigenous Evaluation Framework epistemology and methods and give several examples of these elements from evaluations in American Indian communities. The Indigenous Evaluation Framework was developed based on requests from Tribal colleges in the US to be able to use an evaluation model that was respectful of their context. The framework was developed in collaboration with expert advisors and pilot tested within Tribal colleges and with Indigenous primary and secondary school educators.

In research and evaluation, validity is a key term used by scholars and evaluators to assess the completeness of a study. LaFrance, Nichols & Kirkhart (2012) argue that context is essential to the measurement of validity – programs can only be wholly understood through their relationship to place, setting, and community. "Methodological justifications of validity such as those argued by Rog must be placed in cultural context, supported by justifications grounded in theory, life experience, interpersonal connections, and concern for social consequences," (LaFrance, Nichols & Kirkhart, 2012, p. 62).

Given the need to contextualize, an Indigenous evaluation framework will be specific to each community situation. Indigenous ways of knowing are founded upon traditions of specific cultural groups and can include their creation stories, clan origins, and experiences of their ancestors passed down through stories. This also includes empirical knowledge, gained through observation and from other perspectives acquired through dreams, visions, and ceremony (LaFrance, Nichols & Kirkhart, 2012).

In addition to the contextualized methods based on each unique community, evaluators must consider culturally specific methods of reporting of evaluation and research results. This includes being responsible for the relationships addressed in reporting, for example the community, description or not of any ceremonies, and acknowledgment of Elders and the knowledge shared (LaFrance, Nichols & Kirkhart, 2012).

> …the framework suggests that those who want to apply an indigenous approach to research or evaluation consult tribal cultural experts to understand tribal ways of knowing for that community. This process is often implicit. It can be brought to life through language, protocols for behaving, deeply held relationships within the community and with the land, and the people's lived experiences. (LaFrance, Nichols & Kirkhart, 2012, p. 65).

While there cannot be a standardization of knowledge applicable across Indigenous nations (Kovach, 2010), there are principles that can guide the development of methods based on Indigenous ways of knowing. Principles identified in the framework described by LaFrance, Nichols & Kirkhart (2012) include:

- Relational accountability – demonstrate respect, responsibility, and reciprocity.
- "Building scaffolding," the necessary relationships to ensure the community is driving the evaluation priorities and process.
- Honouring sense of space and place (transparent methods that embrace inclusion).
- Explicit connection to nation building. It is about sovereignty.
- A framework must come from the tribal level and be understood within the context of the community's history and current reality.
- Methods used must be congruent and can include telling of stories, and the use of culturally rooted metaphors as a way to begin telling the story of evaluation.
- Use of metaphors, these can symbolically represent images that have meaning within the cultural context of the program and its evaluation.
- An Indigenous evaluation moves away from a traditional logic model approach and becomes a process for sharing the story of the program and the lessons that have been learned.
- Ensures that the dissemination of the evaluation findings is a priority and often can include a community celebration.

The Indigenous Learning Circle (a group in Winnipeg, Manitoba) led the development of an Indigenous Evaluation bundle. Na-gah mo Waabishkizi Ojijaak Bimise Keetwaatino: Singing White Crane Flying North, is a bundle that provides a community driven approach to evaluating based on Indigenous principles congruent with individuals, families, leaders, and organizations in the north end of Winnipeg. The use of the term bundle is important to highlight. This purposefully moves away from using the term framework or toolkit, terms often used to describe evaluations. "A bundle is a sacred gathering of objects, ideas, gifts, and teachings that take place of the lifetime of an individual," (Rowe & Kirkpatrick, 2018, p. 5). Na-gah mo Waabishkizi Ojijaak Bimise Keetwaatino: Singing White Crane Flying North is more than a collection of values and principles comprising an intellectual model - it is also emotional, physical, and spiritual elements. Ceremony was an important process in the development of the bundle, with attention given to local protocols and processes for seeking and sharing knowledge.

The intent of the bundle is to provide new opportunities for organizations to evaluate based on meaningful measures of success, to provide evidence for ways of working based on Indigenous values and practices, and to share these stories with funders with the overall goal of systemic change (Rowe & Kirkpatrick, 2018). The Indigenous Learning Circle, in the gathering of the Bundle, felt that it was important to make note of the use of the term evaluation:

> From what has been learned so far there is no word for evaluation in any Manitoba Indigenous language. What comes close to the term evaluation reflects a personal process of deep reflection and contemplation. This is more about a process: looking back and seeing what worked, what didn't, and then determining the path ahead. These concepts of evaluation involve taking stock and reflecting upon previous experience in order to move forward. This is a guided self reflection of who you are, where you are at, and where you want to be. This does not employ an external set of indicators upon these questions of where you "should" be. Rather, this creates the space for people to learn from their experiences, reflect on what has worked for them, celebrate their journey, and take that learning into their future. This is a purposeful reflection on self, self in family, and self in community. Based upon this definition, it is also clear that ceremony will be an important element at different points of the evaluation process (Rowe & Kirkpatrick, 2018, p.3).

The bundle provides guiding principles and values that are important to consider in planning, implementing, and reporting evaluation findings and shares questions for evaluators to consider and assess during their use of the bundle. It also provides opportunities to assess merit and worth based on traditional values, sharing congruent methods for knowledge gathering and dissemination.

A review of the literature also identifies the key role that evaluation advisory groups can play to ensure the design of meaningful evaluations. Advisory group members can be community leaders, evaluation stakeholders, Elders and traditional knowledge keepers. Their roles in an evaluation advisory group would be to ensure that cultural protocols are adhered to within an evaluation and that the evaluation provides relevance to the groups being served (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012).

Indigenous program developers understand that establishing what works best for Indigenous families, communities, and organizations requires a commitment to program monitoring and meaningful data collection (Morelli & Mataira, 2010). However, the continued push to fit values-based programming into pre-determined measures of success that are incongruent with Indigenous values and principles remains a challenge that must be addressed. Research continues to confirm the necessity of culturally based programming as a mechanism to counter impacts of intergenerational trauma in families. Logically, the field of evaluation must work to provide strong frameworks based on these ways of working. Indigenous evaluators must be trained in methods congruent with these frameworks with funders providing adequate levels of resources for these evaluations to be completed.

Foundational assumptions in the development of an Indigenous Evaluation Framework

An Indigenous evaluation framework requires grounding in principles based on Indigenous ways of knowing, being, feeling, and doing – in other words, a foundation of Indigenous worldviews. As a Cree woman working in the field of evaluation, I acknowledge that this is a complex undertaking that requires many considerations and careful attention. One consideration in this work relates to the themes of representation and generalizability. While there is an increasing recognition and use of the term Indigenous as an umbrella term in Canada, it is important to understand the connotations and meanings

from which this term was born. Indigenous has roots in a global movement in the solidarity of Indigenous peoples who have experienced colonization worldwide (Manual, 1974). The solidarity comes with the recognition that common experiences and movements can work together to create a shift in the power structures that have oppressed Indigenous peoples globally for hundreds of years.

In Canada, the adoption of the term Indigenous was first through the acceptance of Indigenous scholars, who, in many cases connected with other Indigenous scholars worldwide at conferences supporting the gathering and sharing of Indigenous thought and experiences. Previously, government reference to groups of people comprising Indigenous peoples in Canada was through the term Aboriginal, which remains in use in many public references today. Both Indigenous and Aboriginal terms, from a governmental definition refer to Status and non- Status First Nation peoples, Métis, and Inuit. This grouping served a purpose in the development of the *Indian Act* and regulations about membership. A complex and imposed definition of who belongs and who does not belong according to the *Indian Act* has been a contentious issue for generations.

Recognition must be made that there is no one Indigenous culture or worldview; that Canada has many Indigenous languages; and First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities have greatly varied Indigenous cultures. The foundation of each of these cultures is relational and is in direct connection to the lands and the waters originally home to the different groups. This relationality across varied landscapes means that culture, ceremonies, language – each components of worldview that must be taken into consideration in so many cases when Indigenous cultures are being used to inform the development of programs, policies, and evaluations. It must be taken into consideration before using this document, meant to provide a framework to assist in the design of an evaluation.

A second caution or point for reflection is that Indigenous evaluation is not a practice in professional objectivity. We can never truly be objective, in fact, from this stance subjectivity is the point. We bring with us all of our experiences and contexts. This is how we see the world around us. Given the Calls to Action (2015) this challenge relates directly to purposefully and meaningfully reconcile within not only organizations and governments but also at individual, familial, and community levels. These Calls to Action are not held outside of our personal lives and only within our professional realms, but as evaluators we are a part of this process as well. Engaging in Indigenous evaluation is inherently political. How will evaluation respond to these Calls to Action?

In the design of evaluations using an Indigenous framework it will be important to consider the context of the program under evaluation. Part of this assessment is the program design itself. Does the program include use of traditional Indigenous knowledge, culture, ceremony, language, or processes for engagement in the design? Does the program include an Elder or traditional knowledge keeper? This framework assumes that a combination of these elements is present, and that the population being served through the program or organization is for the most part Indigenous or specifically targets an Indigenous population.

Whether this population is children, youth, families, men, women, couples, grandparents, and/or two-spirit individuals also informs the development of the framework. Considerations on how to work best with each of these groups as active participants in the evaluation and which processes and methods will

best engage. With reconciliation comes the call towards decolonization, where human dignity, value, and worth are a necessary consideration in an Indigenous evaluation framework. When organizations are supported in the use of the framework, this means a commitment to design and implement meaningful evaluations that honour the gifts from the Indigenous peoples who are sharing their experiences.

The following section provides questions for both organizations and evaluators to reflect upon in developing a framework.

Questions to consider

When beginning to develop a framework, there are critical questions for both organizations engaging evaluators in the design and implementation of an evaluation and the evaluator themselves. Some questions are intuitive and are found in the development of evaluations based in Western methodologies:

1. What is the purpose?
2. Who is the intended audience?
3. What is the level of stakeholder participation in the design, implementation, and dissemination of the results?

Other questions require the evaluator to reflect at a deeper level on their relationship with colonization, decolonization, and resurgence of Indigenous peoples as identified in Hart & Rowe (2014) earlier in this paper. The following questions are based on the work of the Indigenous Learning Circle in the development of the bundle. The group felt that it was necessary for organizations to ask the following questions in the development and implementation of an evaluation:

- Do you hold a deep understanding of the historical context of the community you are working with? If you do not possess this knowledge, how will you ensure this is addressed prior to design?
- If you do not share the same worldview within an Indigenous evaluation, is there a way to effectively and appropriately design and implement a meaningful evaluation?
- Do you possess a network of relationships that will assist you in remaining accountable to the community that you are working in? How will you foster and nurture these relationships to ensure that the needs of the community are at the core of the work being completed?
- Do you understand the meaning of protocols and how values and principles are placed into action within local cultures? For example, do you have an understanding about the centrality of food to Indigenous worldviews?
- How will you incorporate protocols, ceremony, and spirit into the evaluation?
- Conversations that occur within evaluations are sacred and a form of ceremony. How can you ensure that the stories that come forth as a result of this ceremony are held in a sacred manner?
- How will you incorporate opportunities for community members to engage in evaluation? Will you include mentorship through hiring and training of local people? (Rowe & Kirkpatrick, 2018, p. 9).

Based on my own work in this field, the questions posed by the Indigenous Learning Circle are ones that require an ongoing commitment to personal and professional development and to building reciprocal

relationships within communities of practice that allow for reflexivity. In my experience, this requires a great deal of humility and embodiment of the values and principles that will be described below. A key point of learning for me was to be okay with times of unknowing, discomfort, and recognizing important moments of learning. The questions posed by the group are not a cursory gate to Indigenous evaluation in perpetuity, but rather require consistent self-examination, which can also be supported by the guidance and coaching of an evaluation advisory group.

Guiding Principles

As indicated in the word of caution above, Indigenous worldviews, values, and beliefs are highly contextual and relational to the environment with which they engage. While this is the case, and it is important to err with caution in making assumptions about ways of knowing, being, and doing that will be suitable in the design of evaluation. In my experience, there are guiding principles that are likely to be congruent for many Indigenous nations in Canada. These principles are enacted in relation to the contexts that I spoke about earlier and therefore can look different in practice depending on the land, language, and culture within which this is being used. These are broad principles and are meant to be applied if they make sense in relation to local contexts, with flexibility to best meet the needs of the community, organization, or program being evaluated.

An important area to pay attention to is how this framework is used in an urban-Indigenous setting, which can incorporate even more diversity and have peoples represented from all over the lands of Canada. While this is not meant as a stumbling block or as a barrier upon which to remain stuck, it does require open conversations about how best to design using this framework in a way that honours this diversity.

The principles described below come from two key sources. The first, Dr. Michael Anthony Hart, a Cree scholar and member of Fisher River Cree Nation, has provided guidance in the development of an Indigenous research paradigm (2010). The second source is the bundle developed by the community knowledge gathering process undertaken for the Indigenous Learning Circle (2018).

Hart (2010) identifies eleven values, listed below, that are essential to an Indigenous research paradigm and reflect the ethical manner in which researchers must carry themselves and work with the community of focus.

1. Indigenous control over research
2. A respect for individuals and community
3. Reciprocity and responsibility
4. Respect and safety
5. Non-intrusive observation
6. Deep listening and hearing with more than the ears
7. Reflective non-judgement
8. To honour what is shared
9. An awareness and connection between the logic of the mind and the feelings of the heart
10. Self-awareness

11. Subjectivity (p.9-10)

Core values identified by the Indigenous Learning Circle in the gathering of the bundle include:

1. Relationships
2. Seven Sacred teachings as values
3. Trust
4. Respect
5. Strength-based
6. Sharing food
7. Reciprocity
8. Responsibility
9. Cultural Safety
10. Attending to mind, body, spirit, and heart
11. Acknowledging the continuum of existence (Rowe & Kirkpatrick, 2018, p. 13-15)

There is overlap between both sets of values, serving as guiding principles. The following paragraphs will outline my own experiences and observations as an evaluator using these principles as a guide to my work with families, organizations, and communities

I have come to learn the importance of community as the driver of the work being done. The first way that this occurs is by recognizing that the values listed above may be removed, adapted or, added to be based upon this understanding. The lists above are meant to be reflections for the evaluator and the organization to begin a conversation about appropriate and necessary elements for evaluating based on Indigenous principles and methods. Community as a driver in control of the research means that leadership, staff, and participants can each be consulted in the development of an evaluation that will best meet their needs. The metaphor of the community driving can be taken further – what vehicle, who will be the co-pilot, who will the other passengers be, what necessary supplies will be needed on the journey, and how will the group prepare to travel in a safe way to meet the final destination? Reframed into evaluative design questions to work through with community/organizations include: What purpose will the evaluation serve for the organization? What methods will best suit capturing data that will meet the purpose? Does the organization have a strong understanding of the processes that are promoting transformation and what data will be collected to capture these stories? For example, while surveys and key informant interviews may be methods that are more familiar, it could be helpful to consider methods that are relational or arts-based.

The evaluator who uses the framework must be aware of the roles that they are taking on in this process. This means that the evaluator has the ability to critically reflect on their role in the work as facilitator, capacity builder, mentor, advocate, and ally. This can occur when there is an opportunity for embedded evaluators who are working based on relational accountability. In other words, how is the evaluator responsible to the relationships that they hold in the community and how will they remain accountable to the participants, organizations, and knowledge being shared in their work together? Two skills that are critical for this to occur are the act of listening deeply and non-intrusive observation. Field notes, reflection in ceremony, and conversations with traditional knowledge keepers have been methods I have

used for deep reflection. Another important aspect that ensures we as evaluators remain responsible to the relationships that we hold can mean supporting identified priorities in the framing of the evaluation and ensuring that meaningful data is gathered that will serve the organization in the long term. Considering the role of evaluator as advocate and ally reinforces that research and evaluation are inherently subjective and political in that when designed appropriately and from the needs of the organization/community they serve a larger purpose of equity and social justice.

The responsibility that comes with holding the stories of participants and organizations is not taken lightly within an Indigenous perspective. Stories are sacred and must be held with that in mind. How they are presented and for what purpose are important questions. In order to honour what has been shared I have often returned to participants to verify that I am representing their stories in a way that is accurate and that validates their experiences. Accurate representation of the story of a community and organization is also considered within this value. It can mean preliminary reactions and conversations about what is held within a draft report, making adjustments or clarifications as necessary. This speaks to respecting community context.

How knowledge is sought, cared for, and shared can include participation in ceremonies and facilitated through the use of medicines led by traditional knowledge keepers and Elders. In my work there has been considerable value in developing evaluation partnerships with knowledge keepers to ensure their insights also guide the work all the way through. In my experience, this means working in partnership with traditional knowledge keepers and organizations to identify what would be appropriate given the community context and identifying the resources required. Pipe ceremonies, sweat lodge ceremonies, smudging, and feasting have all been activities identified and led by knowledge keepers at appropriate times during evaluations.

The principle of reciprocity connects to relational accountability and responsibility to roles. What will be left behind at the end of the evaluation? Is the work extractive or are there valuable opportunities, resources, learning, and insights that lead to increased capacity? Entering into an Indigenous evaluation relationship is a commitment to ensure that these questions have meaningful answers for participants. In my experience, the role of evaluator as capacity builder is directly connected to relational accountability. What will I, as the evaluator or researcher, leave behind in order to ensure a deeper understanding of the knowledge, processes and skills necessary for this work? This could ultimately begin to meet a larger goal of Indigenous evaluation, to have more trained Indigenous evaluators completing this work.

Indigenous ways of knowing are fluid ways of knowing that have come from teachings shared from generation to generation through storytelling. The telling of stories is an important mechanism for sharing knowledge that comes from traditional languages, which place an emphasis on verbs. Knowledge is gained through dreams and visions via intuitive and introspective processes where there is opportunity for deep meaning making and inner journeys (Hart, 2010; Kovach, 2010). Ermine (1995) describes *mamatowisin*, a Cree term meaning, “the capacity to tap the creative life forces of the inner space by the use of all the faculties that constitute our being - it is to exercise inwardness” (p. 104). Indigenous ways of knowing, briefly described here, must be considered in the design of an Indigenous evaluation framework, knowledge gathering, analysis, and presentation of findings of the evaluation. Due to the centrality of spiritual and ceremonial practice in the gathering of knowledge, it is essential for this to be guided by

Elders or traditional knowledge keepers. “Thus, an Indigenous research paradigm is structured within an epistemology that includes a subjectively based process for knowledge development and a reliance on Elders or individuals who have or are developing this insight,” (Hart, 2010, p. 8).

In practice, the enacting of these values includes facilitated self-reflection and learning, storytelling, land-based activities including participation in ceremony and the use of sacred fire, drumming and singing, and the use of traditional medicines (Rowe & Kirkpatrick, 2018).

One example of how I have partnered with an organization in the design and implementation of an evaluation based in Indigenous methodologies is in the first use of the bundle. The bundle, developed by the Indigenous Learning Circle, was first used in practice with the Community Education Development Association (CEDA), an organization in the north end of Winnipeg, Pathways to Education program to answer the question: how has CEDA impacted your family? Indigenous families with students in grades 9-12 who had participated in programming were invited to share their experiences in an evaluation designed based on the work of the bundle. The knowledge gathering process began with a teaching from Elder Don Robinson on the Circle of Courage, a pipe ceremony, and a circle where introductions were made, families spoke of their connection to the program, and were invited to participate in the evaluation with an offering of tobacco. Methods used in this evaluation were arts-based and used the circle as a process for sharing. Leaders at CEDA and the families provided feedback on the use of the bundle in the evaluation. Strengths included the use of ceremony, the inclusion of an Elder in the knowledge gathering, and the use of an arts-based method for exploring the questions. Limitations identified during the use of the bundle was the design of the arts-based method did not directly align with the Circle of Courage model of the organization, staff had hoped for families to identify more gaps, barriers, and challenges, and the lack of time to complete an analysis based on Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing (Rowe & Kirkpatrick, 2018).

It is important in the development of Indigenous evaluations that the evaluator be mindful to reflect on the congruence between methods and the philosophical values of an Indigenous paradigm (Kovach, 2010). One of the limitations described in the example above is the inability of the method to meet the full needs of the organization. I believe that a quick time period and my remote location both were factors in this gap. While I had a pre-existing relationship with the organization and the leadership, I have reflected that more time to understand the purpose and goals of the organization was necessary. One method that would have been useful in setting this foundation is described by Kovach (2010), who outlines the use of a conversational method for knowledge gathering. The conversational method is congruent with the orality of Indigenous ways of knowledge transmission. This method is relationally based, in that it requires a commitment from all participants to learn and share within a collective tradition. Kovach reflects:

> The use of a conversational method within an Indigenous research framework has several implications for the researcher in relation. For the conversational method, the relational factor - that I knew the participants and they knew me - was significant. In each case I had known or met participants prior to the research. With this method the researcher must have a certain amount of credibility and trustworthiness for people to participate in the research,” (2010, p. 46).

This method, while used in knowledge gathering within Indigenous research, is also helpful in setting a strong foundation and partnership for the development of an Indigenous evaluation framework.

While knowledge gathering in the evaluation process is important, a framework based on Indigenous principles must also include reciprocity and responsibility to the knowledge that was shared. More attention must be paid to the dissemination and sharing of the results that were found within the evaluation process. This can include a series of community events or gatherings, videos, user-friendly materials that highlight the work completed, and sharing of the findings in traditional and non-traditional venues. Often during community events that share evaluations there can be space for reflection and reactions to the learning that took place. This can be a positive opportunity to not only connect with the broader community, but to also potentially understand more deeply community context that may not have been readily accessible prior to a reflection on the results.

Meaningful community involvement in the design of Indigenous evaluation must occur at the beginning, must be fully supported with resources, and must be given the time and space to build capacity. In my experience as an evaluator, community truly must be the driver. This means investing time and attention to the building of relationships to come to common understandings about priorities and needs. This also means designing a process and using methods that will ensure to meet these needs. While a framework can outline principles and values upon which to base evaluation activities, it is also just as much about the evaluator themselves and the way that they work with organizations/communities.

Summary

Given the diversity of cultures, languages, urban and reserve-based Indigenous populations across Canada, the task of implementing an Indigenous grounded evaluation framework can appear daunting. This paper is a call to the multiple levels of government to recognize that this is not going to be an easy action to support, but it is clearly time. Similarly, this is a call to evaluators to recognize and address the challenges identified in this document and to reflect deeply on the questions posed about whose voice and priorities must lead the way and how non-Indigenous evaluators can support the work of building capacity with Indigenous communities, organizations, and evaluators.

Opportunities stemming from the learning in this paper include:

- Education about the difference between Indigenous and Western foundations of evaluation and the methodologies used to design them.
- Awareness that the majority of evaluations are still being done on Indigenous peoples by non-Indigenous peoples. There must be a commitment to shifting this reality with training and prioritizing of more Indigenous evaluators to complete this work.
- Even when there is recognition and an intention to make more space for Indigenous evaluation there remains a lack of training and expertise being used to address these issues within institutions. Lead organizations and post-secondary institutions training evaluators must address this gap.
- Granting organizations often provide barriers in the funding guidelines which hold specific measures of success, reporting, and evaluation expectations that do not align with the models

upon which the programs are developed. The development of an Indigenous evaluation requires time and resources to support the intensive and participatory process necessary.

- Narrow views of program dynamics are often captured, with little understanding of the relational process and culture-based practices. This can be attributed to lack of awareness about holistic connections and values-based practices that can impact long term outcomes and influence community well-being. Capturing values-based practices in evaluation frameworks will require prioritizing by funders to ensure the space is made to capture this way of working.
- It is absolutely necessary to design Indigenous evaluation frameworks specific to each community situation. While programs may be funded nationally with similar objectives, how a community, given their history, cultural, and geographical context will address and achieve these objectives must be local. Therefore, an evaluation must be local.

A challenging question, beyond the scope of this document overall, is how can the government, in requiring evaluations of programs that are funded, acknowledge the diversity across Indigenous communities and cultures? Part of a solution lies within the development and application of Indigenous evaluations that are designed from the beginning and in collaboration with Indigenous communities. Right now there is an opportunity to acknowledge that there is not a one size fits all approach and that what we know as a field about how to evaluate is not congruent with Indigenous knowledge, practices, and ways of healing.

Indigenous evaluation is a critical field in development. It is connected to decolonization and reconciliation, both of which are actively being explored by individuals, organizations, and governments across Canada. If the purpose of evaluation and our roles as evaluators is to understand and measure success in order to fund programs and organizations that are making a difference in the lives of Indigenous individuals, families, and communities – it is time to pause and reflect. Indigenous evaluation has a central role in sharing outcomes of organizations working with Indigenous peoples. This requires not only evaluators, but also organizations and funders to become aware of how to design and implement this type of research. The previous sections outlined a history of evaluation and asserts the need for more Indigenous trained evaluators, resources to support this work, and granting organizations to make this a priority.

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Appendix D – *Indigenous Approaches to Evaluation* by JoLee Sasakamoose

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to identify key considerations in the design and implementation of Indigenous evaluation methods for victim services programs.

Terminology

The word "Indigenous" is used throughout this paper as an all-encompassing term to identify First peoples and practices that are separate from the mainstream Western colonial worldviews. Specifically, in Canada there are three Indigenous groups: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, and within these groups is a multitude of distinct and diverse nations and communities. By utilizing the term Indigenous, this paper is laying out guidelines that can be adapted to working with Indigenous communities around the world; however, it is imperative that there is local cultural awareness to avoid assuming all Indigenous nations are the same. Additionally, we will use First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Aboriginal throughout the manuscript as we have adopted the terms used by the authors of literature to avoid masking any differences that may exist between references.

Setting the Context

There has been a call for culturally responsive interventions that take a target group's values, norms, beliefs, and practices into account in the design, delivery, and evaluation of programs (Resnicow, Soler, Braithwaite, Ahluwalia, & Butler, 2000). Strategies in the design, delivery and evaluation of programs that support Indigenous victims' services clients must also work to ameliorate the severe impact colonization has had on families and communities (Mussell, Cardiff, & White, 2004). By placing the high rates of violence, substance abuse, and poverty experienced by Indigenous families into the appropriate context of colonization and assimilation policies, evaluators can focus on the resiliencies these people have demonstrated. With this background, it can be seen that the deliberate suppression and elimination of culture and tradition has led to intergenerational trauma, the residues of which are visible today in the increased levels of social and mental health problems observed in many Indigenous communities (Elias, B., Mignone, Hall, Hong, Hart, & Sareen, 2012; Esquimaux-Wesley & Smolewski, 2004; Kirmayer, Simpson, & Cargo, 2003). This paper will outline the historic and current context for Indigenous evaluation research, provide a rationale for the use of Indigenous methods and ethics, identify a decolonized framework for research and evaluation, and provide actionable decolonizing options for evaluation development and implementation.

Indigenous peoples and scholars have been working diligently over the last several years to develop decolonizing theoretical models and frameworks that prioritize Indigenous methodologies and ways of knowing alongside evidence-based Western practices (Snowshoe & Starblanket, 2016; Kovach, Carriere, Montgomery, Barrett, Gilles, 2015; Sasakamoose & Pete, 2015; Wilson, 2009; Waziyatawin & Yellowbird,

2005; Kirmayer, Simpson & Cargo, 2003). Decolonization, once viewed as the formal process of handing over the instruments of government, is now recognized as a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power (Smith, 2012).

> Decolonization involves dismantling structures that perpetuate the status quo, problematizing dominant discourses, and addressing unbalanced power dynamics. On the other hand, decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and approaches and weeding out settler biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being. Decolonization necessitates shifting our frames of reference with regard to the knowledge we hold; examining how we have arrived at such knowledge; and considering what we need to do to change misconceptions, prejudice, and assumptions about Indigenous Peoples (Antoine, Mason, Mason, Palahicky & Rodriguez de France, [nd], p. 4).

The Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Theory (ICRT) (Sasakamoose, Bellegarde, Sutherland, Pete, & McKay-McNabb, 2017) is a decolonizing, locally adaptable framework utilized to support program development and its subsequent evaluation. Understanding the framework will allow the practitioner to engage in actionable steps to create an evaluative process that seeks to improve programming for participants based on their needs. The ICRT framework includes the important contextual factors (historical, social, cultural and environmental) for engaging Indigenous knowledge, methodologies and participatory frameworks. This framework was developed as there is a recognized need for an improved evidence base as a foundation for measuring systemic change. Culturally responsive changes are needed in the systems that affect social determinants of wellbeing (for example, income, education, health, research, governance, justice) and disparities will not be addressed unless those who practise within these systems embrace an Indigenous cultural responsiveness paradigm (FSIN, 2013). Cultural responsiveness refers to services that are respectful of and relevant to the beliefs, practices, culture and linguistic needs of diverse client populations and communities (Rural and Regional Health and Aged Care Services, 2009). Cultural responsiveness includes the capacity to respond to the issues of diverse communities, it requires the knowledge and capacity at varying levels of intervention: systemic, organizational, professional and individual.

Cultural responsiveness recognizes that colonial practices and policies will continue to be a detriment unless evaluators bring to the forefront the land, language and cultural practices specific to the people for whom they are meant to work (Sasakamoose, Bellegarde, Sutherland, Pete, & McKay-McNabb, 2017; Whitbeck, 2006). Any attempts to improve Indigenous mental, emotional, spiritual or physical well-being must involve co-participation from community members for whom the programs or interventions are designed (Snowshoe & Starblanket, 2016; National Aboriginal Health Organization [NAHO], 2007). When the Duty to Consult with Indigenous peoples is respected and an Indigenous model of cultural responsiveness is implemented, evaluators may influence change in areas that affect Indigenous peoples (Snowshoe and Starblanket, 2016; FSIN, 2013; Reading & Wein, 2009). We acknowledge Indigenous nations have distinct sacred knowledge, beliefs and traditions and that each individual

community/population will locally adapt this framework to their own ways of knowing. Benefits of culturally-responsive program development and evaluation research include access and equity for all; improved communication and understanding between client and providers which fosters better compliance with the recommended program, reduced errors, improved satisfaction, client safety and quality assurance, and best use of resources (Stewart, 2006).

Ethical Implications with Indigenous Research and Evaluation

There has been considerable work undertaken in the area of articulating ethical and respectful practices in engaging in research and evaluation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. From a First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspective, concerns about research include the reluctance of old order research to address issues of historical social systems and structures that contribute to current day marginalization of Indigenous peoples. When evaluators neglect any of these areas in the design of the evaluation process, it is more likely that bias against Indigenous knowledge will affect the final product (Ermine, Sinclair, Jeffrey, 2004). Without proper training, evaluators design from deficit-based perspectives that focus on problems with outcomes rather than the social or structural issues underpinning the conditions for Indigenous peoples (Smith, 1999). Western based perspectives on research are problem focused, while Indigenous perspectives are asset-based and solution-focused (Sasakamoose, et. al., 2017; Crooks, Snowshoe, Chiodo, & Brunette-Debassige, 2013).

To support an Indigenous worldview in an evaluation framework, the following should occur: community cultural protocols are understood and observed; the evaluation process is built upon developing a relationship of trust and respect; important issues are identified and redressed and the communities' or populations' political, social and cultural values are incorporated into the methodology (Kovach et al., 2015; Steinhauer, 2002; Smith, 1999). Community members' perspectives must be considered and included in the preparation of documents and reports, such as records of historical events and cultural ceremonies (Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999). Program evaluation should be designed around improved programming for participants based on their needs. The future of culturally-responsive program evaluation will include the generation of Indigenous knowledge, methodologies, and participatory frameworks. Further it is important that Indigenous people be involved in producing research rather than merely participating as subjects (Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999).

Performance measurement and evaluation, often share the same methodologies as social science research, however, stakeholders usually have a more immediate interest in the findings of an evaluation. Evaluation is characterized as focusing on producing practical knowledge for immediate use by clients for a specific goal or decision; whereas research focuses more on long-term understanding (Barnett & Camfield, 2016). Both fall short and often overlook ethical and policy guidelines for conducting research involving Indigenous populations. Because of these ethical failings First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities are on the forefront of creating and implementing their own research standards and ask that evaluators also uphold the protocols identified within the research community as identified below. Research and evaluation conducted involving Indigenous peoples should be able to identify, understand, and implement the appropriate ethical considerations and protocols specific to the community or population being evaluated. Navigating tensions between ethical rigour in conducting program evaluation

is a challenging, yet a crucial undertaking. Evaluators should not assume that approval of an evaluation project by formal authority structures or administration guarantees the movement of the project forward within First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities. In some First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities, the authority to permit and monitor research lies with the community members designated by traditional protocols and in some First Nations settings, a coalition council spanning several communities may be recognized as having official jurisdiction for research and evaluation initiatives involving its members (Crooks, Snowshoe, Chiodo, & Brunette-Debassige, 2013). The identification of culturally appropriate outcomes and measures are challenging conceptual issues since most research has ignored the tribal cultures and traditions that may protect First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities from adverse outcomes (Friesen, Cross, Jivanjee, Gowen, Bandurraga, Bastomski, Maher, 2011).

In addition to community expectations for researchers, many organizations and First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities have developed their own formalized code of research ethics and those ethics will supersede any others in relation to the specific First Nations, Métis or Inuit community (Assembly of First Nations, nd). The Assembly of First Nations is a national advocacy organization representing First Nation citizens in Canada, which includes more than 900,000 people living in 634 First Nation communities and in cities and towns across the country. In consultation they developed a guide for First Nations ethics on Research and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) included an appendix in their seminal report outlining ethical guidelines for research that specified that the purpose of the code was to "ensure that appropriate respect is given to the cultures, languages, knowledge and values of Aboriginal peoples and to the standards used by Aboriginal peoples to legitimate knowledge (p. 325)."

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, was adopted in Canada in 2016 (UN General Assembly, 2007). Article 19 of this document outlines the Duty to Consult, which advises that governments must "consult and cooperate...with Indigenous Peoples concerned...before adopting and implementing...measures that may affect them (pg. 6)." Following the United Nations recommendations, this means that before any programming design or evaluation is conducted, there must be proper consultation with Indigenous representatives. When the duty to consult with First Nations communities is respected and an Indigenous model of cultural responsiveness is implemented in the program evaluation design, research findings may influence change in the social determinants of health that affect Indigenous Peoples (Snowshoe & Starblanket, 2016; FSIN, 2013; Reading & Wein, 2009).

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and the Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) (2010) have prepared guidelines for researchers working with Indigenous peoples as part of the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS): Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. They published a specific chapter outlining core principles when research involves First Nations, Métis, or Inuit participants. The purpose of these guidelines is to "ensure, to the extent possible, that research involving Aboriginal people is premised in respectful relationships. It also encourages collaboration between researchers and participants (CIHR, NSERC, & SSHRC, 2010, p. 105)." It is an imperative starting place to have program designers and evaluators trained and familiar with Tri- Council Policy Statement Chapter 9 before implementation or data collection.

Ownership Control Access Possession (OCAP®): The First Nations principles of OCAP® are a set of standards that establish how First Nations data should be collected, protected, used, or shared. They are the *de facto* standard for how to conduct research with First Nations. OCAP® is inextricably linked to Indigenous Peoples' agenda of self-determination because it serves to guide the re-appropriation of research activities and their outcomes. The protection of the cultural and intellectual property of Indigenous peoples is fundamentally connected with the realization of their territorial rights and right to self-determination (Simpson & Jackson, 1998). OCAP® is serving to enhance capacity building in Indigenous research by bringing the concepts of ownership and control to the attention of communities (Johnson & Ruttan, 1992). At the same time, the trend towards OCAP® is hastening the development of community-based research guidelines and agreements, is influencing how research ethics boards are conducting ethical reviews of Indigenous related research, and is also influencing how community-based research information is accessed and how research is conducted. There are several guidelines for conducting research with Indigenous peoples which help to refine our understanding of what it means to conduct culturally responsive evaluations in First Nations, Métis or Inuit communities and it helps to map future research directions.

The Decolonizing Evaluation Protocols and Framework

A significant challenge faced by researchers and evaluators stems from the lack of trust that many Indigenous peoples have for the research and evaluation processes driven from a Western scientific perspective. Evaluators tend to enter communities and conduct projects without the respect and reciprocity needed to make the evaluation relevant and beneficial to communities or participants (Kovach, 2012; Wilson, 2009). It is imperative that future evaluations be culturally responsive and have a keen understanding regarding the colonial history in an effort to do no further harm to Indigenous peoples. Evaluation measurement and research are both relevant to the development and delivery of effective programs and services. The shift to new paradigms of research and evaluation is the result of a decolonizing agenda. Indigenous peoples, communities and scholars are leading the way by melding science with tradition and laying new ground for developing culturally-responsive frameworks (Sasakamoose, et. al 2017; Fiedeldey-Van Dijk et al., 2016). Decolonized approaches make it possible to develop evaluation research processes that best meet the needs of clients while getting the most value from available resources. Decolonizing practices include privileging and engaging in Indigenous philosophies, beliefs, practices, and values that counter colonialism and restore well-being (Sasakamoose & Pete, 2015; Sasakamoose, et. al., 2017). Decolonizing models validate and support Indigenous histories and inherent rights and will generate research to reframe, rename, reclaim, and restore Indigenous methodological approaches (Kovach, 2012). Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) have identified the "4 Rs" for developing research procedures in an Indigenous context and Kovach (2010) identified a fifth.

1. **Respect**, or valuing the diverse Indigenous individual, cultural and community knowledge. Respect includes understanding and practicing community protocols, being reflective and non-judgmental, being able to hear what is being said, and building on cultural, social and spiritual values that arise from within the community.

2. **Relevance** to community and cultural needs and experiences. Participants should be part of designing the research and evaluation methods and interpretation of findings.
3. **Reciprocity**, where both the community and researcher/evaluator benefit from a two-way process of learning and research. A question to ask is, "What is the benefit to the community?"
4. **Responsibility**, where there is active empowerment for community members through full engagement and participation. This means the evaluator develops and maintains credibility with the community by considering all perspectives and working collaboratively and sharing findings.
5. **Reflexivity** (Kovach, 2010), changing as a result of the co-constructed relationship and knowledge sharing.

Fletcher (2003) has suggested that when working with Indigenous communities, the evaluator should: acknowledge power imbalances between community and evaluators; focus on relevant topics; foster autonomy and develop capacity in the community; engage community members; consider evaluation as an opportunity to provide public education about research; and respect the ethical guidelines of the communities and organizations that represent the interests of Indigenous people. Evaluators should ensure research objectives are transparent, local politics and protocols are respected, community authorities are recognized, confidentiality is ensured, culturally responsive tools are used and that a comprehensive dissemination strategy is employed. Finally, Sasakamoose & Brace (2018) outline evaluation planning strategies for ensuring participation in Indigenous communities. These include: allotting time for relationship building, community engagement, hosting and attending ceremony, and community events; allotting budget items for relationship building, food, cultural protocol items, Knowledge Keeper gifts, and travel; ensuring evaluation transparency; ensuring space for community input; identifying community assets and needs; and finally developing an evaluation and data sharing agreement prior to the research process. Engaging in a participatory evaluation framework along with professional and cultural codes of conduct will produce an evaluation with the greatest utility and impact.

The ICRT models a reconciliatory approach to health and wellness that is grounded in four protective factors: community-specific, strengths-based, trauma-informed and spiritually grounded (Sasakamoose et al, 2017; Snowshoe & Starblanket 2016; FSIN 2013). Founded in ceremony, steeped in Indigenous ways of knowing, harmonized with evidence based Western practices, and locally adaptable, the Cultural Responsiveness Framework (CRF) approach is uniquely situated to 1) support the restoration of Indigenous community-based health and wellness systems, 2) establish a middle ground for engagement between Indigenous and Western systems to decolonize health research by upholding the commitment to reconciliation and 3) to guide research that improves the Indigenous wellbeing (FSIN, 2013; Sasakamoose, 2017; TRC, 2015).

The key to developing a much-needed culturally adaptable framework for First Nations peoples lies not only in decolonizing the approach, but also in utilizing culture as a tool to engage wellness. Snowshoe and Starblanket (2016) identify four healing protective factors that are effective when applied as decolonized approaches to evaluation: Spiritually grounded, Community specific (engaged), Trauma-informed, and Strengths-based. These principles are appropriate because they fit with an Indigenous worldview and are already a component of establishing a middle ground.

Spiritually Grounded

One of the most overlooked aspects of developing culturally appropriate programming and evaluation for Indigenous people is a connection to the spiritual (Snowshoe & Starblanket, 2016). This is a broad term and has various interpretations, but it is intrinsic to being human. For Indigenous people being spiritually grounded includes being connected to language and culture, Indigenous worldviews, a holistic view of wellness, connecting to the land, sustaining relationships with family and community, the use of ceremony, and integrating cultural traditions.

Community-Specific

Healing for the individual is directly connected to community and cultural healing for Indigenous people. Kirmayer & Valaskakis (2009) indicate that the health of the community is linked to the sense of local control and cultural continuity. Therefore, any program development and its subsequent evaluation should support initiatives that follow the vision of the unique community based on the project, community needs, capacity, interest and engagement.

Trauma-Informed Perspective

It is essential that researchers, program directors, and evaluators understand that "history has had complex effects on the structure of communities, individual and collective identity, and mental health [of Indigenous peoples] (Kirmayer & Valaskakis, 2009, p. 27)." The relationship between Indigenous people and the Government of Canada is filled with abuses, mistrust, broken promises, racism, and control. From colonization, confinement on reserves, unfulfilled Treaty promises, the Residential School system, and bureaucratic control, there are a multitude of "inequities have arisen within the context of an extensive history of aversive treatment of First Nations peoples borne of political policies specifically aimed at the destruction of First Nations cultures (Snowshoe & Starblanket, 2016, p. 67)." Evaluators must consider the intergenerational impact of colonization and its associated negative impacts on the lives of Indigenous people. To take a trauma-informed approach, program designers need to familiarize themselves with the causes and effects of this history and create programing that does not perpetuate systems that have alienated Indigenous people or re-traumatize them.

Strengths-Based Perspective

Strengths-based approaches have the advantage of building competencies that lead to increased wellbeing and adjustment, and also help protect against a range of negative outcomes. A strengths-based approach is especially important for Indigenous peoples, because it takes the Canadian historical context into account (Crooks, et al., 2013). A strengths-based perspective attempts to identify what resources an individual has to positively address problems. It is a model that focuses on developing assets (Smith, 2006). As people develop greater awareness of their own strengths, they will be able to take control of

their lives and make appropriate decisions to empower themselves (Smith, 2006). This translates to program evaluation directly in terms of asking "what is worth measuring?" A deficit model focuses on negative determinants, while a strengths-based model looks for opportunities for growth. The evaluation criteria should target what is going well, how are participants improving, and should work to reframe negative behaviour as developed coping mechanisms (Snowshoe & Starblanket, 2016). This doesn't imply that evaluators should simply ignore the realities and the negative consequences to focus on positives; rather, strengths-based health promotion facilitates wellness by building on the pathways to resilience among Indigenous peoples (Snowshoe, Crooks, & Tremblay, 2017; Snowshoe, Crooks, Tremblay, Craig, & Hinson, 2015).

Ideally whatever will be evaluated regarding the framework and related initiatives will be done in close collaboration with the Indigenous populations being served. In some instances, evaluation tools and models from other jurisdictions may have some applications for what is being done locally and sometimes they may not. It is important to consider whether those tools being utilized have had significant Indigenous community input and are not merely an adopted model from outside (FSIN, 2013). Furthermore, Elders and others want clarification and assurances when tools are locally adapted to develop an evaluation framework that does not 'give away' the culture or medicines, as they are all too familiar with examples where knowledge and medicines were shared and later plagiarized, stolen or used without permission." (FSIN, 2013, pg. 16).

Moving into Action

In order to adopt an Indigenous approach, there must be the realization that one homogeneous evaluation will not be all encompassing for Indigenous evaluation due to the diversity and complexity of community and cultural context (Gray, D., Saggers, S., Drandich, M., Walam, D., & Plowright, P., 1995). However, guiding principles are present in all Indigenous evaluations. The ICRT model provides an overarching framework to plan, develop, execute, and evaluate programs to support Indigenous peoples. Adhering to the spirit of this framework will begin the process of decolonizing programs in order to better address the needs of Indigenous people. In order to assist moving from the theoretical to a practical application, many concrete items should be considered to help shape the evaluation approach.

Summary

Utilizing Indigenous ways of knowing in program design, implementation and evaluation provides an opportunity to demonstrate program success and identify areas for program improvement. Findings interpreted from evaluations should be evidence-informed and should include participants in the interpretation of results. Indigenous scholars have identified that evaluations need to be culturally responsive and consider the population's needs in the design, delivery and evaluation of programs. The principles of Indigenous evaluation are very dependent on the Indigenous group (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) and partners, which can vary considerably based on the situation, the communities' needs, as well as the community's capacity and interest in engagement (Ongomiizwin, nd).

Often there is hesitancy among those interested in getting involved in Indigenous research or evaluation because there is no cookie-cutter approach. By employing the Cultural Responsiveness Framework, we offer clear strategies for ethical approaches to engagement for any type of research including evaluation with Indigenous peoples. It is in the strength of these approaches that the success of the program and its subsequent evaluation should be built. The most important recommendation is that there is an ability to establish genuine partnerships and relationships between the evaluators and the community members in a manner that makes sense for the setting. Further, it is essential that evaluation results be used to produce direct community benefits. We suggest that partners work collaboratively to create participatory approaches to the design of both the program and the evaluation, underscoring the need to ground within the cultural and historic context of the specific community or population. We suggest that the participants or community be involved in the data interpretation and that creative dissemination strategies (i.e. native radio stations, written reports, videos, or group presentations at the grass roots level) are utilized. Finally, we recommend that the evaluation teams consider participating in Reflexive Reflexivity (LaVallie, 2019, Lavallie & Sasakamoose, 2016) and employing cultural humility. Engaging with these two approaches is a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby the individual not only learns about another's culture, but starts with an examination of his or her own beliefs and cultural identity as a foundation for building honest and trustworthy relationships. It is a process that requires the practitioner to face the power imbalances that exist in the relationship dynamics with their clients and the community partners.

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