

“WE GET OUR EDUCATION FROM THE LAND”:
STUDENT PERSPECTIVES OF INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

by

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late grandmother, Shirley Jane Hillier, who has always believed in me and encouraged me to follow my dreams. I will always remember the unwavering support you provided me throughout this journey.

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Abstract

This qualitative study explored the perspectives of participants who attended a Summer Institute in Mi'kma'ki that focused on Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS). Particularly, how the participants' perceived the activities of the Summer Institute as shaping their understanding of IFS, and how they might use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to IFS into the future. Two sets of focus groups took place; the first occurred at the Summer Institute and the second eight weeks later via video-conference. The focus groups were audio-recorded, and the data were analyzed thematically. Two key themes were identified from the analysis; 1) Understanding and Critiquing IFS, and 2) Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen understandings of IFS. These findings offer the perspectives from those who learned about IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing from Mi'kmaq experts, and provides evidence to support the value of land-based learning when trying to gain a deeper understanding of IFS.

List of Abbreviations Used

The following is a list of abbreviations used either in this research or cited research:

- TRC: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
- CIHR: Canadian Institute for Health Research
- IFS: Indigenous food sovereignty
- PhD: Doctor of Philosophy
- WHO: World Health Organization
- REB: Research Ethics Board
- TCPS2: Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
- MA: Master of Arts
- TEK: Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- MEK: Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge
- UINR: Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources
- S: Student
- ER: Early Career Researcher

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I acknowledge that my work took place in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter will provide a brief overview of this qualitative research study. To begin, background information providing context about the study, including a description of the 5-day Summer Institute in which the study took place, will be discussed. This background information will be followed by the purpose of the study, the research questions, the research design, a description of the study participants, as well as identifying the significance of this study for health promotion.

Context of the Qualitative Study

In 2017, the Honourable Jane Philpott, then Minister of Health, announced that the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) would be investing \$8 million dollars to form a series of Canada-wide mentorship networks for Indigenous students. In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Calls to Action, particularly surrounding the number of Indigenous health care professionals working in Canada, it was obvious that programming needed to focus on supporting and mentoring Indigenous peoples to consider health research as a career. The creation of these mentorship networks aims to address that gap by building health research capacity among Indigenous students at all levels of post-secondary education as well as Indigenous early-career researchers by providing various learning and mentorship opportunities. There are eight distinct networks across Canada and each network develops activities that include funding opportunities, mentorship opportunities, and learning opportunities.

This research study took place within the context of a 2018 Summer Institute, a mentorship activity developed and organized by one of the mentorship networks. A working group, consisting of local researchers, network coordinators, academic mentors

and student mentors, was assembled and worked together to organize and implement a 5-day Summer Institute that took place in Mi'kma'ki (Nova Scotia) in August 2018. The theme of the Summer Institute was to explore the relationship between the land, water and air and its connection for overall health and well-being, with a focus on Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS) and Two-Eyed Seeing. Post-secondary students and early-career researchers who were involved in the network were invited to apply and the working group accepted nine students to attend the inaugural event. Over the five days, students would participate in both classroom presentations and land-based activities that considered Indigenous epistemologies; some of these activities included sharing circles, a sweat lodge ceremony, field trips to Mi'kmaw communities, as well as classroom activities supplemented by readings. The Summer Institute was led by academic mentors and community members and provided students with an opportunity to explore a land-based education that is not traditionally offered inside the walls of academia. To align with principles of Two-Eyed Seeing, Indigenous and Western knowledge systems were positioned alongside one another throughout all activities of the Summer Institute, and it allowed the students to explore the relationship between the land, water and air and its connection for overall health and well-being.

Purpose of the Study

Ongoing, systemic colonialism faced by Indigenous populations across Canada, such as the disregard of traditional Indigenous knowledges and environmental dispossession, has resulted in a decreased connection to land, food and culture, as well as had a significant negative impact on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous communities. There is a growing body of literature that suggests reconnecting to traditional Indigenous

knowledge systems and reclaiming culture are important ways to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. One way to begin exploring these important concepts is through Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS), which is the right of Indigenous peoples to produce and acquire their own healthy and culturally appropriate foods in a sustainable way, while also defining their food and food systems.

There are a number of land-based learning initiatives across Canada that focus on educating individuals about IFS and food systems. However, up until this point, there were no such initiatives within Mi'kma'ki (the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq) and there is a lack of research exploring student experiences during these initiatives. This qualitative research study explored the experiences and perspectives of students that attended the Summer Institute. Particularly, how, if at all, the students perceived the activities of the Summer Institute as shaping their understandings of IFS, and how they might use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to IFS into the future. The following research questions were explored during this study:

What were the experiences and perspectives of student participants that attended a

Summer Institute focused on Indigenous perspectives regarding land and food?

- i. How did students perceive the activities in which they engaged as shaping their understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty?
- ii. How do student attendees anticipate using Indigenous and Western knowledge systems collectively (i.e.: Two-Eyed Seeing) to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty into the future?

Research Design

This research study applied a qualitative, descriptive approach to the research questions. A descriptive qualitative approach was chosen to answer the research questions because the purpose of the study was to broadly explore and understand the perspectives of the students who attended the inaugural Summer Institute, and a qualitative approach is particularly suited to accomplish this. By exploring the topic broadly to understand their experiences, I (the researcher) was able to explore how, if at all, the students perceived the Summer Institute as having an impact on their understanding of IFS and how they may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues related to IFS moving forward.

Two sets of data collection took place, the first set included a semi-structured focus group and individual interviews and was held on the last day of the Summer Institute; the second set of data were collected eight weeks later and included a member checking focus group and individual interviews. A focus group was the primary means of data collection; however, participants were given the option to choose an interview if they were unable to attend the focus group or were uncomfortable having discussions in a group setting. The first set of data collection allowed student participants to reflect (collectively or independently) on their experiences and perspectives during the Summer Institute. A summary report was developed (see Appendix H) based on the initial stage of data collection and was disseminated for participants to review before the second data set was collected. The second stage of data collection took place via video-conference and its purpose was to determine whether the summary report was an accurate portrayal of their experiences and to discuss additional reflections. All focus groups and interviews were

audio-recorded, transcribed and analyzed thematically. More details about the research design can be found in Chapter Three.

It is important to note that the purpose of this study was not to evaluate the Summer Institute, but instead, its purpose was to gather the perspectives and understandings of students as they related to IFS. However, it is anticipated that this study will be reviewed by Summer Institute working group members to complement evaluative components of the Summer Institute by learning about the students' experiences during the activities. The findings from this study, in the form of this written thesis will be provided to the Summer Institute's working group to help to provide additional information for their program evaluation.

Study Participant Description

All student attendees (this includes post-secondary students and early career researchers) who attended the Summer Institute were invited to participate in this research study. A total of 9 student attendees volunteered their time to participate in the research study and explore their experiences and perspectives of IFS. As mentioned above, data were collected in two stages; the first included the focus group (n=7) and individual interviews (n=2) at the Summer Institute. Eight weeks later, the second stage of data collection occurred consisting of a member-checking focus group (n=3) and one individual interview (n=1) via video-conference.

Individuals who participated in this research study included post-secondary students (undergraduate, Master's and PhD) and early career researchers. For the purpose of this study, an early career researcher is defined as someone who recently (in the last 5-7 years) received their doctorate. During data collection, there were 2 early career

researchers and 7 post-secondary students at various levels of education. Participants identified as both Indigenous (in this case, all identified as First Nations) and non-Indigenous (settler background) and came from across Nova Scotia and Ontario to attend the Summer Institute. The participants educational backgrounds varied and included: medical sciences, nutrition, kinesiology, and education, but all the participants were either interested in or actively researching topics relating to Indigenous health.

Significance to Health Promotion

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), health promotion is defined as “*the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health.*” (WHO, 2019). This definition moves beyond focusing solely on individual behaviours to consider a broader range of social and environmental interventions that can influence and improve health for all. The World Health Organization has identified eight ‘*Prerequisites for Health*’, which are the fundamental conditions and resources needed to achieve, improve and/or maintain health; peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable ecosystem, sustainable resources, social justice, and equity (WHO, 2019). This research highlighted the importance of one of these fundamental conditions, which is education. Education is a vital social determinant of health that is highly correlated with a number of other health determinants (Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010). For example, as education levels increase, income, employment and working conditions often improve which allows individuals to increase their socioeconomic status (Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010). Additionally, and perhaps most salient for this thesis, education has been shown to facilitate individuals to develop a more comprehensive understanding of their world to understand how societal factors impact health (Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010).

In addition to education being a priority for the World Health Organization, education has also been identified as a major priority for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC, 2015b). The TRC was established to recognize the legacy of the residential school system in Canada and to address the experiences faced by former students and their families (TRC, 2015b). It was aimed to facilitate reconciliation and promote awareness and public education among all Canadians about the impacts of the residential schools (TRC, 2015b). In 2015, the TRC released 94 *Calls to Action* in order to advance the progress of reconciliation throughout Canada. Many of these actions highlighted the importance of education in reducing health inequities faced by those who have been impacted by the residential school system. However, a key section of this report focuses on the importance of education for reconciliation. According to the report, the TRC calls upon federal, provincial and territorial governments to provide mandatory education to students about Indigenous peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada, to integrate Indigenous knowledges into school curriculums and classrooms, as well as to build capacity among students and Canadians to develop intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect (TRC, 2015a, p.7)

It is increasingly obvious that education is a key factor impacting the health and wellbeing of all Canadians. However, it is also obvious that Indigenous peoples experience health inequities related to education beyond what is experienced by non-Indigenous populations. This seems to be exacerbated when we think about issues that are related to food, land and culture. As will be discussed later in this thesis, the legacy of the residential school system resulted in a significant loss of culture and a decreased ability to connect with the land in the ways that many Indigenous peoples once did. This

has resulted in a loss of IFS over time and a decreased understanding among all Canadians about the importance of the land and food for overall health. That being said, to revisit the definition of health promotion, it highlights the importance of enabling people to increase control over their own health. This research provided an opportunity for the participants to ‘*increase control over their own health*’ by participating in an educational opportunity that provided them with a deeper understanding about IFS, Two-Eyed Seeing, and other issues impacting the Indigenous food that influences Indigenous peoples’ health and wellbeing. While achieving IFS within food systems is an ambitious undertaking and may take several decades, having comprehensive discussions and increasing the participants’ knowledge about these issues is a good first step. At this time, the literature surrounding IFS is limited and there are limited programs and initiatives within Mi’kma’ki to explore this concept with others. Therefore, it is essential to pursue health promotion research and programming within this population, especially relating to increased education and awareness about the concept of IFS.

Providing an educational opportunity to both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants was an important way to raise awareness about IFS and to improve their understanding about the connection between land, food and overall health. However, it is anticipated that the implications of this educational opportunity will look different for addressing the health of Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. For example, the Summer Institute provided Indigenous participants with an opportunity to re/connect with their culture by learning about the key aspects of IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing from Mi’kmaq Elders, scholars and researchers and by participating in the Summer Institute’s activities that considered Mi’kmaq ways of being, knowing and doing. There is a

growing body of literature that suggests reconnecting to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems and reclaiming culture are important ways to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. Therefore, when reflecting on key aspects of IFS and the activities of the Summer Institute, the Indigenous participants could (to some extent) participate in their food system while attending the Summer Institute through engaging with the land (during various opportunities) or by learning about the revival of traditional food practices across Mi'kma'ki. On the other hand, non-Indigenous students also participated in the Summer Institute, and it can be anticipated that their experiences may also contribute to their overall health by beginning to understand the sacredness of food. One of the guiding principles that define IFS includes viewing food as sacred; particularly, understanding that Mi'kmaq view food and land as a sacred gift from the Creator and that we all have a duty to protect the land and environment for future generations (Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, 2011). While these are views and beliefs instilled in Mi'kmaq culture, beginning to understand the sacredness of food creates awareness of the importance of protecting the environment and land and in doing so, this impacts *all* populations, contributing to the improvement of health and wellbeing for everyone.

It is also anticipated that this study will contribute to the health promotion literature and influence future practice that focuses on IFS. To begin, the findings offer the perspectives and experiences of student attendees who learned about IFS from Mi'kmaq Elders, Knowledge-holders, and scholars working in this area. The experiences of students who have learned from Mi'kmaq Elders during specific programs or events is something that has not been explored in the literature until this point; yet, it is extremely

important because the Summer Institute was planned with Mi'kmaq epistemologies in mind (i.e., Two-Eyed Seeing) and the teachings focused on Mi'kmaq perspectives. Secondly, the research findings highlight the importance of considering the Mi'kmaq concept of Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen knowledge and understandings about IFS. Participants were able to reflect on how they used Two-Eyed Seeing to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of IFS and how they might consider it into the future. Two-Eyed Seeing has been researched within the context of many programs and areas of study, but there has been very little research that focused on Two-Eyed Seeing in the context of IFS. Finally, this research study highlights the value of land-based learning opportunities, especially programs that aim to incorporate both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems (i.e. Two-Eyed Seeing) into the learnings in order to better understand IFS. It seemed that the participants had a positive experience at the Summer Institute, and the findings highlighted throughout the thesis demonstrate that they gained a deeper understanding of IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing after attending.

Chapter 2- Literature Review

In order to explore the experiences and perspectives of participants who attended the Summer Institute, the following chapter will provide an overview of the current literature surrounding the topic of Indigenous food sovereignty, as well as identify gaps that exist within the literature. This chapter will begin with a discussion of key terms including ‘Indigenous’ and ‘Mi’kmaq’, followed by an introduction to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems about land and food. This will lead into an analysis of historical and ongoing colonialism faced by Indigenous peoples, that has led to the erosion of traditional Indigenous knowledges through dispossession of lands, waters, language and culture, and how this impacts Indigenous peoples’ connection to food and culture. This will be followed by introducing the concepts of Indigenous food sovereignty and Two-Eyed Seeing as a possible means to reclaim culture, reconnect to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems, and improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. To conclude, various Indigenous land-based education opportunities and practices will be examined; this will act as a means to support the value of land-based learning opportunities to understand issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty.

Understanding the terms ‘Indigenous’ and ‘Mi’kmaq’

Jose Martinez Cobo, who is a Special Rapporteur with the United Nations, developed a working definition for the term ‘Indigenous’ within his famous study titled *The Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations* (United Nations, 2004). According to the background paper developed by the United Nations (2004), ‘Indigenous communities, peoples and nations’ are:

“Those of which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system” (p. 2).

This definition considers the historical contexts necessary to understand Indigenous people’s health and well-being, including the importance of land and territory, as well as the determination of some Indigenous groups to preserve and protect their culture for future generations (United Nations, 2004). When this definition was published in the background paper, it was considered a ‘working’ definition. Therefore, it is important to understand how the definition of ‘Indigenous’ has evolved over time by exploring how other organizations define ‘Indigenous’. The World Health Organization (2018) defines ‘Indigenous’ as:

“Indigenous populations are communities that live within, or are attached to, geographically distinct traditional habitats or ancestral territories, and who identify themselves as being part of a distinct cultural group, descended from groups present in the area before modern states were created and current borders defined. They generally maintain cultural and social identities, and social, economic, cultural and political institutions, separate from the mainstream or dominant society or culture” (WHO, 2018).

There are nearly 370 million individuals across the world that identify as Indigenous and all share one thing in common; they are descendants of those who originally inhabited a country or geographical region. However, each Indigenous group is extremely diverse, and each have distinct characteristics that define their culture, traditions, values and

beliefs (United Nations, n.d). In Canada, the term ‘Indigenous peoples’ or ‘Aboriginal’ refers to three distinct collectives that are federally recognized (although many acknowledge that these terms are also imposed and not terms that individual Indigenous peoples use to refer to their own collectives): First Nations, Métis and Inuit (Parrott, 2007). First Nations were the original inhabitants of what is now called ‘Canada’ and occupy territories across the country from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador. Inuit are the original inhabitants of what are primarily the northern, Arctic areas of Canada, identified as ‘Inuit Nunangat’. Finally, Métis come from mixed First Nation and European heritage and live across the country; however, they primarily inhabit the Prairies and Ontario (Parrott, 2007). It is important to note that regardless of geographic borders, Indigenous peoples, in particular First Nations, exist all across North America and whose presence transcends political boundaries. For example, The Ojibwe peoples are vastly spread across North America, with groups existing in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec (in Canada), and in North Dakota, Minnesota, and Michigan (in the United States) (Bishop, 2008). When the term ‘Indigenous’ is used in this research study, it will refer broadly to the three constitutionally recognized Indigenous collectives across Canada. However, this research study emphasized Mi’kmaq conceptualizations of land and food as it was the focus of the Summer Institute.

As mentioned above, First Nations is a broad, collective term that describes Indigenous peoples in Canada who are not Métis or Inuit (Gadacz, 2006). As a result of this diversity within First Nations, many individuals who identify as First Nation are more likely to identify as a member of a specific nation within their community (Gadacz, 2006). For example, there are 634 First Nations communities across Canada, and each

community has distinct traditions, languages and experiences (Gadacz, 2006). In the Maritime region of Canada, one of the First Nations are called Mi'kmaq. According to the Canadian Encyclopedia, Mi'kmaq are a group of Indigenous peoples who were original inhabitants of the Atlantic region and southern Gaspé Peninsula of Canada; this area is known as 'Mi'kma'ki' (McGee, 2008). Mi'kmaq have inhabited these areas since time immemorial, and today there are 30 Mi'kmaq Nations located within Mi'kma'ki (McGee, 2008). Most of these communities are in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, however there is also a presence of Mi'kmaq in Quebec, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Maine and Massachusetts (McGee, 2008). According to Statistics Canada, the population registered as Mi'kmaq in 2015 was around 58 000, with nearly 56% of those living on-reserve (McGee, 2008).

This research study took place in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. Prior to colonization from British settlers, Mi'kmaq lived according to laws imparted to them by their Creator; these 'laws' defined Mi'kmaw peoples' relationships with nature and allowed the Mi'kmaq to foster a spiritual and cultural connection with the land (The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, 2015). As time progressed, and British settlers began to arrive, treaties of Peace and Friendship were signed by the Mi'kmaq and Wolastequy First Nations who inhabited the area in conjunction with the British Crown, with the first treaty of Peace and Friendship being signed in 1725 (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010; The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, 2015; The Grand Council of Micmacs, 1998). These treaties mostly dealt with the provision of traditional lands; importantly, they did not deal with surrendering of lands and/or resources, but instead, established a reciprocal agreement

where the British Crown agreed, to some extent, to recognize Mi'kmaq and Maliseet title and avoid exploitation of traditional lands where activities such as fishing, hunting and planting took place (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010; The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, 2015). Unfortunately, the treaties were not clear in which lands fell under 'traditional lands', and the Mi'kmaq continue to feel that the government has not been honouring agreements set out in the treaties. As a result, the Mi'kmaq have been attempting to revisit these treaties and protect traditional hunting, fishing and planting grounds (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). Mi'kmaq are still experiencing a disconnection from land, food and culture due to continued colonization; what Mi'kmaq largely consider a disregard for traditional Indigenous knowledge and its relationship to environmental dispossession, will be explored further in this literature review.

Traditional Indigenous Knowledge about Land and Food

Mi'kmaq share a common belief: that all life was created by one, powerful Being known as 'Great Spirit' or Kji-Niskam (Unama'ki College, 2018). The Great Spirit created our world and the land, animals and plants contained within it, therefore each living being has a spirit that should be respected (Unama'ki College, 2018). Within Mi'kmaq culture, spirituality is a way of life and dictates how an individual treats and respects all living things provided by Mother Earth (Bernard et al, 2015; Unama'ki College, 2018). Mi'kmaq, like many other Indigenous peoples, view the animals, plants and foods produced by the land as sacred and believe that if the earth is unwell, then we, as humans are not well (Food Secure Canada, 2015; Unama'ki College, 2018). These beliefs represent an overarching value that is present within many Indigenous groups

demonstrating Indigenous peoples' multifaceted relationship with the land. It can be said that these traditional values and beliefs around land and food are the basis of Indigenous food systems. While these beliefs are not explicitly Mi'kmaq beliefs, they do align with the four guiding principles of Indigenous food sovereignty: (1) food is sacred; (2) participation in the food system; (3) self-determination; and (4) legislation and policy reform (Martin & Amos, 2016; Morrison, 2011). These four guiding principles are instilled within traditional Indigenous values and have been used to define and describe Indigenous food sovereignty throughout the literature; the concept of Indigenous food sovereignty and the four guiding principles will be explained further detail in the following section of this chapter titled 'Defining Indigenous Food Sovereignty'.

Since time immemorial, Indigenous populations across Canada have survived and thrived from the bounties of their traditional food systems (Martin, 2009). Traditional plants such as sweet grass, sage and juniper, grew wild and were cultivated without any concern over lack of fertile land (Johns, Hebda, Arnason, & Turner, 2012). Traditional medicines, including nearly 500 varieties of plants and herbs, were often used to treat sickness and diseases (Uprety, Asselin, Dhakal, & Julien, 2012). Additionally, community members were extremely active participants in their food system. For example, groups of hunters often travel together and hunt game meat, such as moose or caribou, intended for the entire community to share and eat (Skinner et al., 2013). This concept of food sharing is common within many Indigenous communities (Daigle, 2017; Martin, 2009; Skinner et al., 2013), and consuming traditional foods were not viewed as a choice, but rather a way of life. Traditional foods were, and continue to be, a way to uphold traditions, values and beliefs, and ultimately express culture (Martin & Amos,

2016). Across Canada, many Indigenous communities continue to utilize traditional knowledge and participate in traditional gardening, harvesting, and hunting practices (Kamal et al, 2015; Rudolph & McLachlan, 2013; Turner & Turner, 2008).

However, there is a growing body of literature indicating that Indigenous populations across Canada have experienced a decreased connection to land, food and culture since early colonization and the arrival of European settlers. Understanding this decreased connection involves several complex underlying factors including: ongoing systemic colonialism faced by Indigenous populations, environmental dispossession, a disregard for traditional Indigenous knowledge, and a subsequent focus on ‘nutritionism’. Each of these concepts are explained below in relation to how they might influence Indigenous peoples’ overall health and well-being.

The Impacts of Colonialism

Colonialism is defined as “the control or governing influence of a nation over a dependent country, territory, or people, and the system or policy by which a nation maintains or advocates such control or influence” (Czyzewski, 2011, p.1). When European settlers arrived in Canada, assumptions of superiority towards the Indigenous peoples resulted in cultural assimilation, genocide, and long-term systemic colonialism that is still experienced today (Czyzewski, 2011). This ongoing, systemic colonialism contributes not only to a disconnect from traditional Indigenous knowledge about land and food, but also to the disproportionate health inequities experienced by Indigenous populations across Canada, as Indigenous peoples commonly experience barriers to fully embracing the traditional Indigenous food system (Czyzewski, 2011). The purpose of this section is to reveal several examples of both historical and ongoing colonialism faced by

Indigenous populations, and to discuss how this has resulted in a disconnected relationship between Indigenous peoples and their land, food and culture.

The Historical Context of Colonization

There is evidence indicating that the Mi'kmaq have had a presence within Mi'kma'ki for more than 10,500 years. However, the first accounts of colonization began in the early 1700s when British explorers began to settle in Nova Scotia (The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, 2015). There were numerous treaties of Peace and Friendship developed between Mi'kmaq and the British Crown; these treaties were meant to establish a relationship between Nations but have set the tone for an unequal power relationship between Indigenous peoples and the government (Henderson, 2006). The first of the treaties was signed in 1726 which formally ended a war between Britain and the Wabanaki alliance (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). The Wabanaki alliance, consisting of Mi'kmaq, Wolastequy, Passamaquoddy and the Abenaki, were concerned over British expansion and colonialization in areas where they lived for centuries. Particularly, they were concerned over the British fishing off Nova Scotia's coastal waters and interfering with their own fishing livelihoods (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). As a result of the treaty, it was instructed that the hunting, fishing and planting activities of the Indigenous peoples were to be explicitly recognized, and land rights were to be protected in exchange to end the war (The Grand Council of Micmacs, 1998). As time progressed, and the British presence increased in Mi'kma'ki, numerous treaties were developed and signed between the First Nations and British crown as it related to provisions with land rights and traditional activities (The Grand Council of Micmacs, 1998). These treaties also outlined the agreement of First

Nations to the idea that the British Crown may ‘lawfully’ establish future settlements. However, the definitions of ‘traditional activities’ and ‘lawfully’ were not clear and it seems that the British were attempting to assimilate First Nations people under British laws and rules (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). It is important to note that these treaties are different than the numbered treaties that were signed in Western Canada; instead of creating treaties that dealt with (arguably) the surrender of Indigenous lands to the government, the Treaties of Peace and Friendship attempted to establish a reciprocal relationship between nations.

The Indian Act of 1867 furthered the growing tensions between Indigenous peoples and the government (Food Secure Canada, 2015). This piece of legislature, which is only applicable to First Nations and Inuit, determined how the government would control and manage status and land (Henderson, 2006). The Indian Act has been amended several times but continues to enable historical trauma and violate human rights (Henderson, 2006). For example, because of the Indian Act, it was illegal to practice cultural and spiritual ceremonies, such as potlatch, and even participate in traditional dancing (Henderson, 2006). Another example of how the Indian Act violated human rights occurred in 1927, when it was illegal for a First Nations person to hire a lawyer to fight a land claim without the government’s consent (Henderson, 2006). Forced assimilation continued as the years progressed, and the biggest loss of Indigenous culture, tradition, values and beliefs came as a result of the residential school system (Miller, 2012; TRC, 2015b).

The residential schools were government backed, Christian schools developed with the sole purpose to assimilate First Nations’ children into a Euro-Christian Canadian

culture led by prime minister Sir John A. Macdonald (TRC, 2015b). The residential schools would separate First Nations' children from their families, deprive them of their culture, language, and traditions and force them to be educated and integrated into this 'new' society (Miller, 2012; TRC, 2015b). It is predicted that approximately 150 000 Indigenous children attended a residential school; the 1930's saw the peak of residential school attendance and the last residential school closed in 1996 (Miller, 2012). In Mi'kma'ki, there was one residential school in operation from 1930 to 1967, which was located in Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia and hosted over 1000 Mi'kmaq children from all across Atlantic Canada (The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, 2015). As a result of the residential school system, many Mi'kmaq children lost their connection to their culture, language, and traditions that would normally be passed on through teachings from their Elders. Additionally, they lost their connection to nature, land and the resources it produces because they no longer had Elders or families to pass on knowledge about traditional food and land practices (Council of the Canadian Academies, 2014; TRC, 2015b). The residential school system not only contributed to a tremendous loss of cultural identity, but also a loss of one's self; many children experienced mental, physical and sexual abuse while attending, and the long-term trauma faced by Mi'kmaq children in the residential schools continues to haunt families today (Council of the Canadian Academies, 2014; Rudolph & McLachlan, 2013; The Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, 2015; TRC, 2015b).

Environmental Dispossession

Many Indigenous groups hold a spiritual relationship with the land, and it is often viewed as a central component of culture and tradition (Richmond, 2015). However,

Indigenous populations across Canada, particularly First Nations, have experienced centuries of environmental dispossession (Daigle, 2017; Richmond, 2015).

Environmental dispossession consists of the processes that prevents or reduces Indigenous people's ability to access the land and resources within their traditional environments (Council of the Canadian Academies, 2014; Richmond, 2015), and it has serious implications on their overall health and wellbeing (Council of the Canadian Academies, 2014; Richmond, 2015). *The Panel on the State of Knowledge of Food Security in Northern Canada*, which is a report that was developed by the Council of Canadian Academies for the Government of Canada to assess the state of knowledge about food security in Northern Canada, identified that there are two forms of environmental dispossession: direct and indirect (Council of the Canadian Academies, 2014).

Indirect forms of environmental dispossession have and continue to occur as a result of policies and regulations that attempt to disrupt the relationship between Indigenous people and the land (Council of the Canadian Academies, 2014). For example, the residential school system mentioned in the previous section can be viewed as an indirect form of environmental dispossession; the government, supported by policies in the Indian Act, disrupted Indigenous children's relationship to their culture. However, indirect environmental dispossession can take other forms. As a result of the establishment of parks and protected areas by conservation laws and regulations (Turner & Turner, 2008), strict laws and regulations limit access to land areas that were once traditional territories, and Indigenous people are prevented from engaging in food procurement activities, such as hunting, fishing and gathering (Martin, 2009; Turner &

Turner, 2008). In Martin's PhD dissertation, community members identified that they engage in hunting and fishing because it is an important way to strengthen their cultural connection with the land. Yet, increased government regulations prevented them from engaging in these activities in the ways they used to (Martin, 2009). Today, there are many different types of licenses and courses one must take in order to hunt and fish legally; prior to colonization Indigenous peoples could simply go out on the land and harvest what was needed at the time and notably, there already existed checks and balances within the community that ensured that only respectful forms of harvesting were accepted that adhered to community social and cultural norms (Martin, 2009).

One example of indirect environmental dispossession occurring within Mi'kmak'i is the story of Donald Marshall Jr. (Butts, 2009; Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). Donald Marshall Jr was a member of Membertou First Nation in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. In 1993, he was fishing eels in Antigonish County when he got charged and had his equipment seized; he was charged with fishing without a license, selling eels without a license, and fishing during a closed season (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). At the time, Donald Marshall Jr claimed he was not violating any laws as he was following treaties signed by Mi'kmaq and the British Crown (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). This dilemma sparked a nearly 6-year long legal battle regarding treaty rights that made its way to the Supreme Court of Canada (Butts, 2009). In 1999, The Supreme Court confirmed Marshall's claims all along, and indicated that Marshall had a right to catch and sell eels, according to the treaty of Peace and Friendship signed in 1760 (Butts, 2009; Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). However, the government made sure to indicate that treaty rights were not unlimited, and that

fisheries could be regulated by the government; because Marshall had approximately \$800 worth of eels, this was considered earning a ‘moderate’ livelihood and was not considered to be an over-exploitation of treaty rights, although the definition of what constitutes a ‘moderate livelihood’ was never fully defined and thus continues to create tensions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous fishers today (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). Moving forward, it is important to consider how issues, such as environmental dispossession, impact Indigenous peoples’ connection to land and the food it produces that is harvested (Daigle, 2017; Richmond, 2015).

Direct forms of environmental dispossession include the approach of physically restricting the use of traditional lands and waters; this often occurs by increased industrial development that contaminates or destroys the land/water for future use (Council of the Canadian Academies, 2014). An example of direct environmental dispossession is found within the First Nations groups of the Anishinaabe territory (Daigle, 2017; Richmond, 2015). When the Canada-US border was developed, it crossed food harvesting grounds in Anishinaabe territory in northwestern Ontario. This development disrupted traditional Anishinaabe harvesting grounds and waters, and it is now illegal to partake in traditional activities that are central to culture in that area (Daigle, 2017). Additionally, Anishinaabe groups located on the north shore of Lake Superior have found that environmentally exploitative resource development near Lake Superior has led to contamination of resource-rich land (Richmond, 2015). Developments including the Hudson Bay Company post, the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Trans-Canada Highway have all disrupted traditional harvesting and hunting lands of the Anishinaabe people that were once rich in resources that provided economic prosperity to the community (Richmond, 2015).

Unfortunately, these are not the only cases of direct environmental dispossession; draining and dyking wetlands, habitat destruction, resource over-exploitation, contamination and pollution, introducing new species, and the conversion from traditional to industrial agriculture, fisheries and harvesting practices have occurred across Canada (Turner & Turner, 2008). Today, the reality is still the same, with Indigenous communities continuing to experience negative impacts associated with direct environment dispossession.

A local example of direct environmental dispossession is the story of environmental contamination that has had serious and far reaching consequences for a Mi'kmaw First Nation community in Pictou County, Nova Scotia. Boat Harbour is a body of water located near Pictou Landing First Nation and has been a source of environmental contamination since the 1960s. Pictou County is known for its pulp and paper industry, and at this time, an effluent treatment plant was constructed to handle the waste from the neighboring Abercrombie Pulp and Paper Mill (The Council of Canadians, 2011). This caused Boat Harbour to become polluted with toxic materials and it is estimated that a trillion litres of effluent have flowed into Boat Harbour since 1966 (The Council of Canadians, 2011). Boat Harbour, or 'A'se'k, was once a traditional place where the community of Pictou Landing First Nation would fish, hunt and play. However, this once healthy area became a toxic wasteland; most aquatic life perished, air pollution was evident, and water levels began to flood traditional reserve lands (Beaton, 2016; Castleden et al, 2017). Additionally, members of Pictou Landing First Nation noticed an increase in health concerns and did not feel safe harvesting traditional Indigenous foods from the area (Beaton, 2016). This disregard for the environment and

traditional Indigenous values is an evident form of ongoing systemic colonialism, as the pipe carrying effluent travelled away from the white settlement of Pictou, and towards Boat Harbour (Beaton, 2016; Castleden et al, 2017). In 2014, this pipe had burst, and it was in direct proximity of a traditional burying ground for the First Nation community (Howe, 2014). As a result, the Chief of Pictou Landing First Nation and other members of the community decided to place a blockade across the access road, to prevent the traditional burying grounds from being disturbed (Howe, 2014). As a result of these issues, an agreement was developed between the Province of Nova Scotia and Pictou Landing First Nation to introduce a bill titled “Boat Harbour Act”; this act would call for the cessation of the Boat Harbour Effluent Treatment Facility, and to negotiate an agreement for remediation (Province of Nova Scotia, 2015). In 2017, officials in charge of cleaning up Boat Harbour indicated that cleanup estimates are set at \$133 million, and Northern Pulp is required to build a new treatment facility by 2020 (Castleden et al, 2017; Withers, 2017).

A Disregard of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge

The traditional values and beliefs around land, air, water and food are the basis of the Indigenous food systems, where Indigenous individuals can consume traditional foods and participate in traditional food practices (Martin & Amos, 2016). However, a disregard for traditional Indigenous knowledge has impacted the ability of Indigenous peoples to remain connected, both spiritually and culturally, to the land. As a result, many Indigenous people are prevented from fully embracing their traditional food systems, regardless of how important these are to their personal wellbeing. The beginning of this disregard for traditional Indigenous knowledge can be explained by early colonization by

British settlers within Mi'kma'ki. When European settlers began to arrive, they did not believe that Indigenous peoples had any religious, spiritual or cultural beliefs, and viewed traditional spiritual practices as superstitions. For example, they attempted to convert many Mi'kmaq to the Christian faith as a way to assimilate them into the 'new' culture of Canada that was heavily emphasized on European and Christian values (Unama'ki College, 2018). In regard to food and land, many early settlers viewed Indigenous traditions and values as disadvantageous to 'progress' made by settlers and felt that British methods of land ownership and agriculture were more advantageous than the way it was being done by Indigenous populations (Food Secure Canada, 2015). These euro-centric views brought from the early settlers continued for years; First Nations people were forced to live on designated reserves and separate themselves from the land in which they held spiritual and cultural connections (Food Secure Canada, 2015), in order to become "self-sustaining British citizens" (Leslie, 2002 p. 24). The views held by early settlers has trickled into the way our current food system is viewed and continues to impact Indigenous peoples' spiritual and cultural connections to land and food. For the Mi'kmaq, culture is rooted in the land. Therefore, without this spiritual connection to the land, the Mi'kmaq cannot fully adopt their traditional food system. It can be recognized that the movement towards 'nutritionism' in our current food system, which will be explained subsequently, has contributed to this disregard for traditional Indigenous knowledge systems.

The term 'nutritionism' was first coined by George Scrinis (2008) and refers to a nutritionally reductive approach to food. Over several decades, the food and nutrition industry have conditioned society to focus on nutrients when we think about food

(Scrinis, 2008). If determining whether a food choice is healthy or not, we have been taught to review the nutrient composition by reading the nutrition label. Additionally, decades of nutrition education have focused on the importance of a healthy diet in relation to consuming more or less nutrients (Scrinis, 2008). Our relationship with food has changed, and it comes down to eating high nutrient foods to be healthier (Scrinis, 2008). As a result of this approach, we fail to acknowledge the many other ways to become involved with food and our food system, including the social, spiritual and cultural contexts (Scrinis, 2008). This switch in how food is viewed has resulted in what Nestle (2007) calls ‘nutrition confusion’. According to Nestle, the food industry may be responsible for this confusion, stating:

“On the one hand, our advice about the health benefits of diets based largely on food plants—fruits, vegetables and grains—has not changed in more than 50 years and is consistently supported by ongoing research. On the other hand, people seem increasingly confused about what they are supposed to eat to stay healthy” (Nestle, 2007).

‘Nutrition confusion’ is not uncommon within our society, as individuals are becoming increasingly confused about the accuracy of dietary information and the types of foods they should be eating (Scrinis, 2008). Within the paradigm of nutritionism, Scrinis suggests viewing foods at the level of the whole food product rather than only investigating the biological functions of specific nutrients (Scrinis, 2008). This way, we can begin to reintroduce the cultural, social and environmental factors that effect food choice and reclaim our relationship with food.

The critiques that Scrinis has identified within the paradigm of nutritionism can be translated and expanded to consider traditional Indigenous knowledge about food and land. Instead of considering food as a biological means to sustain life, traditional

knowledges about food and land need to be reclaimed and revived by Indigenous populations. Before colonization, the values and beliefs instilled within Indigenous culture surrounding food contributed to environmental sustainability, health and well-being, and the ability of future generations to produce and harvest food. Therefore, moving forward it will be important to revive these traditional knowledges, as they may contain the answers to issues caused by ongoing, systemic colonialism.

Defining ‘Indigenous Food Sovereignty’

The term ‘food sovereignty’ was first developed by a group called ‘La Via Campesina’ in the 1990s (Wittman, Desmarais & Wiebe, 2010). This group consisted of Indigenous communities, small-scale farmers and agriculture professionals that advocated against agriculture practices that are often corporate-led and contribute to food and environmental crises across the world (Wittman, Desmarais & Wiebe, 2010). They felt that these agricultural practices contribute to a disconnect from food, and ultimately a loss of control over our own food systems (Wittman, Desmarais & Wiebe, 2010). In Canada, the concept of food sovereignty was introduced by two members of La Via Campesina in the early 2000s (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014). These individuals participated in the original conversation on food sovereignty, but it took several years before the concept was used across Canada; the early definitions were solely focused on agricultural production and trade (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014). In 2007, nearly 500 representatives from 80 countries participated in the ‘Declaration of Nyéléni’ at the Forum for Food Sovereignty (Forum for Food Sovereignty, 2007). At this time, they developed a definition for food sovereignty, “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable

methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems” (Forum for Food Sovereignty, 2007, p.1). Various Canadian organizations attended this forum, including Food Secure Canada, and returned to Canada dedicated to support a national food sovereignty movement (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014).

Many Indigenous populations across Canada have sought to develop their own framework related to Indigenous food sovereignty. Rather than focusing on agriculture and trade, however, Indigenous food sovereignty is rooted in decolonization and self-determination (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014; Daigle, 2017). The main purpose of Indigenous food sovereignty is to honour, value and protect traditional food practices in the face of ongoing colonialism (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014), and the concept truly speaks to the issues faced by Indigenous populations (Martin & Amos, 2016). As has been discussed throughout this literature review, ongoing systemic colonialism in the form of environmental dispossession and a disregard of traditional Indigenous knowledge has contributed to the negative health issues faced by Indigenous populations and fails to acknowledge traditional Indigenous food practices (Daigle, 2017; Food Secure Canada, 2015; Kamal et al, 2015; Martin & Amos, 2016; Martin, 2009; Rudolph & McLachlan, 2013). Across Canada, Indigenous populations are experiencing disproportionate levels of health inequities when compared to non-Indigenous populations. For example, an increased prevalence of chronic disease, such as type 2 diabetes, exists within Indigenous communities. The increased availability of unhealthy foods and the decreased availability and increased cost of traditional foods may contribute to these inequities (Rudolph & McLachlan, 2013). Therefore, the concept of Indigenous food sovereignty can be viewed as an approach to explore these issues.

The concept of Indigenous food sovereignty can be explained by the following four guiding principles: (1) food is sacred; (2) participation in the food system; (3) self-determination; and (4) legislation and policy reform (Martin & Amos, 2016; Morrison, 2011). The four principles of Indigenous food sovereignty are grounded in traditional Indigenous knowledge and represent a predominant theme of the traditional Indigenous food system (Martin & Amos, 2016). In regard to the first principle, ‘food is sacred’, it is important to be aware that Mi’kmaq view food and land as a gift from the Creator; by upholding a duty to protect and foster a healthy relationship between land and humans, Indigenous peoples can begin to support Indigenous food sovereignty (Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, 2011). Secondly, it has been identified that in order to achieve Indigenous food sovereignty, Indigenous peoples must actively participate in their traditional food systems. Therefore, actions to reclaim culture and traditions must be practiced in order for traditional knowledges to be passed on to future generations (Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, 2011). The third guiding principle, ‘self-determination’, recognizes the importance of responding to collective needs as they relate to culture, land and food. If Indigenous populations are interesting in considering Indigenous food sovereignty as a method to reclaim culture and regain traditional knowledges, they should have the opportunity to make their own informed decisions about their food systems. Finally, the fourth guiding principle includes policy reform. The disregard of traditional Indigenous knowledges and environmental dispossession faced by Indigenous populations stems from ongoing, systemic colonialism. By considering Indigenous food sovereignty as a potential method to reclaim culture, a restorative framework identifying the concerns of Indigenous peoples can be inherently

created and utilized to enact policy change (Morrison, 2011; Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, 2011). Moving forward, Indigenous food sovereignty can be viewed as a resistance against colonialism, but also as a resurgence of traditional Indigenous knowledge (Daigle, 2017).

The relationship between Indigenous Food Security, Food Sovereignty and Health

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, food security exists “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (Food and Agriculture Organization, 1996). Conversely, food insecurity exists “when an individual experiences inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints” (Tarasuk et al., 2014). In 2012, nearly 1 in 8 households experienced food insecurity (Tarasuk et al, 2014); this prevalence is magnified when we consider Indigenous populations. According to the Canadian Community Health Survey in 2008, Indigenous peoples who live off-reserve had nearly three times the rates of food insecurity when compared to non-Indigenous populations (Francis et al., 2014).

Additionally, Nova Scotia has the second highest rates of food insecurity in the country, behind Nunavut and the Northwest Territories (Tarasuk et al, 2014), suggesting that rates of household food insecurity may even be higher among Mi’kmaq in Nova Scotia. Food security is an extremely important determinant of health, and the challenges associated with food insecurity are far more evident for Indigenous populations and contribute to the health disparities they face (Council of Canadian Academies 2014, Czyzewski, 2011; Skinner et al, 2013; Socha et al, 2012). For example, Indigenous households are more likely than non-Indigenous households to experience various socio-demographic risk

factors associated with food insecurity, including poverty, insecure housing, and reliance on government assistance programs (Tarasuk et al., 2014). According to the 2016 Child and Family Poverty Report Card, The Eskasoni First Nation, located in Eastern Cape Breton, had a child poverty rate of 75.6 per cent, which is the highest in the province (Frank, 2016). In addition, Indigenous peoples experience unique challenges as it relates to the procurement and consumption of traditional foods, such as decreased access to traditional foods, particularly in rural communities, increased presence of market foods, and environmental concerns impacting the food supply (Tarasuk et al, 2014). These issues impact overall health and may contribute to the high prevalence of diet-related illness found within Indigenous communities, including obesity, type 2 diabetes mellitus, and cardiovascular disease (Dillabough, 2016; Tarasuk et al, 2014). One study found that obesity rates within Indigenous communities are two and a half times that of non-Indigenous communities (Gates et al. 2013). Living in a food insecure household has also been found to negatively impact mental health; higher rates of depression, stress, anxiety and suicide are found in Indigenous households that are food insecure (Dillabough, 2016; Socha et al., 2012).

To address and prevent food insecurity within Indigenous populations, one must consider the historical, social and cultural factors that come into play regarding food and eating. To quote the Council of Canadian Academies (2014), “Food security can be considered a goal in itself, and food sovereignty a means by which to achieve it” (p. 27). Throughout the literature, experienced Indigenous health researchers have determined that solutions to food security can be found by achieving food sovereignty within Indigenous communities (Martin & Amos, 2016). If we reflect on the four principles of

Indigenous food sovereignty and consider Mi'kmaq ways of being and knowing, we can begin to reclaim culture, reconnect to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems, and work towards improving the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples across Canada. Martin and Amos (2016) describe that there is not one 'recipe' for good food, but identify the key components to address Indigenous food sovereignty:

“It is food that is harvested, prepared, and consumed according to the principles, values, and norms of the Indigenous peoples on whose territory that food has been acquired; it is about understanding the diversity of communities and the people within them as unique, understanding that their knowledges about their own lands and waters, and thus, their foods is also unique; it is about education that does not present itself as narrowly constructed, one-size-fits-all approach to promoting healthy decisions about food and eating; it is about trusting in the ancestral knowledge that diverse groups possess about food; and finally, it is at the root of bringing people together to celebrate culture” (p.217)

Two-Eyed Seeing

In order to repossess the environment, reconnect to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems, and ultimately reclaim Indigenous culture, we must find a means to better understand and explore the concept of IFS. With the intention of gaining a better understanding about IFS and to understand how improving IFS has the potential to impact the health and wellbeing of Indigenous populations, we must explore how to learn about these concepts that considers the best information from both Indigenous and Western knowledges.

According to Elders Murdena and Albert Marshall of Mi'kma'ki, the answers to better health and wellbeing are embedded within traditional Mi'kmaq values, beliefs, and knowledges. However, due to the history of colonization in Canada, First Nations have

not been able to utilize their traditional knowledges to the extent that they once did (Marshall, Marshall & Bartlett, 2015). As a guide to address these issues, Elder Albert Marshall coined the term 'Two-Eyed Seeing' (Marshall, Marshall & Bartlett, 2015). Two-Eyed Seeing brings together traditional Indigenous knowledge and Western, scientific knowledge to address major environmental, health and social issues that our society is experiencing (Marshall, Marshall & Bartlett, 2015; Martin, 2012; Hovey et al., 2017; Knapp, 2013). Traditional knowledges are the values, beliefs and understandings that have been obtained over time from living in harmony with the natural environment and are to be passed on to future generations (Marshall, Marshall, Bartlett, & Iwama 2015). Many Indigenous groups across Canada, particularly the Mi'kmaq, view traditional knowledges about the land and food as sacred. Yet, Western scientific knowledge values analytical, objective and quantitative approaches based on the scientific method to study and understand the world, including the natural environment. According to Elder Albert Marshall, Two-Eyed Seeing "*encourages that we learn to see from one eye with the best in the Indigenous ways of knowing and from the other eye with the best in the Western ways of knowing and, moreover, that we learn to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all*" (Marshall, Marshall, Bartlett, & Iwama 2015, p.283). Elder Albert Marshall and Dr. Cheryl Bartlett view their work with Two-Eyed Seeing as an integrative, co-learning journey (Integrative Science, 2019). They believe that understanding and practicing Two-Eyed Seeing is meant to be a journey in which you continually learn from others, learn with others, and then use these multiple perspectives to understand and see linkages among issues we face with and within nature (Integrative Science, 2019). An integrative science framework was developed to guide individuals,

particularly ones working in education, research and outreach to begin to understand and recognize multiple perspectives, and it includes four key elements that are ongoing in nature: 1) Acknowledgement of the role we play as storytellers for our knowledges, 2) Effort to understand and deepen our understanding of our common ground, 3) Effort to understand and deepen our differences and develop respect for them, and 4) Recognition of our need to talk and walk together on our Earth Mother today (Integrative Science, 2019). These four elements are essential in beginning to understand Two-Eyed Seeing, and especially when embarking on a co-learning journey with others. This framework highlights the importance of learning together to expand our understandings in an integrative way (Integrative Science, 2019).

When we consider issues that have impacted Indigenous populations, such as those relating to food and land, there has been an over-emphasis of the ‘Western’ eye when coming up with solutions; this aligns with the ongoing systemic colonialism faced by Indigenous populations today (Martin, 2012). This focus on the ‘Western’ eye continues to be evident today, especially within academic institutions and conventional Canadian food systems. Unfortunately, this has significantly impacted awareness and understanding about traditional values and beliefs surrounding food among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals, an impact of ongoing colonialism.

There is a unique potential for the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing to be considered when reflecting on issues that impact IFS. Many of the issues that influence Indigenous peoples’ ability to participate and self-govern their food systems often comes back to a general lack of understanding among Western society about the importance of traditional Indigenous knowledges. Therefore, it is important to explore how Indigenous knowledges

can be considered alongside Western knowledges (and privileging it where necessary), especially when we think about issues impacting IFS such as a decreased understanding about the importance of culture and feeling disconnected from culture. While our view focuses on the importance of privileging traditional knowledge when necessary, the value and importance of Western knowledges does not go unnoticed and is vital to understanding Two-Eyed Seeing. At this time, there is a lack of research exploring how Two-Eyed Seeing can be considered when thinking about IFS. However, Two-Eyed Seeing has been researched within the context of environmental education, global change, and health promotion (Hatcher, 2012; Martin, 2009). For example, a study by Hovey and colleagues (2009) determined that by considering both philosophical hermeneutics and Haudenosaunee decision making in their work, they shaped a Two-Eyed Seeing approach that encouraged a new way to understand diabetes and the and its impacts on the community. This research is significant because it highlights why Two-Eyed Seeing and embarking on an integrative, co-learning journey should be considered when addressing issues impacting health, especially Indigenous food sovereignty.

Land-Based Learning within an Indigenous Context

The following section will explore land-based learning opportunities as a method to explore and understand Indigenous food sovereignty. A review of the literature has indicated that there are several land-based initiatives across Canada that focus on topics including Indigenous traditional knowledge, Indigenous food systems and Indigenous food sovereignty. For instance, there are several university-based courses available (McGill School of Social Work, 2015; The University of British Columbia, 2013), and a wide variety of community-based learning opportunities for Indigenous peoples

(Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016; Castleden et al., 2015). However, when this study was being developed, there were no similar programs or initiatives within Mi'kma'ki (Nova Scotia). The literature reviewed in this section will highlight examples of land-based learning opportunities across Canada and provide insight into how the Summer Institute may have influenced the student's perspectives and experiences. To begin, two Canadian land-based university field courses will be introduced, followed by an analysis of two community-based learning opportunities that address Indigenous traditional food systems.

At McGill University located in Quebec, a collaboration between the Social Work, Anthropology, Law and Medicine departments has resulted in an interdisciplinary Indigenous field studies course (McGill School of Social Work, 2015). The duration of this course is four weeks, and throughout that time students learn about Haudenosaunee culture and worldviews at both the McGill campus and Kahnawake, Mohawk Territory (McGill School of Social Work, 2015). For one week, students travel to Kahnawake to live and learn from the land alongside community Elders and facilitators; the course description indicates that the field portion involves rugged field conditions and varying weather, so students must be prepared for this (McGill School of Social Work, 2015). At the University of British Columbia, The Faculty of Land and Food Systems collaborated with the Squamish First Nation to offer a community-based experiential learning field course in food security (The University of British Columbia, 2013). In 2012, ten students from an assortment of disciplines at the University of British Columbia went to Squamish First Nation and participated in an intensive community-based field course (The University of British Columbia, 2013). During the course, students and community

members learned about food security, food sustainability, traditional knowledge and the reestablishment of traditional foods through lectures and hands-on activities on the land. This course is unique because the students and community members of Squamish First Nations learn side-by-side, and the priorities of both groups are acknowledged (The University of British Columbia, 2013). A brief review of the course outlines highlighted learning opportunities similar to components of the Summer Institute that is a focus of this thesis research, such as the curriculum topics (McGill School of Social Work, 2015; The University of British Columbia, 2013).

In addition to university-based field schools, there are also community-based learning opportunities that educate individuals about Indigenous traditional food systems. In a research study conducted by Castleden (2015), non-Indigenous student perspectives were examined after attending a field school that incorporated digital storytelling as an approach to discussing Indigenous Perspectives on Environmental Management (Castleden et al., 2015). Castleden has explored the concept of ‘transformative learning’, which is an educational theory that promotes challenging our previous assumptions and engaging yourself with new concepts. It allows individuals to break down their preconceived notions and “undergo cognitive and affective transformation” (Castleden et al., 2015). During this program, non-Indigenous students worked directly with Indigenous communities to learn from Elders and Knowledge-Holders. Researchers used “digital storytelling”, which considers Indigenous epistemologies of storytelling, to collect information from the students about their experiences of transformative learning, as well as their overall experiences in the field school (Castleden et al., 2015). As a result, it was determined that students became more aware of the importance of Indigenous

knowledges within an environmental context and continued to engage in transformative learning when working with the community; students were able to emotionally, mentally, and spiritually engage with Indigenous peoples (Castleden et al., 2015). Additionally, a thesis study conducted by Rudolph (2009) found that processes of transformative learning can form politically active individuals that participate in the decolonization of structures that contribute to inequity (2009). Therefore, the information provided by the assessment of Castleden's field school is extremely valuable because it was offered by Dalhousie University, and focused on Mi'kmaq culture within Nova Scotia. However, the target audience for this field school were non-Indigenous students. On the other hand, the Summer Institute in which participants attended targeted post-secondary students and early-career researchers who are interested in or conducting Indigenous health research. These participants identified as both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Additionally, the topic of this field school was entirely focused on environmental management, whereas the Summer Institute focused on Mi'kmaq conceptualizations of land and food, with a focus on Indigenous food sovereignty. Nevertheless, these studies provide insight to potential perspectives and experiences of participants that will attend the Summer Institute.

In a research project guided by Bagelman and colleagues, nearly 5000 First Nations people from British Columbia from 2007-2012 participated in Feasting for Change. The purpose of this study was to explore the "Feasting for Change" meal that allowed participants to share food prepared in traditional ways and to share stories about both the loss of food culture and the importance of reviving traditional food practices (Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016). Feasting for Change allowed community

members to participate in traditional food activities, including pit cooking, berry picking, and cleaning fish and crab (Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016). As a result of the 51 meals organized during Feasting for Change, three significant experiences were discussed as meaningful by participants: the revitalizing nature of the meal, the intergenerational exchange of information, and importance of community (Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016). Participants also voiced a desire to encourage group meals as a means for Elders to share their knowledge with youth and their community (Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016). While this project is not targeted at university students, there are still important aspects to consider within the context of this research study. For example, Feasting for Change was a good example of how participating in traditional food practices can have a positive impact on participants. Participants felt that the Feasting for Change meal allowed them to reconnect with their traditional foods, and ultimately their traditional values (Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016). While the Summer Institute participants did not necessarily practice ‘traditional food practices’, they were able to connect to culture in different ways, such as going on the land and participating in the medicine walk. Additionally, this project used the knowledge and expertise of a community working group, similar to the Summer Institute, as they used a working group to implement the program. Bagelman’s research included a diverse group of individuals, including Indigenous community members, health care professionals, community groups and students, who were involved in a community consultation to ensure various perspectives were considered during the planning process (Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016). The working group was based on the idea of reciprocity; therefore, ideas

could be shared, and opinions could be heard in a respectful manner (Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016).

In conclusion, a brief review of the literature has shown that there are several land-based initiatives across Canada that focus on Indigenous food systems, Indigenous food security and food sovereignty. Several programs and initiatives across the country are providing Indigenous populations with the opportunity to reconnect to their culture and traditional knowledges through food and land. In particular, there are a number of courses that are targeted for university students to learn about these concepts, and they provide young scholars with unique opportunities to explore and learn from the land alongside Elders and Knowledge-holders. However, at the time of the study, there were no such programs located within Mi'kma'ki, and there were very little, if any, initiatives that explored students' perspectives and experiences relating to Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS.

Chapter 3- Research Design and Research Methods

This chapter will provide an overview of the research approach and methods used to explore the experiences and perspectives of students who attended the Summer Institute. To begin, the research questions that guided this study will be introduced. This will be followed by a summary of my assumptions and worldview, the role of the researcher, the study design, research participants, data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations and dissemination.

Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative, descriptive research study was to explore following research questions:

What were the experiences and perspectives of student participants that attended a Summer Institute focused on Indigenous perspectives regarding land and food?

- i. How did students perceive the activities in which they engaged as shaping their understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty?
- ii. How do student attendees anticipate using Indigenous and Western knowledge systems collectively (i.e.: Two-Eyed Seeing) to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty into the future?

Worldview

As the primary researcher for this study, I have considered and applied a constructivist philosophical worldview to explore the research questions for this study. According to Berger and Luekmann (1967) and Lincoln and Guba (1985), the constructivist perspective offers an approach to qualitative research that reflects on socially constructed experiences; particularly how individuals construct their own

understandings and knowledge about the world through experience and reflection. In order to understand the cultural and historical experiences of individuals, one approach is a constructivist perspective, which aims to study the subjective experiences of individuals who have experienced similar events. As a result, researchers can view the complexity of the event through multiple perspectives, as there are multiple ways to understand the world, and consider how that event has influenced culture and history (Berger & Luekmann, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). By exploring the participants' experiences through a constructivist lens, I was able to learn more about how the participants' understandings about IFS were shaped by attending the Summer Institute. However, it also informed me about why these perspectives are important to be heard; the participants valued having meaningful discussions with one another about IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing during the focus groups and these perspectives should be shared broadly to inform others. The constructivist worldview also considers collaboration between participant and researcher; this collaboration allows participants to tell their stories while collectively constructing the knowledge (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The participants were able to bring their perspectives to the 'collective table' by sharing their stories during data collection. They brought varying levels of knowledge about the terms IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing; on one hand, there were participants who had never heard of IFS before, and on the other, there were participants who had been extremely aware of these concepts for several years. As the primary researcher, my perspectives and past experiences have also influenced what I brought to the 'collective table' and impacted the way in which I worked with the study participants to construct the knowledge. My educational training is in nutrition and dietetics and I am a Registered Dietitian, which has led me to becoming

eager to explore and understand experiences with eating and the overall connection to health and culture. Often, this training traditionally focuses on preparing individuals to practice in clinical settings, so this would have influenced the way I approached the study because I recognized that there is very little cultural content in how I have been educated to learn about food and this was something I wanted to explore further. Additionally, before attending the Summer Institute, I immersed myself in conducting literature reviews surrounding IFS, Two-Eyed Seeing, and land-based experiential learning opportunities focused on Indigenous food systems. I was extremely new to this topic of research and there was a lot that I didn't know, especially in relation to Mi'kmaq culture and the connections to food and land. I brought this small piece of knowledge to the 'collective table' to inform the way in which I analyzed the data by beginning to understand not only what is happening across Canada, but what is happening in Mi'kma'ki as well. I still do not consider myself an expert, and I feel that my knowledge will continue to expand throughout my life.

Additionally, when I was reflecting on how to collect information from the participants, and what to ask, the constructivist world view was considered; particularly in how the questions were posed to participants during data collection. Creswell (2014) argues that questions from a constructivist viewpoint should be open-ended, very broad and posed in a way to evoke critical thought. This will ensure that each participant can attempt to develop meaning to answer the question on their own, (Creswell, 2014). For this research study, a facilitation guide was developed with open-ended and broad questions for data collection (Appendix F) to ensure participants weren't limited in what they could share. Additionally, the main research questions for this study were intended

to be broad for the same reason; to be sure participants could share their experiences (whatever they may be) related to IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing.

Role of the Researcher

There have been numerous situations that have shaped my worldview as the researcher. However, I can say that my educational path to becoming a Registered Dietitian has greatly influenced how I view the world. From beginning my undergraduate degree in nutrition and dietetics, to finishing my dietetic practicum five years later, each step has had an impact on my worldview. As a dietitian, it is vital to understand that each person has their own individual relationship with food. Why an individual chooses a certain food is much more complex than it may seem, and often, their relationship with food is shaped by their culture and history. Because of this, I have shifted my way of thinking and I am very interested in learning about individual experiences with food and eating and how they are influenced by culture, experience and social context. Completing this research study will allow me to explore student experiences with food and eating, especially as it relates to perspectives about Indigenous food sovereignty after attending a Summer Institute focused on Mi'kmaq conceptualizations of land and food.

Additionally, it is important for myself, as the researcher, to recognize my own background and identify my privilege in relation to my worldview and this research study. I have recently learned in the past several years that I have Mi'kmaq heritage. While I do not identify as Indigenous, I have begun taking opportunities to participate and learn more about Indigenous values, beliefs, traditions and culture, with a focus on Mi'kmaq culture. This has led me to become extremely passionate about conducting research relating to Indigenous health, as well as studying the impacts of colonialism and

the health inequities faced by Indigenous populations across Canada. I do not consider myself an expert of Indigenous culture by any means. However, exploring the experiences and understandings of student participants that attended the Summer Institute has vastly increased my understanding about issues impacting Indigenous food systems. I am now able to critically reflect on these issues and consider how I can contribute to improving Indigenous food sovereignty.

Study Design

This research study applied a qualitative, descriptive approach to address and answer the research questions. According to Lambert and Lambert, “qualitative descriptive studies are a comprehensive summary, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals” (Lambert & Lambert, 2012, p. 255). Often qualitative research is viewed as ‘confusing’ because it is so broad and some think that without statistics and numbers, it can be interpreted differently by every individual (Kovach, 2009; Straus & Korb, 1998); however, it is an appropriate and valuable method to discover the perspectives, assumptions and experiences about an event, experience or phenomenon (Kim et al, 2016). A descriptive qualitative study was chosen to answer the research questions in an exploratory manner because the purpose of the study was to capture the unique perspectives of the students who attended the inaugural Summer Institute. In particular, how the students’ perceived the activities of the Summer Institute impacting their understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty and how, if at all, will they consider Two-Eyed Seeing moving forward was explored. Exploratory qualitative research does not attempt to make final conclusions about topics or issues, but instead allows the researcher to gain a better understanding of issues that are not clearly

defined (Dudovskiy, 2018). By considering semi-structured questions during data collection, it allowed the participants to openly discuss their perspectives while allowing the researcher to investigate those perspectives. Additionally, Rossman and Rallis have identified that 'qualitative research is quintessentially interactive' (2003, p.35) and that direct contact between the researcher and participants is essential; it allows participants to feel comfortable discussing complex issues if a relationship has been established with the researcher (Kovach, 2009; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This interactive nature between researcher and participant seemed to be achieved during this research study since I had spent a significant amount of time with the participants over the course of the week and had an opportunity to develop a rapport with them. Additionally, it appeared as if the participants were comfortable with one another as many opened up about somewhat sensitive topics during the focus group. This aligns with Kovach's (2009) view that the researcher is not a neutral aspect of the research process.

Research Participants

The population for this study consisted of student attendees of the 2018 Summer Institute in Mi'kma'ki, including post-secondary students (undergraduate, graduate and PhD) and early career researchers (within 5-7 years, post-PhD). Nine post-secondary students and early career researchers attended the Summer Institute, and all were invited to participate in this study. According to the literature, sample size for qualitative research, especially focus groups, usually falls within a minimum of 4 participants and a maximum of 12 participants (Carlsen & Glenton, 2011; Sergeant, 2012). During this research study, 7 students participated in the focus group and 2 individuals chose an interview. In the second stage, 3 students participated in the focus group and 1 individual

participated in an interview. While there were only 3 participants in the second focus group, which is lower than the typical features of a focus group, it was still a successful focus group.

Recruitment for this research study occurred at the Summer Institute once REB approval was received. The regional project coordinator, who was responsible for planning the Summer Institute in collaboration with a working group, provided information about the research study with participants during the welcome orientation on the first day. At this time, she informed all student attendees about the research study and data collection. She also provided informed consent forms to those who were interested in participating and encouraged students to reach out to me if they had any questions. A script was developed for the regional project coordinator to present the information to potential participants (Appendix A), and on the last day of the Summer Institute, all student attendees provided informed consent. An informed consent form (Appendix B and C) was given out and by signing, it was assumed that the student was consenting to participate in the research study.

Data Collection

On the last day of the Summer Institute, all student attendees were invited to participate in a semi-structured focus group. The purpose of this focus group was to explore the research questions and allow the students to collectively reflect on their experiences and perspectives during the Summer Institute, especially as they relate to Indigenous food sovereignty. According to Gill and Colleagues (2008), a focus group is a group discussion on a particular topic created for research purposes, and is led, observed and recorded by a researcher. Focus groups provide an opportunity to gather participants

perspectives and experiences and provide a space to discuss collective views (Gill et al., 2008). A focus group was chosen for this research study because in qualitative research, focus groups allow participants to discuss a particular concept while the researcher acts as a facilitator of the discussion. Although I referred to the methods used as ‘focus groups’, they were intended to be very open ended in order to encourage dialogue among participants, which is similar to how stories are shared among many Indigenous cultures, including Mi’kmaq. I posed very broad questions to the group to stimulate conversation but allowed the conversation to flow organically in order to hear their stories in the way they wanted to tell them. Acting as the facilitator also kept the participants on topic.

One focus group was held and included 7 participants (5 students and 2 early-career researchers). A facilitation guide (Appendix F) was used to help guide the discussion, the group was audio-recorded, and hand-written notes were taken. The focus group lasted approximately an hour and a half, and if students did not wish to participate, they had the choice to visit a local farmer’s market instead. If students were unable to attend the focus group but wished to participate in the research study, they were given the option to partake in a one-on-one interview instead. There were 2 participants who could not attend the focus group and their interviews took place one week after the Summer Institute via video-conference. The interviews used the same facilitation guide as the focus group, were audio-recorded, and hand-written notes were taken.

An initial analysis of all data collected from the first focus group and interviews resulted in the development of a summary report. This summary report (Appendix H) explores the key preliminary themes identified in the focus group and interviews as they related to the research questions. Approximately eight weeks after the Summer Institute,

this summary report was emailed to all participants of the research study and they were invited to contribute in a second focus group (or interview). This focus group was held via Zoom and both the summary report and a facilitation guide (see Appendix G) were used to guide the discussion. The purpose of the second focus group was to determine if the summary report accurately reflected the participant's experiences, and to provide the students with an opportunity to discuss additional reflections that may have been missed during the initial data collection. By conducting this focus group several weeks after the Summer Institute, it was anticipated that the participants would be able to reflect on their experiences in more depth, draw conclusions from their experiences, and discuss additional learnings with their peers. Three participants (2 students and 1 early-career researcher) were included in this focus group and it lasted approximately 40 minutes. The focus group was audio-recorded and hand-written notes were taken. Like the first stage of data collection, participants could choose to partake in an interview if they were unable to attend or felt more comfortable in a private setting. One participant could not attend the second focus group, so they opted for a telephone interview. The interview followed the same format as the focus group and used the summary report and facilitation guide to direct discussion.

As a component of the Summer Institute itself, all participants were encouraged to participate in comprehensive reflection throughout the five days. These reflective exercises were not mandatory and entirely based on the student's preference; reflections could have included photographs or journaling. The personal reflections were not intended to be shared with the researcher, but they were encouraged to bring their reflections to the focus group or interview. It was anticipated that the reflections would

evoke critical thought within the students and allow them to reflect on their experiences as they navigated through the Summer Institute. Reflection is one component of Kolb's experiential learning style theory, which is a model that was considered during some aspects of this research study. Kolb's experiential learning theory is based on the idea that engaging in new experiences influences our understanding of concepts and knowledges (Kolb, 1984). There are four components to Kolb's experiential learning theory; participating in a concrete experience, reviewing and reflecting on said experience, learning from the experience, and utilizing what was learned (Kolb, 1984). When pondering the 'reflective observation' stage of this model during the design of this study, it was anticipated that the students would engage in reflective exercises during the Summer Institute. That way, the participants could reflect on their experiences in order to effectively learn (Kolb, 1974). However, it is important to note that no study participants brought reflections to the focus group, which was the main source of data collection for this study. Kolb's experiential learning theory model was also reflected on when completing data analysis and will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

Additionally, 'Two-Eyed Seeing' was considered throughout data collection and can be connected to Kolb's experiential learning theory model. Elder Albert Marshall, who coined Two-Eyed Seeing, often discusses a concept called 'i'l'oqaptmu'k' which means "to revisit to renew, to maintain movement in the direction Spirit intended" (Marshall, 2017). The idea behind this is that you continually take what you have learned and use it to improve on how you move forward, which aligns very closely with Kolb's experiential learning model (that focuses on continual reflection). Elder Marshall considers 'i'l'oqaptmu'k' as the essence of a co-learning journey. Another key feature of

Two-Eyed Seeing that was considered during data collection was the importance of establishing a common language. At the start of the initial focus group, the researcher (myself) started a discussion to develop a common language; this included asking participants to define Indigenous food sovereignty and Two-Eyed Seeing. As Two-Eyed Seeing is guiding my learning journey, and the focus group included both Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals, it was imperative to establish a common ground before beginning. Elder Albert Marshall often discusses this when teaching others about Two-Eyed Seeing. He highlights that traditional knowledge is the collective consciousness of the people, and no one person ever has more than one piece of the collective knowledge (Integrative Science, 2013b). Establishing a common language for our focus group discussion was made much easier because we had already been discussing many of these concepts together throughout the week. The importance of diverse perspectives (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) during the focus groups contributed to a valuable co-learning journey.

Data Analysis

All data collected during this research study in the form of audio-recordings was analyzed using a qualitative thematic approach. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method that identifies patterns in data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). More specifically, its purpose is to identify common threads that occur among a group, or numerous groups, of people (DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000). This inductive approach allowed me to reflect on all the findings broadly to determine the key themes. It was anticipated that by analyzing the data thematically, several themes would be identified

that described the perspectives of student attendees regarding their experiences learning about IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing.

Braun and Clarke identified that there are several steps to conducting a qualitative thematic analysis including: familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the report (2006, p. 87). In the first step ‘familiarizing oneself with the data’, I collected all necessary information/data (audio-recordings from the focus group and interview) and began to transcribe, de-identify personal information, and organize the transcripts. These transcripts were reviewed several times in order to reflect on the conversations and to generate initial codes for the data; important features and potential themes that occurred throughout the focus groups were given labels and referred to as codes. These codes informed larger themes as all the data were being reviewed (Vaismoradi et al, 2013), which addressed and informed the research questions. To provide an example, one major theme identified in this research study was ‘Understanding and Critiquing IFS’ and a smaller category (code) that falls within that theme was: ‘a lack of understanding among mainstream society’. The themes generated by the initial analysis were continually reflected on throughout the analysis process, particularly when discussing them with participants during the second stage of data collection. As a result of the initial analysis, five key themes were identified that described the students’ perspectives and experiences after attending the Summer Institute as they related to IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing. These five major themes informed the development of the summary report that was discussed in the previous section and was used as a discussion tool during the second set of data collection. A similar process of data analysis occurred after the second set of focus

groups but was less complex; participants did not discuss new information during the second focus group or interview, so there was no new data to add to the existing analysis. However, participants did provide grammatical suggestions about the summary report and discussed their satisfaction with the preliminary themes. This second round of analysis ensured the summary report was the most accurate portrayal of the participant's perspectives by allowing them to review the results before they were made final. However, I decided to compress the five themes that the participants reviewed into two major themes. This occurred as a result of completing a further analysis of the themes and realizing that two, strong themes that encompass all of the findings expressed in the earlier iteration would convey the findings in a more meaningful and logical way. A final summary report with the two major themes will be sent to study participants when the thesis is submitted (Appendix I).

The concept of 'Two-Eyed Seeing' was a guiding principle used throughout the development and implementation of the Summer Institute, but also throughout the development of this research study. Therefore, I considered Two-Eyed Seeing when analyzing the information gathered during this study. This was accomplished by providing student participants the opportunity to reflect on the initial themes and provide feedback on their understanding of the findings. According to Margaret Kovach, Indigenous research must include some form of community accountability (Kovach, 2009, p 48). The research study did not explore events within a specific community; however, it can be said that the student attendees formed a community within the Summer Institute. It seemed that the discussions that took place during the Summer Institute brought the participants closer together by sharing common views and

experiences. At the end of the Summer Institute, many participants expressed their gratitude for the time spent together and reached out to one another to stay connected outside the Summer Institute. Additionally, in order to align with the values of Two-Eyed Seeing, it was important to consider both Indigenous and Western perspectives from the participants equitably when analyzing the findings from the focus groups and interviews. To attempt this, the researcher (myself who is non-Indigenous) analyzed the findings, prepared a summary report, and took it back to the student attendees (who were both Indigenous and non-Indigenous). During the second focus group, the participants were able to discuss whether the summary report was an accurate portrayal of their experiences and perspectives, and they provided input on how to improve the summary report. This process was chosen so that member-checking could exist between the myself as the researcher and study participants and to consciously consider both Indigenous and Western knowledges during the analysis. However, as a non-Indigenous researcher, the extent in which one can consider Two-Eyed Seeing is limited; Two-Eyed Seeing is not something that I have reflected on throughout life. Nonetheless, being non-Indigenous does not mean that that Two-Eyed Seeing cannot be considered at all, especially when working with Indigenous populations. It was important as a non-Indigenous researcher to establish common ground with Indigenous participants and work together to ensure both Indigenous knowledges and Western knowledges were viewed together throughout the study.

Ethical Considerations

It is important to be mindful of ethical issues when conducting research with all populations; however, the specific ethical considerations when conducting research with,

on, or about Mi'kmaq, or other Indigenous populations, is especially important to consider. According to Ermine et al (2014), health research conducted with Indigenous populations should be respectful and responsive to the population it is studying, identify and/or address inequities of power, and produce information that is relevant to the needs of the community. Historically, research conducted within Indigenous communities has been intrusive and unethical, and there is a definite lack of trust between Indigenous populations and researchers (Ermine et al., 2004). For the purpose of this study, it was essential that I was aware of Mi'kmaq customs, traditions, values and beliefs to collect data in a respectful and culturally appropriate manner. During this research study, I established an interpersonal relationship with the study participants; this ensured that research was conducted in a respectful manner and that the information provided by the participants is what they intended to share (Ermine et al., 2004). Additionally, the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS) indicates that researchers must seek community engagement when research is being conducted in an Indigenous community and when the research is very likely to influence the welfare of the Indigenous community, or communities, to which the participants belong (TCPS, 2014). However, for the purpose of this study, our participants belonged to many diverse communities across Nova Scotia (and across Canada) and statements made by the participants were not specific to any community. Instead, they provided broad perspectives and opinions about IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing. Therefore, local community engagement and permission was not required nor sought for this research study. However, ethical approval was sought and provided by Dalhousie Health Research Ethics Board and Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch at Unama'ki College, Cape Breton University.

In addition to being considerate about the culture and population being studied, it was important to be mindful about potential ethical dilemmas that occur during the research process such as: privacy and anonymity, confidentiality, risks and benefits, dissemination of results, and potential conflicts of interest.

Regarding privacy and anonymity, student participants were informed during the consent process that keeping participant identity confidential was not guaranteed. Students who attended the Summer Institute may be named on the event host's website or in social media posts that highlight the Summer Institute. There were 9 student attendees of the Summer Institute, and they all agreed to participate in the research study, so it would not be difficult to determine who the participants were, especially considering this was the only Summer Institute held in Mi'kma'ki in August. Therefore, it is impossible to be confident that the participants' identities would remain confidential. Student attendees' names are not acknowledged or identified in relation to this research study, including in this written thesis or any future publications. All information provided during the focus groups and interviews was de-identified and no personal information or names were associated with the collected data. This will ensure that when the results are shared more broadly, it will be difficult, but not impossible, to connect the findings to individual participants. Quotes have been used throughout this document, but they are not identifiable. Additionally, the name of the Summer Institute and who hosted the event is hidden throughout this thesis and when presenting the findings. However, the data collected during the focus groups and interviews was kept confidential and secure. All personal information provided during data collection was de-identified during analysis to ensure there was no way to connect the information to specific individuals. Once the

focus groups and interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, they were deleted. Only the primary researcher (I) have access to the collected raw data, transcripts and consent forms and they are kept on an external hard-drive and stored in a locked and safe location. Additionally, it is important to note that the I sought permission from the Summer Institute's facilitators in order to name them throughout this thesis. This occurred during data analysis when it was obvious that the facilitator's activities had resonated with the study participants.

Participants were unlikely to incur any associated costs or expenses to participate in this research study. The initial focus groups and interviews took place during the Summer Institute, and the second focus group/interviews were held via video-conference and did not require special travel and/or accommodation costs. A thank-you card was sent to all participants at the end of the research study.

When considering the risks and benefits, it can be said that this research study was considered minimal risk, meaning that the likelihood of harms associated with participating are no greater than those encountered by participants in everyday life (TCPS, 2014). This study consisted of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants, and each group may have been exposed to different risks. In the past, Indigenous populations, including Mi'kmaq, have been exposed to unethical situations in research, which make them a particularly vulnerable study population. However, the scope of this research was not anticipated to expose this population or their community to any risks. During this study, Indigenous participants discussed issues that are directly related to them, and these issues could potentially influence their everyday lives. Non-Indigenous participants may have also experienced risks while participating. It was predicted that

non-Indigenous participants may experience colonial guilt, especially when learning about the impacts of colonialism on Indigenous populations. These individuals may have felt uncomfortable having these discussions with their Indigenous peers.

Finally, the last potential ethical issue that could have occurred during this research study is a conflict of interest. I (Megan Matthews) am the primary researcher for this study. I was also hired as a Research Assistant to help plan and implement the Summer Institute, and I attended as a student learner. Some individuals may view this relationship as a conflict of interest. However, I believe that this is the nature of a qualitative study and being involved in various aspects of the Summer Institute supported and informed the findings. In order to decrease the potential for undue influence, both real and perceived, the following three steps were conducted. First, I did not conduct recruitment for the research study. Instead, the regional project coordinator of the event introduced the research study and recruited potential participants. Secondly, the initial focus group was not imbedded into the Summer Institute's itinerary, and activities were available to those who did not want to participate. Students could visit the Antigonish Farmer's Market or watch the video "Feast of Forgiveness" during the focus group session. Finally, I (the researcher) clearly explained my triple role as a student, research assistant and learner with Summer Institute to all student attendees and potential participants. I was very clear that participation in the research study is completely voluntary and not at all associated with their participation in the Summer Institute.

Dissemination

In order to meet the TCPS2 guidelines and share the research study results with the participants, I have planned several methods to disseminate my results. To begin, I

will be developing a thesis manuscript for my MA Health Promotion degree requirements. This will be published in a scientific journal and can be reviewed by health professionals, researchers or other individuals working with Indigenous populations. The preliminary results were also presented at various academic conferences, including the 16th Annual Dalhousie Crossroads Interdisciplinary Health Research Conference (held in March 2018 in Halifax, NS) and the 8th International Conference on Food Studies (held in October 2018 in Vancouver, British Columbia). To present my initial findings to the student participants, I created a one-page summary report that described the key findings from the study. This report was emailed to all participants and used as a discussion tool for the second focus group/interview. A final summary report will be created after the thesis is submitted and will be disseminated to all participants and members of the Summer Institute working group. Finally, I will be presenting my findings to the Summer Institute organizers to provide them with useful information on the significance of the research study, and if any of the findings can be used in a way to improve the program. Student attendees will be encouraged to attend this presentation.

Chapter 4 – Results

This chapter will discuss the two main research themes identified from the focus group and interview transcripts. These themes are ‘Understanding and Critiquing Indigenous food sovereignty’, and ‘Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen understandings of Indigenous food sovereignty’. As a reminder, the purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and perspectives of students who attended the Summer Institute. Particularly, how the activities of the Summer Institute may have shaped their understanding of IFS, and how they may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues related to IFS into the future. Study participants identified that by attending the Summer Institute, they were able to better understand and critique IFS. These conversations created a comfortable environment for participants to consider the Mi’kmaq concept of ‘Two-Eyed Seeing’ as a potential means to not only deepen their own understandings of IFS, but also as a way to share their new knowledge with others. Throughout this chapter, quotes from study participants will be labelled as either ‘S’ for *student* or ‘ER’ for *early-career researcher*. I will also identify the participant as *Indigenous* or *non-Indigenous* to provide more context.

Theme 1: Understanding and Critiquing Indigenous Food Sovereignty

By attending the Summer Institute, participants identified that they were able to gain a deeper understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty. Participants came to the Summer Institute with varying levels of knowledge, understanding and awareness about the concept of IFS. For many, they heard the concept before but never had the opportunity to explore it in-depth with other academics and/or colleagues. There were

also several participants who were not familiar with the concept of IFS until attending the Summer Institute.

At the beginning of the initial focus group or interview, I asked study participants how they would describe IFS to establish a common meaning. There was some diversity in the participant's definitions; for example, participants identified at the beginning of data collection that each individual brings their own story and experiences when defining concepts such as IFS. However, there were three common elements that linked their varying definitions. The first among these definitions included the idea that IFS goes beyond the consumption of traditional Indigenous food and considers the connection between food, ceremony and culture. This was raised by one participant during the focus group:

“Going beyond food consumption. So, I would consider food sovereignty or the management of living food to be related to ceremonial practices as well, and to go just beyond that.... and everything that comes along with the cultivation of food and animals as well” (ER, Indigenous).

This participant viewed IFS as a wholistic way to consider not just how we consume traditional foods, but how living food (including traditional plants and animals) is managed and sustained through ceremonial practices and culture. During the Summer Institute, several of the facilitators discussed how ceremony is often incorporated into traditional food practices in Indigenous communities; this participant may now consider ceremony as a key component of IFS as a result of attending the Summer Institute.

In addition to ceremony, another important element of IFS identified by study participants is the awareness and utilization of Indigenous land rights, especially as they

relate to the hunting, fishing and harvesting of traditional foods. One participant highlighted their perspective during the focus group:

“So, I think that is a big part of food sovereignty as well...So its not so much entitlement but understanding why these people... us... why we have these rights to fishing and hunting and understanding the importance of it” (S, Indigenous).

The importance of Indigenous land rights was raised several times during the focus group and participants identified that the ability to understand these rights is key to understanding IFS. However, they believe there is not enough understanding and awareness about these important land rights among non-Indigenous individuals. Participants identified that it is vital to spread awareness about Indigenous land rights that impact food. They feel this will help others understand what IFS seeks to achieve.

The final common element of IFS described by study participants is self-governance. Participants identified that a key aspect of achieving IFS is providing Indigenous peoples with the opportunity to have a say in their food system. One participant described IFS as *“having control over food and resources from an Indigenous perspective”* (S, Indigenous). Another indicated, *“there is a political aspect to it as well. So, I think of that more as, you have access to food and on top of that, you have the ability to govern those food sources”*(S, Indigenous). These participants felt that Indigenous peoples should have the capacity to control their own food system; if they did, they would have the ability to determine how their traditional lands are used and what they would be used for. Even though aspects of ceremony, land rights and self-governance were weaved throughout the definitions provided by participants, each individual brought their own experiences and perspectives to the conversation on what they think IFS is and what it seeks to achieve. For example, one participant highlighted

the difficulty of coming to a common definition for IFS, *“I still think that if I’ve learned anything this week, its that like, we’re probably not going to come to one....like we all take our own meaning for those terms”* (S, Indigenous). When this comment was made during the focus group, echoes of agreement were heard among all participants.

While the Summer Institute provided participants with the opportunity to describe their own perspectives about what IFS is, it also allowed them to critique and critically discuss the concept with others. At this time, the study participants identified potential concerns relating to how IFS is understood and described. This included a lack of understanding among Western society about IFS, as well as the problematic Westernized language used to describe IFS. To begin, participants believe there is a lack of understanding among Western society when it comes to Indigenous cultures, and Mi’kmaq culture specifically. They believe this is especially true when considering the values, beliefs and traditions that Indigenous groups (particularly Mi’kmaq) hold around land and food. For example, one participant, who was non-Indigenous, felt that many non-Indigenous peoples often do not understand how food is connected to many aspects of health, such as spiritual and mental wellbeing:

“What non-Indigenous people don’t realize is the connection that food has to all the aspects of spiritual, mental, and community well-being, and, it’s to raise awareness to that issue, that there is a connection with all the elements, they are all woven together” (S, non-Indigenous).

The understanding that food is connected to Indigenous values, beliefs, and culture is something that many Indigenous peoples have always understood; Mi’kmaq traditional knowledge emphasizes the spiritual and cultural connection with the land (including food from plants and animals) as central to health and well-being. However, participants

identified that one may encounter barriers when trying to communicate Indigenous values and beliefs surrounding land and food. For example, one participant indicated:

“As soon as you try and communicat[e] that to some elements of the mainstream, you know, I mean you come upon barriers and that could be whether you’re dealing with funding agencies, or peers, or colleagues, whatever, it’s like, you know, that can be a bit of a struggle, helping people to understand that wholistic nature of food and food consumption” (S, non-Indigenous).

This idea was echoed by another participant, who identified that bringing up the ‘spiritual’ is often a barrier:

“The spiritual just isn’t there. Spiritual is not... we don’t...we can’t even find it, we bring it in... its even, uh, you avoid... you’re suppose to just avoid it at all costs, right? Because its going to delegitimize everything you’ve done, if you start talking and bringing in the spiritual...And so, I think that really challenges us, to be students and to be teachers, and to be academics and to be scholars and to be researchers, having the spirit first and foremost and the piece that is central to everything, like that’s hard to do” (S, Indigenous).

These conversations signify that participants are frustrated by the lack of understanding among non-Indigenous people, as well as broader systems in which these mindsets have continued to dominate. It is obvious that they may have experienced barriers when trying to discuss the spiritual aspects of food with others, and it is unfortunate that they feel the need to avoid discussing their values and beliefs related to IFS with the fear that their knowledge will be delegitimized. One participant highlighted that an important component of IFS should be to increase understanding of Indigenous values around land and food among non-Indigenous individuals:

“I think it [Indigenous food sovereignty] is more than just, you know, Indigenous people governing how resources are allocated and how resources are used. I think it’s having people outside Indigenous communities understand that as well, and being understanding of why that is... because I think there is a lot of...you know, Indigenous people having these rights and stuff, and people not understanding it, and that’s a really big part of Indigenous food sovereignty, is making sure that its not just Indigenous people who are, you know, understanding what it means” (S, non-Indigenous).

In addition to identifying a lack of understanding among Western society, participants also discussed the problematic language often used to describe IFS, which is used by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals throughout academia. For example, several participants felt that the word ‘sovereignty’ itself may be a bit problematic to use in the context of IFS. One participant indicated:

“When you think about ‘sovereignty’ and ‘security’, like that has a certain... like there is...it is coming from a certain worldview, and a certain place, and it’s uh, militaristic, it’s western, and I mean you know, what does that...how does that frame our...how does that influence our thinking about food and about food systems when we use words like that?” (S, non-Indigenous).

This uncertainty about the using the term ‘sovereignty’ was echoed by another participant:

“I remember that was really big back in the day... the “are we going to talk about food security” and “what is food sovereignty”... and its such a, it puts me in such a contradiction, cause I have issues with even the whole concept of sovereignty...I am not sure if everybody would agree with that but I’m almost afraid that, there, um, food sovereignty is becoming such a buzzword (ER, Indigenous).

Both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants agreed with one another that they fear the term Indigenous food sovereignty is at risk of becoming a buzzword, especially considering the lack of understanding about what the term actually means among non-Indigenous individuals. Participants felt that this risk is emphasized when Western terms are used to describe Indigenous concepts, such as using the word ‘sovereignty’ within the concept ‘Indigenous food sovereignty’. This could be because the word ‘sovereignty’ has been historically defined to represent authority and power. These discussions between participants highlighted the reality of how these concepts are being utilized and considered, especially in academia. This seemed to contribute to Indigenous participants sharing their own personal experiences with IFS, particularly how they often feel disconnected from their own Indigenous cultures, which is similarly identified throughout the literature (Frideres, 2008; Julian, 2016b; Pearce & Coholic, 2013; Wittman, Desmarais & Wiebe, 2010). This was extremely upsetting to a few Indigenous participants as they felt being connected to their culture was very important. This disconnection was especially evident when they were learning from Mi’kmaq Elders, Knowledge-keepers and academics, whom they deemed as culturally and spiritually connected. One Indigenous participant identified their experience feeling disconnected after hearing from some of the facilitators: *“They made more of that connection of bringing people to the land, and I felt like, they were very much connected. They had a strong identity, and I don’t feel that. I sometimes feel disconnected...”* (ER, Indigenous). A second participant, who also is Indigenous, echoed these views of disconnect, while discussing how they are always expected to be connected to culture:

“For a lot of my life, there has been the expectation that like, “I’m the brown skin one in the room, I’m supposed to know the most, be the most spiritual”, and

there's that, pressure to seem connected even if you don't truly feel that full connection that you crave and need, and its taken me so long to realize and understand that its okay to not feel it yet because that process can take years, and it can take your whole life" (S, Indigenous).

It is important to highlight that the study participants may not have had the opportunity to discuss their personal perspectives relating to IFS and critique the concept with others if not for the activities of the Summer Institute. Therefore, it seems that the participants felt it was important to discuss these concepts with one another in order to learn more about them and share their knowledge with others. Additionally, the critical discussions and engaging activities of the Summer Institute allowed participants to begin contemplating how they may use Mi'kmaq ways of being, knowing and doing to deepen their understanding of IFS. In particular, the participants reflected on the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing, which was a key learning objective of the Summer Institute, and they pondered how it could be used as a tool to deepen their own understanding of IFS. If we know that IFS must consider Indigenous values and beliefs, Two-Eyed Seeing is one way to begin considering these issues; by viewing the best knowledges from the Indigenous and Western perspectives.

Theme 2: Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen understandings of Indigenous food sovereignty

By attending the Summer Institute, it seemed that participants began to view Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen their understandings of Indigenous food sovereignty. The participants perspectives outlined in the previous theme highlights that the current scope and use of IFS is not without its critiques. This can be evidenced by the participants' discussions about the lack of awareness regarding Indigenous knowledges

and the problematic language used to describe these terms; some participants identified feelings of disconnect from their culture as a result. However, by attending the Summer Institute, it seemed that the participants began to consider IFS from a different perspective; particularly, by considering Two-Eyed Seeing as a way to approach issues impacting IFS. The activities of the Summer Institute provided participants with the chance to explore what Two-Eyed Seeing is, critique the current use of Two-Eyed Seeing within academia, and learn about its intended use from those who use Two-Eyed Seeing. Lastly, participants discussed how they hope to use Two-Eyed Seeing moving forward. Many indicated the need for continued, critical reflection to grasp how their understandings of Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS have evolved. However, several participants provided insight on how they believe Two-Eyed Seeing should be utilized when we think about issues impacting IFS.

Understanding and Critiquing Two-Eyed Seeing

During the initial focus group or interview, the participants were asked to describe Two-Eyed Seeing and provide their perspectives on the concept. A common thread identified among most participants was that Two-Eyed Seeing considers two different perspectives:

“Two-Eyed Seeing is trying to see something from two different perspectives; the Indigenous perspective and non-Indigenous perspective...and kind of seeing it from two different worlds, I guess...whatever it may be... Multiple perspectives as a whole.” (S, Indigenous).

Another common thread among participants was that that Two-Eyed Seeing is something they consider to be understood, at least to some extent, by many Indigenous peoples,

although they may have a different term for it, or no term at all. Yet, the meaning behind the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing seems to resonate across diverse Indigenous cultures.

One Indigenous participant highlighted their perspective on Two-Eyed Seeing:

“Two-Eyed Seeing is something that is within me, and something that is guiding me, as opposed to something that is telling me what is right and what is wrong in some sense, cause I’m exploring and I will figure out what is right and what is wrong, and I believe that Two-Eyed Seeing sort of guides someone and pushes someone to maybe continue to be a learner, to be a life-long learner” (ER, Indigenous).

Regardless of these common definitions, participants seemed to have varying levels of knowledge about Two-Eyed Seeing before attending the Summer Institute. For some, the Summer Institute was the first occasion where they heard about or discussed Two-Eyed Seeing with others. As an example, one participant had never heard Mi’kmaw Elder Albert Marshall speak about Two-Eyed Seeing until attending,

“...The Summer Institute definitely gave me more perspective on it [Two-Eyed Seeing] I think. It was nice to hear Albert speak about it, and because I haven’t had a chance to really hear him speak much about it before. So, that was really great” (S, Indigenous).

For others, understanding Two-Eyed Seeing has been a life-long learning journey that has influenced their every day lives,

“I’ve read articles about it, I’ve heard people speak about it before, and heard Elder Albert Marshall speak of it before, and once again though... being here at this conference... I’ve got another deeper meaning and understanding of it [Two-Eyed Seeing] so that tells me that it’s going to continue for me. The more I engage with it, the more I read about it, talk about it, sit with it... You know?,

So..., I guess being here at this conference... that was my first time I realized that oh, this is... this is really, really deep and comprehensive...”(S, Indigenous)

Additionally, one study participant who is Mi’kmaq, discussed their perspective of Two-Eyed Seeing in their everyday life:

“I definitely always had Two-Eyed Seeing in my life and I definitely will have it for the rest of my life because I am a Mi’kmaw person but I am also...like I go to school off the Mi’kmaq community and it’s kind of just been that way my whole life, kind of seeing the both worlds...seeing it from two different perspectives... So yeah, I’m definitely going to keep using it because I have to...” (S, Indigenous).

These findings signify the complexity of understanding and utilizing Two-Eyed Seeing in practice. Each individual who attended the Summer Institute came with different experiences, perspectives and knowledges about the concept. Yet, each individual identified that they learned something new by attending. This shows that by attending the Summer Institute, participants gained a deeper perspective about what Two-Eyed Seeing is and it provided them with the space to begin viewing issues from both the Indigenous and Western perspectives. These findings are extremely important because it demonstrates that the activities of the Summer Institute provided participants with the opportunity for something greater than just learning something new; it seems as if they embarked on a co-learning journey with one another as they not only learned from one another but learned new things together. It also appears as if the Summer Institute allowed participants to begin understanding the potential of Two-Eyed Seeing when thinking about issues that impact IFS. One participant discussed how the Summer Institute convinced them that Two-Eyed Seeing is a way to consider issues, especially those related to food and land, as we move forward:

“Here in this time and place, I now [have] become convinced and that’s new for me to be convinced, that this is the way forward... this is the way that everything will come together” (S, Indigenous).

As the main focus of the Summer Institute was on Mi’kmaq conceptualizations of land and food, discussions during the focus group and interviews surrounded how participants could begin considering Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to address issues that impact IFS after hearing from a number of facilitators who are currently doing that work. However, in addition to discussing this potential, participants also discussed their critiques about the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing, especially as it relates to the potential improper use of the term within academia. One participant, who is Indigenous, discussed their experiences with Two-Eyed Seeing within an academic setting:

“Indigenous people also in the academic world have become disconnected from what Two-Eyed Seeing actually really means and have attached new language to it in order for academia to understand it and for them to be able to place it somewhere, when that’s actually not what it’s meant to be. So, when you read the literature, you’re reading how people are using Two-Eyed Seeing and I look at the authors and I see Indigenous authors, and I’m like, “this is not what was meant, and you know, Albert [who coined Two-Eyed Seeing], he is very aware of that... that people are trying to move the concept forward to better understand it and to share it widely, but what they’re doing, what they are moving forward is...they’re also taking steps backwards” (ER, Indigenous).

Participants’ have witnessed both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people using Two-Eyed Seeing in their work, whether that is in academia or not, and have indicated that in order to move the concept further along and have more people (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) understand its meaning, we should let those individuals understand it the best

way they can and learn from their mistakes. This was reiterated by a participant in the focus group:

“Indigenous people all over the world have a perspective on Two Eyed Seeing but they don’t call it Two-Eyed Seeing...but its values, its something that’s deeper than a methodology...it’s even deeper than that because they are putting it within an academic context and they may not necessarily fit there and so, It’s up to us to kind of move that forward and to understand that people are going to try to figure out how to categorize it and then they are going to start to find deeper meaning in it, and that’s you know, you always make mistakes in the beginning, and then you grow from those mistakes, and then you, things get better from there on” (ER, Indigenous).

This experience seemed to resonate with other participants; at this point in the focus group, many other participants echoed in agreement when the participant was speaking. Additionally, participants were amazed that people need a label in order to understand the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing. This was highlighted from one Indigenous participant’s perspective:

“It’s kind of funny for me because... when we started here, I only heard Two-Eyed Seeing as a buzzword and I wasn’t particularly impressed. It was like, “no duh, we’ve been dealing with... like on this coast... we’ve been dealing with settlers for like, 500 years now”, and it was like baffling to me to be like, “how could you not know...you know...that there is kind of two different cultural perspectives...” (S, Indigenous).

Another participant identified a lukewarm reception to the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing with another First Nations group in Canada:

“I noticed this in some of my work, in [Place], I brought up Two-Eyed Seeing with some of the Haudenosaunee Elders that I work with and there has been a

really lukewarm reception, and I wonder, I didn't really get a chance to dig into that in order to talk to them about that, and I wonder if its because.... maybe there's some kind of misinterpretation..." (S, non-Indigenous).

This experience was surprising to me, and there could be many reasons why the Haudenosaunee Elders had a lukewarm reception to the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing. For example, there may be a lack of understanding behind what Two-Eyed Seeing seeks to achieve; particularly, by labelling this concept as Two-Eyed Seeing, it may have resulted in the concept being interpreted incorrectly or losing its significance over time. Additionally, Two-Eyed Seeing was identified and created in Mi'kmaq'i; even though both the Mi'kmaq and Haudenosaunee are First Nations groups, they are extremely diverse and have different ways of being, knowing and doing. There may be a potential resistance to using a concept developed by Mi'kmaq within a Haudenosaunee context. Another participant outlined their experience and critiques with Two-Eyed Seeing; they focused on how Two-Eyed Seeing should be used and how it is currently used when considering traditional ecological knowledge and environmental assessments:

"It's so problematic now that if you look at every environmental assessment for every development project, whether it is mining, or particularly in the resource extraction industry, there is a TEK [Traditional Ecological Knowledge] or MEK [Mi'kmaq Ecological Knowledge] ... beautiful knowledge... I go in there and wouldn't believe the history, particularly that our own people do that, however, it has become...abused in terms of a check-mark that we consulted with these people, we had a TEK, and it just doesn't seem to have... it seems to be delegitimized and it just doesn't seem to matter anymore" (ER, Indigenous).

This participant fears that non-Indigenous organizations who conduct environmental assessments for development projects may not be considering traditional ecological

knowledges in the way they should. Instead, they felt that often these knowledges are viewed as just a ‘checkmark’ on a list, and people are not actually taking the knowledges into consideration. When we connect this back to the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing, it seems that they feel the Western, scientific eye is being favoured rather than both traditional knowledges and western knowledges being viewed and utilized equally, which was something the participant’s highlighted learning about at the Summer Institute. This fear stemmed from the participant’s personal experiences working in the area; this example could be related back to a long history of environmental dispossession and a lack of acknowledgment about traditional knowledges. Despite their concerns about *how* it may be used, it appears that the study participants see the value in utilizing Two-Eyed Seeing, especially when we consider the issues that impact Indigenous food and culture. The participant quoted above saw the value of Mi’kmaq Ecological Knowledge being considered (and privileged when necessary) to Western, scientific knowledge about the environment throughout environmental assessments on traditional lands. Based on this participant’s opinion and experience in the area, the fear of traditional ecological knowledge not being used the way it should must be acknowledged.

Additionally, there are two concepts that are often used when discussing both Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS that participants identified and critiqued during data collection. Specifically, participants highlighted the terms ‘decolonization’ and ‘Indigenization’ and how they have been used within the context of IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing. Participants discussed that a general lack of understanding about traditional Indigenous knowledge was a barrier in understanding and achieving IFS. The concepts of ‘decolonization’ and ‘indigenization’ are integral to understanding Indigenous

knowledges, so it is not surprising that participants identified the importance of ensuring that these concepts are not just ‘buzzwords’ but are actually utilized in meaningful ways that consider Indigenous perspectives. This was highlighted by one participant:

“I’ve just heard Indigenizing so many times, I kind of like, I was having a hard time really, you know, having it click with me. Cause I was like, how, I don’t understand how this can happen, how can we Indigenize the academy...” (S, Indigenous).

Two-Eyed Seeing offers a way to increase understanding of these concepts; by considering the Indigenous perspective, focus should begin on decolonizing the settings that have been built by colonial practices and ideas, and then beginning to Indigenize those settings. Participants broadly discussed the meaning that is often ascribed to both terms and it allowed them to critically reflect on the language often used to describe Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing. In summary, the study participants believe in the potential for Two-Eyed Seeing to be used to as a means to deepen understandings of IFS. However, discussing Two-Eyed Seeing does not come without potential issues and/or critiques about the current use of the concept.

Two-Eyed Seeing and Indigenous Food Sovereignty in Mi’kma’ki

The participants ability to discuss and critique Two-Eyed Seeing identified during data collection provides some indication that attending the Summer Institute shaped their understandings of IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing. The study participants highlighted specific activities during data collection that resonated with them or uniquely impacted their understandings. These activities included critical discussions with Mi’kmaw Elder Albert Marshall, as well as presentations by three Mi’kmaq scholars highlighting what they are doing to address Indigenous food issues in Mi’kma’ki. Each facilitator discussed their

programs or areas of expertise and how each reflect IFS in different ways. Additionally, each facilitator discussed how Two-Eyed Seeing influences their work. Participants indicated that they valued learning about Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS during the Summer Institute, especially during these activities, as it showed them different ways one can address IFS issues and understand how to work towards achieving IFS.

The first aspect of the Summer Institute that participants identified as extremely valuable to understanding Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS was spending time with Mi'kmaw Elder Albert Marshall. Participants felt that learning from Elder Marshall influenced their understanding of the concepts, and they appreciated that he spent the time to discuss his own experiences with Two-Eyed Seeing while encouraging everyone to explore and critique their own perspectives. For some individuals, this was the first time they heard Elder Marshall speak in person. As mentioned above, one participant identified that learning about Two-Eyed Seeing from Albert allowed them to understand the concept better (p.66). Other participants commented on how they knew about the concept before or spent time with him previously. However, they indicated that by attending the Summer Institute and hearing him speak about Two-Eyed Seeing again, it allowed their understanding to deepen and evolve. For one participant, he reminded them that Two-Eyed Seeing uses the best of 'two worlds':

"I think what Albert was bringing to the table the other day is that we have to legitimize that [Two-Eyed Seeing], and [determine] what is the best out of two worlds, and if you look at two eyes if you look at the Indigenous perspective, and the relational perspective to the land, hopefully that will inform the other side [of] the coin" (ER, Indigenous).

Another participant identified that Elder Albert Marshall taught them to see both ‘sides’ as equal:

“I feel like I had some background knowledge a little bit, but I feel like I’ve learned a lot too at the same time. Especially with like... especially with the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing. I think it was...I think it was Albert that said, Two-Eyed Seeing is kind of seeing from both sides but seeing it as equal. Because, when I thought about Two-Eyed Seeing before, I didn’t think about both sides being treated equally, like the both sides were there, but when he said that... it kind of changed the whole outlook on it for me” (S, Indigenous).

It is obvious that many of the participants gained a deeper understanding of what is intended by Two-Eyed Seeing, especially when learning about it from this Elder Albert Marshall. It seems that as a result of attending, they have realized that Two-Eyed Seeing is more than just a research methodology and should be viewed as a potential way to address issues impacting IFS by considering the best of traditional and scientific knowledges within the context of the issue that is being faced.

Study participants reflected on three specific activities that occurred during the Summer Institute that highlighted how Two-Eyed Seeing is applied in the real-world to address issues impacting IFS. These activities allowed the students to critically reflect on what is being done in Mi’kma’ki (and Eastern Canada) to re/connect Indigenous populations back to their traditional culture through food.

The first activity that resonated with participants was a presentation focused on the Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) Moose Management Initiative in Mi’kma’ki, and the Mi’kmaq concept of *Netukulimk*. In short, ‘*Netukulimk*’ is the “utilization of resources provided by the Creator in a way that is honourable, sustainable, support’s individual and community wellbeing, and protects our resources for future

generations” (Prosper et al., 2011). The facilitator of the activity, Clifford Paul, discussed with students the role of *Netukulimk* in the moose management plan for Unama’ki and connected it back to IFS. The moose management plan is Two-Eyed Seeing in action; by considering the best knowledges about moose management from both the Mi’kmaq and Western perspectives and viewing both perspectives alongside one another. The participants valued learning about the history of the moose from Clifford as it helped students understand IFS through a practical example of an issue impacting Mi’kma’ki. Students were particularly intrigued by learning about how the Mi’kmaq relationship with the moose became disconnected as a result of colonial policy. One participant, who is Mi’kmaq, identified their personal perspectives about losing access to this traditional food:

“One of the fundamental things that you need to understand about moose is it always wasn’t that way. In like the 1980s, it took a massive protest and about 14 Mi’kmaw getting arrested before... because what they wanted to do in Nova Scotia when we are talking about our treaty rights... they wanted to put a draw... and what do you call them like a moose lottery draw? By the way the sport hunters do it... and the Mi’kmaq that participated in that draw...they said no, this is our way of life..... I wish my grandmother lived to see some of the fish species and some of the... moose come back..... and she never got to witness that. She, she... you know...they lost access to that food...” (ER, Indigenous).

This participant highlighted the Mi’kmaq’s history with the moose over the last few decades. To provide some context, moose were viewed as an important source of food and held cultural significance for the Mi’kmaq for many years preceding European contact. However, the arrival of Europeans resulted in a drastic decline of the moose population in Unama’ki; particularly, the moose hides were viewed as an important

commodity for Europeans to trade. Additionally, the sport draw for moose (which is still continuing today and is open to non-Indigenous individuals) has resulted in increased poaching and individuals participating who should not be. The study participant discussed the negative feelings that were brought up when someone suggested a sport lottery for Mi'kmaq, similarly to what is done for non-Indigenous hunters. They felt that this goes against the Mi'kmaq way of life. During the Summer Institute, Clifford discussed what the program seeks to achieve in regard to re/connecting Indigenous populations back to moose and moose meat. This included discussing how they educate individuals about sustainable and traditional hunting practices, especially with Indigenous youth, and how they mentor them during an annual moose hunt. A participant discussed their take-away from learning about this program:

“I already knew this [UINR Moose Management Initiative] but I felt blown away. I just forget about stuff like that... when he was talking about how there are all these hunters and they are anonymously going out and getting moose and then distributing it to all these communities” (S, Indigenous).

This participant was discussing a story that Clifford told the Summer Institute participants during the presentation. He identified that during the annual moose hunt within the program, all of the moose meat is harvested and delivered to Mi'kmaw communities across Unama'ki and Mi'kma'ki. This story was extremely impactful to many of the several participants because it showed that this program is re/connecting Mi'kmaq peoples back to a traditional food that was once so dominant in Mi'kmaq culture. Participants also discussed that Clifford helped them understand how *Netukulimk* is a key component of IFS, especially when we think about the moose management program:

“S: I think that, just his [Clifford] stories about, um, promoting traditional and sustainable ways of moose hunting to youth and people that, you know, sometimes might not be doing it the sustainable and traditional way. I think that’s really important to talk about and understand those two different sides to this, and he’s kind of advocating for the sustainable and... I can’t remember the Mi’kmaq word for it, but it starts with an N...

I: Netukulimk?

S: Yeah... I thought that was important to talk about and I think that that has a big role in Indigenous food sovereignty...” (S, Indigenous).

It was obvious to the participants that this program is working towards re-establishing the relationship between Mi’kmaq and the moose population. Participants felt that re/connecting Indigenous populations back to their traditional foods and practices was extremely important when we think about IFS, and Clifford showed the participants how Two-Eyed Seeing is used as a means to achieve that; rather than solely focusing on a Western method to manage moose populations (i.e. a lottery draw), Clifford’s program considers both traditional knowledge about moose and western scientific knowledge throughout the moose management program.

The second activity that allowed study participants to consider how Two-Eyed Seeing could be used as a way to address IFS was a medicine walk led by Mi’kmaq scholar Tuma Young. Students travelled to a local walking trail with Tuma, and he led them through the woods and educated them about different plants and medicines and their use in Mi’kmaq culture. Students identified that they had an extremely positive experience while learning from Tuma. Participants enjoyed walking in the woods and physically connecting with the land. One participant got emotional when discussing the impact of the activity:

“I’ve known him [Tuma] for so long... It was a side of him that I had never seen before, and I really liked walking in the woods. For me... [Participant got upset and passed to next participant]....” (S, Indigenous).

This indicates that Tuma’s activity was very impactful, especially to this particular individual. Earlier in this chapter, participants identified that there was a lack of understanding about traditional Indigenous knowledges, especially among non-Indigenous people. The medicine walk, on the other hand, highlighted the importance of re/connecting to the land and food through sharing traditional Mi’kmaq knowledge with others. This was identified by one participant:

“Tuma Young actually brings... I don’t know how to... he brings...authentic traditional Mi’kmaq knowledge to this here [Summer Institute]. Like, it’s actually, it’s down to... it’s historically accurate and he’s still making it modern” (S, Indigenous).

The medicine walk allowed the participants to physically re/connect with the land around them, learn the ways in which traditional plants can be used as food or medicine, and think about how that knowledge can be used to educate others and raise awareness about the importance of IFS. It appears as if this activity provided participants with a glimpse of traditional knowledge that is not often studied or included in scientific journals. While this activity did not highlight the importance of both traditional and Western knowledges being viewed equally, it highlights the importance of privileging traditional knowledge when necessary, as traditional knowledge about the land, food and plants is often lost from generation to generation. It could also be said that this activity provided the context for students to begin learning how to incorporate Indigenous knowledges into conversations about food in order to ensure the “Western Eye” is not privileged,

ultimately viewing both knowledge systems equitably. Participants were very glad that both Clifford Paul and Tuma Young shared their knowledge with others and highlighted the importance of re/connecting to the land:

“They [Clifford and Tuma] connected things through history, and then brought it back to a modern day of how Indigenous people are living and how we can go back in history and how we can use that knowledge as well. So... for me...they made more of that connection, of bringing people to the land” (ER, Indigenous).

“...They [Clifford and Tuma] sort of really went out of their way to give what little shard that they had that was meaningful to them and try and pass it on” (S, Indigenous).

The third facilitator who discussed their work in Mi’kma’ki that incorporates Two-Eyed Seeing into their personal business was Nadine Bernard. Nadine focused the presentation on her business as well as her own personal journey with food and how that journey relates to Mi’kmaq food sovereignty. Nadine’s Slow Cooked Dreams Education and Empowerment program involves working with individuals and communities to improve food preparation skills while managing a budget. However, the program also brings people together to develop social support networks. Participants felt that hearing from Nadine allowed them to reflect on the interconnected relationship between individual food security, IFS and overall health (which includes both Indigenous and Western knowledge). The conversations with Nadine appeared to make participants excited to learn about what you can do as an individual to address personal food choice, but also to hear about how Nadine’s food security work may impact IFS into the future. Food security and food sovereignty go hand in hand, and if food security is the main goal, achieving food sovereignty is the way to do it (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014,p.

27). Participants felt extremely motivated by Nadine’s work and they viewed her as a passionate advocate for food security and food sovereignty. To one individual, listening to Nadine’s story allowed them to understand IFS better:

“When it comes to food sovereignty, it was like she [Nadine] simplified that... Just like, you can spend hours and hours and hours theorizing on what’s the best term, and how should people better understand a term that’s already here, like, she just went out and did it, you know?” (S, Indigenous)

This participant is discussing how Nadine started up her program as a result of her own personal issues with food. They valued that she “went out” and acted to address the food issues that were impacting her life. As a result, they view her program as something that is impacting the lives of other individuals, especially relating to food security and utilization of Indigenous food. Participants also discussed that learning from Nadine allowed them to grasp a deeper understanding of the interconnected nature of IFS. One participant reflected on how food is connected to many different aspects of life:

“Its not just food, but also families... Like, that’s just how our, way of life is, it just, its all, interconnected, so you can’t just talk about the food aspect of it without bringing in the aspects of, um...bringing in her [Nadine’s] story” (S, Indigenous).

It was obvious to participants that Nadine is extremely passionate about what she does and that resonated with them. During the focus group, one individual discussed that hearing Nadine’s personal story signified how passionate she was:

“I think that with Nadine’s [presentation], it was nice to hear a personal story and, you know, it was really motivating to hear her talk about her passion about food security and wanting to help people... I think the passion and the drive is important for the whole food sovereignty thing, having people like Nadine who

are so passionate about it and really want to help other people, you know take control of those issues that they have surrounding food” (S, Indigenous).

For many study participants, attending the Summer Institute and hearing from the facilitators was a big motivator to get them thinking about the importance of individual action and what they can do moving forward. Learning from Nadine however, ignited passion in many of the study participants when it comes to advocating for issues relating to IFS:

“She [Nadine] summed that up for me, like... sometimes, things do take a lot of careful thought and planning, but every once in awhile you do have to take a step back and say, hey look, we are talking about people here, and people can be incredibly complex to understand, but, um, in the end, we all eat food. We all need food and we all deserve a right, an equal right, to have access to good food” (S, Indigenous).

“I think that that those presentations with Nadine kind of gave me more passion and drive to want to uh, advocate for those kind of things” (S, Indigenous).

Moving forward with Two-Eyed Seeing and Indigenous Food Sovereignty

As a result of the Summer Institute’s activities, participants identified the need for continued reflection in order to determine how they may contribute moving forward and/or how they think Two-Eyed Seeing could be used as a means to address issues that impact and influence IFS. Participants identified that they couldn’t truly grasp what they learned and how their understandings of IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing evolved at the time of data collection. For many participants, the Summer Institute was the first time that they had an opportunity to have these conversations with a group of like-minded individuals. This was highlighted by a participant that was excited to discuss these issues with others:

“I felt as though we all kind of had a pretty fundamental and basic idea of what was happening, and we just finally got to, for the first time, jump in and dive into the guts and details and the nitty gritty just for like, with you know other people. That’s the best I could describe it, yeah...” (S, Indigenous).

Another participant highlighted the potential complexity when trying to understand and connect to what Two-Eyed Seeing truly means:

“For me, it [Two-Eyed Seeing] is a guiding principle that’s up here (signals to head) and then when I work, I consider those things down here (signals to heart) that you know, you can pick up a book and you can connect to it, but Two-Eyed Seeing is something that is harder...” (ER, Indigenous).

It is obvious that participants began to understand the complexity of Two-Eyed Seeing. For this particular individual, Two-Eyed Seeing has been something always guiding them. However, this isn’t the case for all participants, and that understanding Two-Eyed Seeing may take more than just reading up about the concept.

The nature of the discussions and teachings that occurred at the Summer Institute, especially those related to IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing, were viewed as important to participants, but they felt it was difficult to understand how their understandings may have evolved at that moment in time. One participant highlighted this and identified the need to continue reflecting on their experience:

“For me there wasn’t... it’s not new territory...but what I would say is that, you know, I feel like I’m going to need time to reflect on a lot of what I heard and shared and heard other people share, and I feel like I’m you know, I’m getting glimmers of the evolution in my understanding” (S, non-Indigenous).

Many of the study participants identified similar opinions; they felt that they were beginning to see how their understanding evolved after attending but wanted more time

to reflect. This is an element of Two-Eyed Seeing that Elder Albert Marshall often discusses; particularly, he often discusses that Two-Eyed Seeing is a journey that requires continual reflection. This will be discussed further in Chapter Five. Another participant discussed how they will be reflecting on the importance of increasing awareness about the issues that impact IFS:

“I think right now for me, it’s just awareness, because it seems like there are so many people around me at school and in my personal life that just don’t really understand...so I think awareness is the first step, which I think is starting to happen which is great. Um, and then I’m not exactly sure what the next step is. I think it’s something I’m still reflecting on” (S, non-Indigenous).

As a reminder, the initial focus group was held on the last day of the Summer Institute. It was an extremely busy week with very little down time, so it is not surprising that participants did not have time to reflect on their learnings. However, during the member-checking focus group eight weeks after the Summer Institute, some participants still felt they needed more time to unpack the information. One non-Indigenous participant indicated:

“I don’t really have anything to add, because this was my first time learning about this topic and I didn’t know what the terms mean... So, it was really more of a learning and more like a crash course learning in food and Indigenous perspectives. And so, I’m still trying to... not understand it, but just de-pack it [sic] and perhaps in the future going this route and attend another similar event...maybe I’ll be able to critically, more understand the concepts or maybe compare a little bit better (FG2, S, non-Indigenous).

Regardless for the need for continual, critical reflection, participants also spent time considering how they think they may use Two-Eyed Seeing moving forward,

especially when considering issues that impact IFS, such as a lack of understanding among non-Indigenous individuals. During the focus group, several participants highlighted how they may consider what they learned at the Summer Institute moving forward. One participant discussed how they plan to use the knowledge, while providing an interesting perspective on the value of the Summer Institute:

“For me, it was only very recently that I learned about Two-Eyed Seeing, Netukulimk, and you know, learning about food sovereignty this week really. And, I think I don’t know how I’ll, how it will, it will change how I view food and a greater appreciation for all, for all and access to healthy nutritious food that is culturally appropriate, and I think I will always hold on to that. I don’t know if I’ll be able to make a change, but I know I’ll always hold on to these experiences I’ve had over the five days and hopefully maybe it will trickle, maybe something will spark in me and I’ll be able to you, tell someone else you know?” (S, non-Indigenous).

For another participant, they plan to consider Two-Eyed Seeing throughout their research and hope to raise awareness about Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS to others:

“I think it will help guide, uh my research that I will be doing this coming year, and then, you know I’d like to, regardless of what I end up doing I’m not exactly sure, but I’d, I hope to be able to uh, teach other people about it , and I think just talk to people about” (S, Indigenous).

For another participant, they hope to take their learnings back to their classroom to educate and support Indigenous students:

“I really, really want and need to hold on to this moving forward... doing this work I’m going to be doing... working with Indigenous youth and supporting them and facilitating them to be leaders” (S, Indigenous).

Another participant identified that moving forward, it will be important to break down assumptions that the Western way of doing things is the only way, especially when we consider land and food:

“I think that I’ve taken away that there is a lot that... we need to incorporate more voices into the bigger picture and that we can’t assume that the western way of... the western diet is correct...and we need to come to terms with that. And once we do, I think, or once, you know, policy makers and other institutions come to terms... everybody has a different diet and if we want to be a healthy society collectively, we should go back, look back, go back to the roots and try to make changes” (S, non-Indigenous).

In summary, it was obvious that many participants needed more time to reflect on their experiences, as it was difficult for them to determine how they may contribute to IFS and how they may use Two-Eyed Seeing into the future. Participants may not know just quite yet how Two-Eyed Seeing could be considered when addressing issues that impact IFS, but they see the potential. This can be evidenced by one participant’s perspective about bringing together Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS; they believe that society will be further ahead if we begin to use Two-Eyed Seeing to understand what IFS means as it incorporates a cross-cultural perspective:

“If this Two-Eyed Seeing has evolved through life learning and our concept of food sovereignty can even bring a little bit of that meaning together, that cross cultural perspective, we will be much bigger in the game I think.” (ER, Indigenous).

Chapter 5 - Discussion

This chapter will discuss how the research themes outlined in the previous chapter contributed to the overall purpose of this research study. As mentioned previously, the purpose of this study was to explore how the activities of the Summer Institute may have shaped the students' understandings of IFS and to determine how they may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues related to IFS into the future. This was explored thoroughly with research participants during data collection and informed the two key themes discussed in the previous chapter. In this chapter, both themes will be discussed in relation to similar perspectives existing within the literature to support the findings. This will be followed by the limitations of this research study, the significance and implications for health promotion practice and policy, and suggestions for future research. To conclude, a summary paragraph will highlight the key take-aways from this research study.

Theme 1: Understanding and Critiquing Indigenous Food Sovereignty

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first major theme identified by study participants was that by attending the Summer Institute, they were able to gain a deeper understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty and what it means. Participants came to the Summer Institute with varying amounts of knowledge about IFS, but they were able to explore it further and critique it with others while attending the Summer Institute's activities and presentations. During data collection, study participants identified potential concerns relating to IFS. This included a lack of understanding among Western society about Indigenous cultures, as well as the problematic Westernized language often used to describe IFS. As a result, several participants identified that they often feel disconnected

from their own Indigenous cultures and face barriers when trying to communicate beliefs to others.

To begin, participants felt that there was a lack of understanding among Western or ‘mainstream’ society regarding Indigenous and specifically, Mi’kmaq culture, especially when we consider the values and beliefs that Mi’kmaq (and other Indigenous groups) hold around land and food. This belief is supported throughout the literature and can be traced back to when settlers arrived in North America. In a recent article by Ishiguro (2018), they reviewed historical evidence from British family letters received from early settlers living in British Columbia between 1858 and 1914. These letters were reviewed to explore food and settler colonialism among early settlers. It was identified that throughout the correspondence, settlers rarely mentioned Indigenous populations and they often ignored cultural differences within British Columbia when corresponding, such as not acknowledging Indigenous food practices and food systems (Ishiguro, 2018). On the flip side, these settlers often purchased local foods from Indigenous peoples, such as game and fish (Ishiguro, 2018), so it is likely that they were somewhat familiar with Indigenous groups and their cultures. The lasting effects of settlers not understanding and choosing not to acknowledge Indigenous cultures, especially as it relates to the values and beliefs that surround land and food, has continued up until today.

A more recent example comes from the Boat Harbour (A’s’e’k) contamination in Pictou County, Nova Scotia that was discussed in the literature review. A study conducted by Castleden and colleagues (2017) explored Elders perspectives of A’s’e’k before it was contaminated and highlighted present day concerns with settlers not understanding or acknowledging Indigenous the importance of A’s’e’k to Mi’kmaq as a

place to gather food and to engage with the land and water. Conversational interviews with Mi'kmaq Elders indicated that 'crooked' and 'dishonest' people duped the Chief and Council into signing agreements to dump the effluent into A'se'k by claiming that the effluent would not pollute the waters (Castleden et al, 2017). Elders indicated that the "White man's way" does not always seem to acknowledge Indigenous perspectives and that non-Native society has always been about "the almighty dollar" (Castleden et al, 2017, p. 29). A'se'k was a place of cultural significance for the Mi'kmaq community, especially relating to traditional food practices, as many families spent time fishing, hunting, berry picking and gathering there. However, it seems that the "White man's way" evidenced in this example outlines a lack of understanding among the non-Indigenous settlers who were responsible in the decision-making processes for Boat Harbour. It is interesting to ponder whether or not the decision makers were aware of the cultural significance of this location when choosing to develop an effluent treatment facility, and if they were, whether it would have been enough to inform their decisions. In order to achieve IFS, the traditional values and beliefs that surround land and food must be acknowledged and understood, especially by mainstream society (Food Secure Canada, 2015; Martin & Amos, 2016). The findings from this study further supports the idea that some non-Indigenous people continue to lack understanding and awareness of the importance of Indigenous cultural beliefs, as study participants continued to witness it within society. Therefore, spaces must be created and designated for these important conversations to occur; by sharing the findings of these conversations, we can begin to inform and educate others about the experiences of individuals who are impacted by a general lack of understanding Indigenous knowledges.

Another consideration raised by participants was the potentially problematic language often used to describe Indigenous food, even using the word ‘*sovereignty*’ to describe Indigenous food. The word ‘*sovereignty*’ was developed by philosopher Jean Bodin (1530-1596) and defined as a “supreme, perpetual, and indivisible power, marked by the ability to make law without the consent of any other” (Encyclopedia of the Early Modern World, 2018). However, this is not the way most Indigenous peoples would describe ‘*sovereignty*’; from the Indigenous perspective, the term ‘*sovereignty*’ is viewed in relation to self-government and autonomous decision-making (LaForme, 1991). These two definitions for the term ‘*sovereignty*’ differ quite substantially and therefore might pose problems when the term is being used within an Indigenous context. When we consider the definition of IFS, which includes a very self-determining, participatory, and sacred food system (Martin & Amos, 2016), we see again how the concept of ‘*sovereignty*’ varies when considering it within an Indigenous perspective. This could explain why several participants showed their dissatisfaction with the word ‘*sovereignty*’ during the focus group. Mainly, participants identified the importance of using Indigenous terminology to explain Indigenous concepts. In the discussion section of the following theme, participants identified similar critiques related to the terms of ‘*decolonization*’ and ‘*indigenization*’, especially when they are used to discuss IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing.

Several participants from this research study also indicated that they felt disconnected from their own Indigenous cultures, which was upsetting to them as they felt being connected to culture was important for their own identity. This disconnection was especially evident to participants when they were learning from Mi’kmaq Elders,

knowledge-keepers and academics, whom they deemed as culturally and spiritually connected to the land and the food it produces. These views are echoed throughout the literature, which highlights the importance of reconnecting to one's own Indigenous culture (Martin & Amos, 2016; Richmond, 2015). The literature also reaffirmed that other Indigenous peoples often feel disconnected similarly to the participants (Frideres, 2008; Julian, 2016b; Pearce & Coholic, 2013) and this cultural disconnect may be connected to ongoing, systemic colonialism (Czyzewski, 2011; Food Secure Canada, 2015; Robinson, 2012; TRC, 2015b; Turner & Turner, 2008). These findings support the development of programs and initiatives across Canada that promote Indigenous cultural identity through food (Bagelman et al., 2016; Francis et al., 2014; Kamal et al., 2015; Kirmayer et al., 2011; MacLellan, 2013; Pearce & Coholic, 2013; Rudolph & McLachlan, 2013; The University of British Columbia, 2013).

Theme 2: Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen understandings of Indigenous food sovereignty

The second major theme identified in this research study was that by attending the Summer Institute, the study participants began to view Two-Eyed Seeing as a way to deepen their understandings of Indigenous food sovereignty. The activities of the Summer Institute provided participants with the chance to understand and critique IFS and discuss the lack of awareness surrounding traditional Indigenous knowledges. However, attending the Summer Institute also allowed the participants to begin considering Two-Eyed Seeing as a way to approach issues impacting IFS. Participants were able to discuss what Two-Eyed Seeing is, critique some uses of Two-Eyed Seeing within academia and learn about its intended use from individuals who have enacted

Two-Eyed Seeing in their own work. Additionally, participants began to reflect on how they may use Two-Eyed Seeing moving forward.

Understanding and Critiquing Two-Eyed Seeing

As a result of attending the Summer Institute, participants had new appreciations for Two-Eyed Seeing and felt that it was something “*deeper than a methodology*” (P5, ER). This belief among participants can be reaffirmed when you consider traditional Indigenous knowledges. First Nations people, including Mi’kmaq, have always had to consider Two-Eyed Seeing and know how to walk in two worlds (that of their own traditional Indigenous culture and mainstream society). However, they may not have always used that term to describe what they were doing (Marshall, Marshall & Bartlett, 2015). Two-Eyed Seeing is something within and guiding First Nations and allows them to understand how the strengths of Indigenous knowledge can work alongside the strengths of Western knowledge to improve the health of individuals, communities and populations (Bartlett, Marshall & Marshall, 2012; Marshall, Marshall & Bartlett, 2015).

Participants discussed how learning from Mi’kmaw Elder Albert Marshall at the Summer Institute impacted their understanding and appreciation for Two-Eyed Seeing. Albert Marshall is a well known Mi’kmaw Elder from Eskasoni First Nation in Unama’ki, Nova Scotia and has been teaching about the importance of the Mi’kmaq knowledge and language for many years (Integrative Science, 2013a). He has travelled internationally speaking on topics including Two-Eyed Seeing, Co-Learning, and Truth and Reconciliation (Integrative Science, 2013b). Elder Marshall attended several events at the Summer Institute and spoke about Two-Eyed Seeing, Netukulimk, and his own experiences and perspectives as they related to Two-Eyed Seeing. The participants’ views

regarding Elder Albert Marshall are reiterated in the media and by other researchers, and his knowledge and perspectives are valued and cherished across Mi'kma'ki and Canada. A recent news article discussed when Elder Marshall spoke at Mount Allison University and indicated how captivated the audience was; "Crabtree, Mount Allison's second-largest lecture hall, was brimming with excitement at the opportunity to interact with one of the most influential advocates of the Mi'kmaw community" (Mavridis, 2018, p.1). This research study offers an interesting and unique contribution to the literature in the sense that it provides the experiences and perspectives of students learning from Indigenous Elders, as well as this particular Mi'kmaw Elder. This is something that is not seen in the literature at this time. Students identified that regardless of what knowledge they came to the Summer Institute with about Two-Eyed Seeing, they still learned something new from him and began to understand Two-Eyed Seeing better than they had before. Participants also appreciated that Elder Marshall encouraged them to explore their own perspectives and to critique those perspectives. It would be interesting to see further qualitative research that explores the importance of Indigenous Elder's traditional knowledges and teachings to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. While it was not surprising, it was interesting to hear how many participants spoke about their time with Albert during data collection. It appeared that his presence and knowledge made a significant impact on them, so it would be interesting to explore the impact of his learnings on those who have had the chance to learn from him.

In the last several years, there has been an increased awareness of the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing and many health researchers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) are using Two-Eyed Seeing within their research (Hatcher, 2012; Hovey et al., 2017; Martin,

2009; Rowan et al., 2015). For example, Martin (2009) used Two-Eyed Seeing to guide her qualitative doctoral research study that explored the experiences of individuals living in a remote, Inuit-Metis community in relation to food and global change (Martin, 2009). Additionally, a research study by Dell and colleagues (2015) used Two-Eyed Seeing to guide their research study on a First Nations Addiction Treatment program (Dell et al., 2015). They considered Indigenous traditional knowledges alongside Western science when “supporting Indigenous cultural renewal by confronting colonial practices via First Nations governance in our collaborative study involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers” (Dell et al., 2015, p.1). These studies, along with many others, indicate that there is an increasing amount of literature highlighting academia’s use of Two-Eyed Seeing.

Even though participants understand the value of Two-Eyed Seeing as a concept, they also identified potential tensions with how Two-Eyed Seeing has been historically used. Participants feared that the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing was at risk of being improperly used within academia; particularly, they felt that there is often a disconnect between what Two-Eyed Seeing truly seeks to achieve and how it may be approached by researchers. This has led to some participants worrying that Two-Eyed Seeing may become a ‘buzzword’; this might help to explain why a non-Mi’kmaq First Nations community had a lukewarm reception to the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing mentioned in Chapter Four. Even though many Indigenous peoples might agree with what Two-Eyed Seeing is in principle, there may be an issue with labelling it in a way that can be understood and adopted by “mainstream society”. This could be a source of the misinterpretation witnessed by study participants. One example of how Two-Eyed Seeing

is frequently used within mainstream organizations is by considering traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in environmental assessments. Upon further investigation, it was determined that including TEK in environmental assessments has been a policy requirement for almost twenty years, yet there is no real guidance on how to implement it properly (Usher, 2000). This lack of utilization of traditional knowledges was echoed by a participant in the focus group. They indicated that traditional ecological knowledge (or Mi'kmaq ecological knowledge) has been abused and viewed as a 'checkmark' (ER). This could signify that consulting with Indigenous peoples and considering traditional ecological knowledge may not be utilized in the way it should.

There is potential to consider Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to address issues that impact IFS, but there is a concern that if it is not understood and used in the way it is intended, that it may be utilized in a way that infringes on Indigenous knowledges and supports existing hierarchies. These potential tensions must be acknowledged and addressed in order for the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing to be understood. Two-Eyed Seeing is an extremely complex concept and employing it in any way requires a deep understanding of what it intends to achieve. Study participants identified a general lack of understanding among non-Indigenous individuals when it comes to traditional knowledges. Therefore, a suggestion in order to ensure people truly understand Two-Eyed Seeing is to determine strategies to not only educate non-Indigenous individuals about the importance of traditional knowledges (the Indigenous eye) but to also inform one another (Indigenous peoples) about the ways in which they educate others about the Indigenous eye and Two-Eyed Seeing as a whole. If there is a misunderstanding in the way it is being interpreted, all individuals involved in developing, researching and

practicing Two-Eyed Seeing should be at a collective table to ensure it is being understood correctly. When considering issues that impact IFS, it is essential to have Indigenous voices, knowledges and values at the table, while also considering Western scientific knowledges. In order to consider Two-Eyed Seeing as a guiding principle to address this issue, it is essential for it to be interpreted correctly, and a great place to start is where the education takes place.

In regard to the terms '*decolonization*' and '*Indigenization*', participants were also concerned that they may not be interpreted correctly by academia. As a result of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, many academic settings (including universities) began to establish their role in decolonizing their institutions and contributing towards reconciliation (TRC, 2015a). Many universities have begun "Indigenizing the Academy" and bringing Indigenous individuals as well as their cultures, values and beliefs into the forefront of recruitment, research and strategic planning. During the Summer Institute, a Mi'kmaw Elder was having a discussion with the student attendees and mentioned the statement "decolonization before indigenization". This message resonated with study participants and it was highlighted during data collection. Participants felt that in order to Indigenize, you must first decolonize, but feel that decolonization does not always come first, especially as we see increased efforts to Indigenize different academic settings. It is possible that these terms are not being used correctly and it may be the reason why participants feel that it is important to consider decolonization, rather than just indigenization. A recent PhD dissertation (Pictou, 2017) highlighted the important yet complicated nature of decolonization; "decolonization is a form of social action that cannot be achieved just

through symbolical means but must be obtained through a resurgence of Indigenous knowledge rooted in re-learning land/water-based practices for food and lifeways” (Pictou, 2017). For decolonization to occur, universities must focus less on the symbolic gestures, such as raising a Mi’kmaq flag on a university campus (CBC News, 2018), and focus more on structural, policy changes within the academy, such as providing mandatory education to university students that truly emphasizes the importance of Indigenous knowledges (Pictou, 2017; Tuck & Yang, 2012). However, there is even some skepticism in the literature that decolonization can be achieved; “In respect to the Mi’kmaq, how do we strategize for decolonization while our treaty rights are contingent on agreements with our “colonizers,” so to speak?” (Pictou, 2017, p.12). These views were echoed in discussions during data collection as participants mentioned a conversation about decolonization and indigenization with Mi’kmaq Elders who attended the Summer Institute. It could be expected that ongoing colonialism within the spaces in which these terms are used has impacted the way they are interpreted, especially when we think about these terms in relation to food and IFS. For example, students critiqued the term ‘sovereignty’ during data collection and felt that it was an extremely Westernized term being used to describe an Indigenous concept. These terms are often developed within the context of academic settings, and more often than not, these academic settings have yet to decolonize and are still influenced by colonial structures. While these terms were critiqued by participants during data collection, they did not feel as if the terms should no longer be used or that new terms should be developed. Instead, it seemed as if participants wanted to raise awareness about what the terms decolonization and indigenization seek to achieve. It was deemed important for academic

settings to address the TRC's Calls to Action and break down the systemic barriers (i.e.: policies and structures) that influence our understanding of these concepts. It is difficult to determine at this time how one could go about breaking down these barriers. An extremely useful place to start, however, could be having more opportunities to learn and discuss these concepts with others. This could include open dialogue and conversations within academic settings, focusing on Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing when needed, and ensuring that Indigenous voices are embedded throughout these efforts. This would significantly contribute to more individuals understanding the importance of IFS, and potentially increase advocacy within academic institutions to break down the systemic barriers that are preventing Indigenous values and beliefs from being recognized.

Two-Eyed Seeing and Indigenous Food Sovereignty in Mi'kma'ki

There were several specific activities that took place during the Summer Institute that greatly impacted the participants' knowledge of Two-Eyed Seeing and allowed them to gain a deeper understanding of IFS. Across the literature, there has been an abundance of research and programming focused on re/connecting individuals to Indigenous culture and values (Bagelman et al., 2016; Big-Canoe & Richmond, 2014; Francis et al., 2014; Hatcher, 2012; Kamal et al., 2015; Kirmayer et al., 2011; MacLellan, 2013; Pearce & Coholic, 2013; Rudolph & McLachlan, 2013; The University of British Columbia, 2013). However, there haven't been many programs in Mi'kma'ki or developed with the Mi'kmaq in mind (Julian, 2016a). It could be considered that the Summer Institute in which the participants attended provided them with an opportunity to re/connect to Mi'kmaq knowledges regarding the land and food and gain a deeper understanding of

what IFS seeks to achieve. This provides a contribution to the literature because it highlights the experiences of those who attended a program that discussed the importance of re/connecting to Indigenous culture, especially as it relates to IFS. Additionally, the teachings were offered directly from Mi'kmaq Elders and scholars and focused on Mi'kmaq ways of being, knowing and doing, such as Two-Eyed Seeing, which was a unique aspect of the program. Study participants reflected on three specific activities that highlighted how Two-Eyed Seeing is applied in the real-world to address issues impacting IFS. These activities allowed the students to critically reflect on what is being done in Mi'kma'ki to re/connect Indigenous populations back to their traditional culture through food.

One of these activities was a presentation focused UINR's Moose Management Initiative and '*Netukulimk*'. The activity was led by the coordinator of the initiative, Clifford Paul, and he sat with students to discuss the history of the program and his experiences working to create a moose management plan for Unama'ki. Clifford also spent time with students discussing the role of '*Netukulimk*' and IFS within the Moose Management program. Everything that is done in this program and that UINR is based on the concept of '*Netukulimk*' and Two-Eyed Seeing. One aspect of Clifford's role includes guiding and mentoring Mi'kmaq youth during an annual moose harvest that takes place in Unama'ki. This opportunity provides youth with an intergenerational learning experience and allows them to re/connect to their traditional culture as it relates to food and harvesting. This program also works to improve community food security by increasing access to traditional foods; moose meat is distributed to Mi'kmaw communities all across Nova Scotia, the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, and other

areas of need across Nova Scotia. In addition, the moose pelts are distributed to Mi'kmaq Elders to make clothing and other traditional items which contributes to a resurgence of Mi'kmaq culture and traditions.

The second activity that allowed participants to consider how Two-Eyed Seeing could be used as a tool to address IFS was the medicine walk led by Mi'kmaq scholar Tuma Young. Tuma is an Assistant Professor in Mi'kmaq Studies at Unama'ki College, with an educational background in Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy (Cape Breton University, 2017). Tuma's primary research focuses on an analysis of L'nu worldview to determine how traditional concepts of governance can be used in contemporary institution development (Cape Breton University, 2017), but he also researches Mi'kmaq ethnobotany and frequently leads medicine walks. During a medicine walk, Tuma will lead a group of individuals into the woods or a walking trail, where he teaches about different plants and medicines, as well as their use in Mi'kmaq culture. The students attending the Summer Institute were able to participate in a medicine walk with Tuma (see photo on the following page), and afterwards students felt very connected to the land.



Figure 1: Medicine Walk with Tuma Young (Megan Matthews, 2018)

There is not a lot of literature or research investigating the benefits of medicine walks as they relate to IFS; however, there is a growing amount of literature that emphasizes the value of connecting to and learning from the land (Bagelman et al., 2016; Datta, 2016; Obed, 2017; Restoule et al., 2013; Rosano, 2017). Medicine walks could also be considered an intergenerational learning opportunity, just like the moose management program. Similar programs have been shown throughout the literature to be beneficial to re/connecting to Indigenous culture by promoting traditional knowledge, values, and beliefs through communication and interaction between the generations (Council of Canadian Academies, 2014; Gabel, Pace & Ryan, 2016; Islam et al., 2016; Obed, 2017). The participants' perspectives about the medicine walk will provide a unique contribution to the literature. For example, it will emphasize the value of land-based activities as an important way to educate both Indigenous and non-Indigenous

learners about the importance of traditional Indigenous knowledges, and particularly Mi'kmaq conceptualizations about land and food.

The third activity that resonated with participants was led by Nadine Bernard and it highlighted what can be done at the individual level to address IFS through Two-Eyed Seeing. Nadine's presentation focused on her own personal journey with food, which led to the development of the Slow Cooked Dreams Education and Empowerment program. This program brings people together all across Nova Scotia to prepare meals using a slow-cooker, but the program is not just about preparing meals. The education and empowerment program also focuses on food budgeting and preparing food when dealing with financial difficulties. While the program is not targeted specifically for Indigenous individuals, Nadine focuses the program around a holistic health approach while considering the four aspects of the medicine wheel (physical, spiritual, emotional and mental well-being) and their interconnectedness in her teachings. Speaking of interconnectedness, the study participants also discussed how learning about the interconnected nature of IFS from Nadine's experiences was very impactful. Particularly, students discussed how the activities emphasized how food can be connected to many aspects of Indigenous culture and community (Bartlett, Marshall, Marshall & Iwama, 2012; Canadian Council of Academies, 2014; Desmarais & Wittman, 2014; Food Secure Canada, 2015; Martin & Amos, 2016; Obed, 2017). Nadine connected her work with Indigenous food systems back to her own personal story and the successes and/or failures she experienced. As everyone's story is different and everyone connects to food differently, participants witnessed how IFS can weave through many aspects of life (spiritual, emotional, physical, mental) and impact each individual in a different way.

Across the literature, it is evident that acting on issues impacting the Indigenous food system is critical in order to advocate for change at both the individual level and the policy/legislation level when it comes to IFS (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014; Martin & Amos, 2016; Morrison, 2011). At the individual level, active participation in the Indigenous food system is a key factor in contributing to a sustainable food system and IFS (Martin & Amos, 2016). The activities facilitated by the three Mi'kmaw scholars emphasized to students what is currently being done (at an individual/community level) in Mi'kma'ki to advocate for IFS. For example, Clifford Paul highlighted the importance of going on the land to promote traditional and sustainable moose hunting practices to local youth while also increasing food security by delivering moose meat to local Mi'kmaw communities. The medicine walk led by Tuma Young highlighted to students the importance of bringing people onto the land to reconnect to food and medicine. Finally, Nadine Bernard's activity showcased a food program that aims to increase participation in the Indigenous food system by preparing meals with others and highlights the passion necessary to advocate for IFS on an individual level.

A gap identified in this study is that participants did not mention the importance of change at the policy and legislative levels when considering IFS. This is evident by the lack of research that focuses on policy change and how policy has the potential to influence issues impacting IFS. Future research should emphasize the steps needed in order to effectively support Indigenous food sovereignty in Canada. One study by Godek (2015) looked into the challenges associated with passing food sovereignty policy; More specifically, the paper focused on Nicaragua's Law 693, which is the Law of Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security that was passed in 2009 after a length negotiation

process (Godek, 2015). Godek identified three factors that influenced the lengthy process of implementation: competition from other approaches to food security, the ‘conceptual ambiguity’ of food sovereignty, and the paradox of the state (Godek, 2015, p.528). It was noted that because food sovereignty is not broadly understood, the policy faced barriers when moving through the approval process such as competing against common approaches to food security developed by international organizations (Godek, 2015). It was also discussed that the state (government) was a key player in the implementation of the policy; the National Sandinista Liberation Front (FSLN) government demonstrated political will to support the policy initiatives but the ability to actually create conditions to foster food sovereignty was limited (Godek, 2015). For example, there was no indication that the government planned to challenge the private sector and protect small/medium producers (Godek, 2015). The findings from this study can be considered when we think about IFS and policy change in Canada. I recommend that similar research be done with a focus on what Indigenous food sovereignty policy could look like in Canada. This would allow for decision-makers to predict any challenges before enacting such policy in the future or to determine if Canada would experience similar challenges as Nicaragua.

Moving Forward with Two-Eyed Seeing and Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Participants identified that continued reflection on the learning opportunities was necessary to truly comprehend how their understandings of IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing may have evolved as a result of attending the Summer Institute. Elder Albert Marshall, who coined Two-Eyed Seeing, calls this ‘*i'l'oqaptmu'k*’ meaning to ‘revisit for renewal, to maintain movement in the direction Spirit intended’. In short, as one continues to

learn, it is important to continually reflect and revise your knowledge in order for your understanding to deepen. This Summer Institute was the first time many of the students discussed IFS, Two-Eyed Seeing, and other Mi'kmaq values surrounding land and food with other individuals. As the concepts were very complex and interconnected, it was hard for participants to understand their evolution of learning while they were still attending the Summer Institute (initial focus group was on last day of Summer Institute) and even 8 weeks later during the member-checking focus group.

When reflecting on the Summer Institute as a whole and considering the time needed by study participants to reflect and absorb the knowledge, the Summer Institute can be viewed within Kolb's experiential learning style theory (Kolb, 1984) introduced in Chapter Three (see Figure Two below). Kolb's theory is represented by a four-stage learning cycle; concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). It is thought to be an 'effective learning' experience when an individual cycles through all four stages of the theory (Kolb, 1984). As a result of the Summer Institute, it seems that study participants cycled through at least three of the four stages in Kolb's experiential learning theory (See Figure Two).

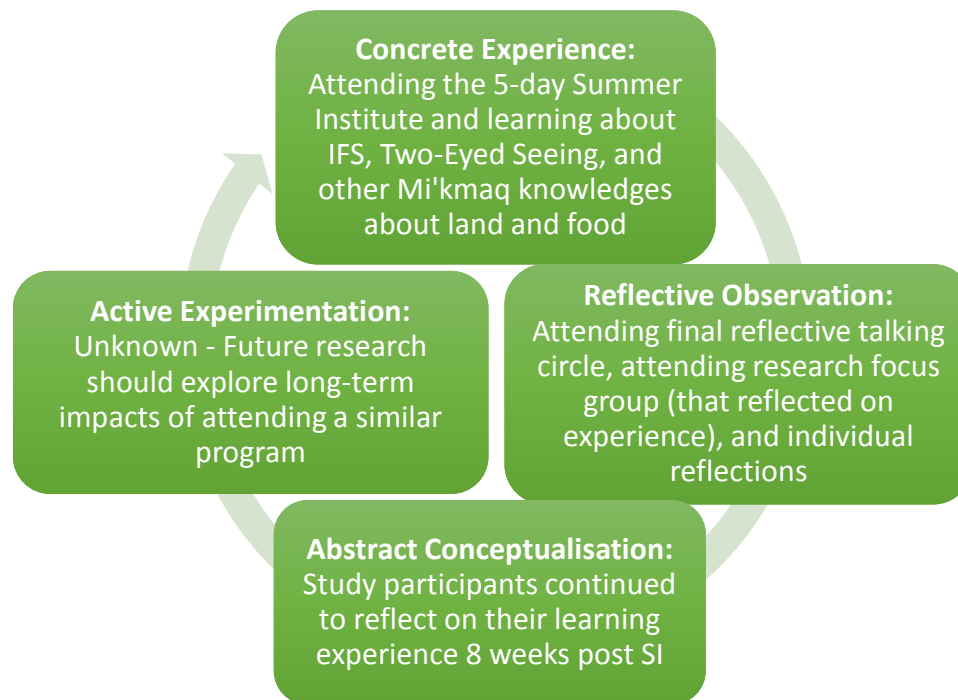


Figure 2: Kolb's Experiential Learning Style Theory considered within the Summer Institute (Megan Matthews, 2018)

To begin, students were exposed to a concrete learning experience that expanded their knowledges and understandings of the interconnected relationship between land, food, and health as well as IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing. The 5-day Summer Institute consisted of presentations, field-trips and discussions with academics, community members, Elders and knowledge-keepers. Students cycled through the 'reflective observation' stage by having the opportunity to reflect on their experiences during the Summer Institute in several formats. For example, student participants had the chance to participate in a closing talking circle that was focused on reflection, there was the opportunity to participate in a student-led focus group (current research study) that focused on perspectives and experiences of attending the Summer Institute, and participants had the opportunity to reflect individually when time permitted. However, it

is important to note that there was no dedicated time at the Summer Institute for reflection. Some of the student participants cycled through the ‘abstract conceptualization’ stage during the second stage of data collection for this research study. A member-checking focus group was held with study participants 8 weeks after the Summer Institute had concluded. At this time, it appears that participants were continuing to reflect on their experiences at the Summer Institute, and they did not have any clear conclusions on their learnings. This finding makes one consider the time-frame needed to fully reflect, absorb and conclude on learnings from an experiential, land-based program. A future recommendation may include dedicated reflection time during the Summer Institute that aligns with IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing. This could be as simple as a dedicated hour for participants to walk in nature and individually reflect on their learnings. Additionally, a process in which students are held accountable to continue learning after the program has concluded could be a way to continually reflect; for example, having a paper due several weeks after the Institute for participants to connect their learnings to theory on their own. This will ensure an effective learning process and make it more likely that the participant will cycle into the fourth stage of active experimentation. At this time, it is unknown that the study participants will take their knowledge and put it into practice. During data collection, participants identified that they were interested in acting on their learning, but they weren’t sure how exactly that would happen. Moving forward, qualitative research should focus on the student’s long-term retainment of knowledge within a similar land-based program. This will provide evidence that the participants engaged in a successful and effective learning opportunity and will further support Indigenous-focused, land-based learning programs.

Study participants indicated the importance of reflection to truly understand how their knowledge about IFS has evolved. Throughout the literature, it is clear that critical reflection is important, especially within education and academia (Hwang et al., 2018; Winkle et al., 2013). However, there is not much literature that explores critical reflection during land-based programs or field schools, and especially less when we consider Indigenous knowledges. Research conducted by Heather Castleden from Queen's University considered critical reflection during a field school that used digital storytelling to discuss Indigenous Perspectives on Environmental Management (Castleden et al., 2013). At the end of the field school, students were asked to reflect on their experiences throughout the course (Castleden et al., 2013). Findings showed that students began to situate themselves within the context of their experiences and found that digital storytelling provided a "necessary space for critical reflection to happen" (Castleden et al., 2013, p. 494). This program was only targeted for non-Indigenous students, but I don't believe that a mixture of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (like the Summer Institute) would have impacted critical reflection. This research supports the value of critical reflection in experiential, land-based courses. Into the future, research should investigate how critical reflection during a land-based programs focused on Indigenous knowledges influences participants' evolution of learning.

Additionally, there does not seem to be much research exploring personal experiences and perspectives of Two-Eyed Seeing. The participants of this study shared personal reflections about what Two-Eyed Seeing meant to them and how they will consider it moving forward. It was a very powerful and emotional conversation and it emphasized the need to explore individual experiences with Two-Eyed Seeing in the

literature. This current research study emphasizes the student's individual perspectives of Two-Eyed Seeing as they learned about it and discussed it thoroughly during a 5-day Summer Institute, which could contribute to improving awareness and understanding about Two-Eyed Seeing and what it truly means. As mentioned previously in this thesis, I played a triple role in the Summer Institute as a researcher, attendee and working group member. As a result, I gained interesting insights that are relatable to the student attendee's learnings and experiences at the Summer Institute. I was able to consider IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing in a new way, even though the I came with prior experience and knowledge about the topic. For example, the discussions with participants about the tensions surrounding IFS, Two-Eyed Seeing, decolonization and indigenization were a surprising finding to me. It was not anticipated that the participants would have experiences with Two-Eyed Seeing that were not always positive, and it was refreshing to critically analyze the way these terms are commonly used. That being said, learning from the facilitators, having discussions with participants, and actively participating in the activities allowed me to expand her knowledge base and be more critical of the concepts, which influenced the way the data were analyzed and how the themes were finalized.

Limitations

As with many qualitative research studies, there are some limitations that arise. First, this research study consisted of a sample size that decreased between the first and second stages of data collection. During the first stage, there were 7 participants at the focus group and 2 participants completed individual interviews. However, at the second stage of data collection, only 3 participants joined the focus group and 1 participant

completed an individual interview. This loss of participants was expected, as the participants had busy schedules and there was no reason to continue participating 8 weeks after the Summer Institute; participating during the Summer Institute was easy as the students were all together at the same time. Upon further reflection, I am uncertain whether or not there was a benefit in having a second focus group/interview because no new information was collected to incorporate into the research findings during that time. However, it was extremely relevant as a member-checking exercise in order to ensure that my interpretation of the findings were accurate to the participant's experiences. Even though there were only 3 participants, they confirmed that what I had interpreted was indeed correct.

The second limitation of this research study was the depth of data obtained from the methods used during data collection. I considered semi-structured focus groups and interviews to collect data from study participants, followed by a member-checking focus group/interview. Choosing this approach was due to time and resource constraints associated with the short timeline of a Master of Arts in Health Promotion program. If resource and time constraints allowed, I may have considered a more comprehensive data collection method that would allow me to engage more with the participants, perhaps asking participants to complete a reflective written piece about their experiences; this would allow me to explore how their understandings truly evolved from attending the Summer Institute.

Another limitation of this research study is that discussions surrounding gender and the implications on IFS did not emerge during data collection. I did not prepare specific questions about gender for the focus group in order to keep the discussion broad

and open. If specific questions were prepared, I would anticipate that participants would have discussed their perspectives about gender during data collection, which would potentially have added an important dimension to the findings.

The final aspect of this study that could be considered a limitation is the triple role I held within the Summer Institute. As mentioned previously, I was not only the researcher, but also an organizer of the Summer Institute and a student attendee. These overlapping roles could be viewed as conflicting with one another; therefore, steps were taken to mitigate this potential conflict of interest. First, recruitment was completed by the coordinator for the Summer Institute to ensure I was not influencing the students' participation. Secondly, data collection was not embedded into the weekly itinerary, so participants did not feel that participating was mandatory for their involvement in the Summer Institute. Finally, I was very clear to the participants about identifying my overlapping roles in the Summer Institute. While all research contains some bias, there may be researchers that could view this role in the research study as a potential bias. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge and be open about these connections. However, I do not consider these connections as a limitation because they were extremely beneficial when collecting data and analyzing results of my research study.

Significance and Implications

Conducting this research study has highlighted the importance of undertaking qualitative, health promotion research in order to gain the perspectives and experiences of individuals. While this study was not intended to directly impact any specific population or group of individuals, it was anticipated that the findings would positively contribute to the health promotion literature to inform practice and policy development that

emphasizes the importance of educating others about traditional knowledges to achieve IFS, and how Two-Eyed Seeing could be considered when addressing issues that impact IFS. By reviewing and analyzing the findings, it can be said that this research study achieved its purpose and successfully answered the research questions. Participants gained a deeper understanding about IFS as a result of attending the Summer Institute, and they have begun to consider how Two-Eyed Seeing could be used as a means to not only better understand IFS, but to also address issues impacting IFS. Additionally, it appears that by learning from the facilitators, they have begun to identify the importance of advocating for change within Indigenous food systems.

The findings from this study offer the perspectives of students who learned about IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing from Mi'kmaq Elders, Knowledge-Holders and scholars. The Summer Institute was the first time that many participants discussed IFS or Two-Eyed Seeing with others. Yet, after five days, they were comfortable to discuss these concepts thoroughly and critique them with others. Additionally, the students were able to take the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing and consider it in a way to better understand IFS. This resulted in the study participants reflecting on how Two-Eyed Seeing could be considered when addressing the issues that impact IFS. This study was one of the first that investigated student's perspectives of IFS, particularly within the Mi'kmaq context, and it showed that there is great value in learning from Mi'kmaq Elders, Knowledge-Holders and scholars. Traditionally, education and academia are contained to four walls. For the Summer Institute, these "walls" included much more, such as walking trails, sharing circles, and being in Mi'kmaq communities, which aligns with traditional Indigenous ways of being and doing. Moving forward, Indigenous ways of learning should be emphasized

when planning future health promotion programs, especially ones that include Indigenous populations.

Secondly, the findings of this study highlight the value of land-based learning opportunities, especially those that integrate both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems (Two-Eyed Seeing) to better understand IFS. Across the literature, there are several land-based programs that focus on topics such as Indigenous traditional knowledge, Indigenous food systems and Indigenous food sovereignty. These programs are commonly offered through a university for credit or through community-based organizations and seem to offer valuable knowledge to the students that attended. The Summer Institute in which the participants' attended incorporated a combination of both land-based activities and conventional classroom approaches over the five days. It appeared that this combination was successful in terms of creating a positive experience for the participants. The discussions during data collection demonstrated that they gained a deeper understanding of IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing after attending, and that it provided participants with a space to re/connect to their traditional Indigenous values and beliefs. During data collection, several participants identified that they felt disconnected from their culture, especially when learning from other Mi'kmaq scholars who they viewed as very connected. However, by attending the Summer Institute, they were able to participate in activities that re/connecting them to the land and learned from scholars who taught about the importance of the resurgence of traditional Indigenous knowledge. At the time of the Summer Institute, there were no similar programs offered in Mi'kma'ki. Therefore, there is the potential to advocate for the program to continue, especially as it allows individuals to re/connect to their traditional values and reclaim their Indigenous

culture. Based on the findings of this study, I believe that incorporating a combination of land-based and conventional classroom approaches in health promotion programs is an interesting and unique way to engage participants and contribute to a positive learning experience. Both aspects of learning are extremely important but provide the participants' with different ways to engage with the same concepts. For example, Clifford Paul discussed his work with UINR and the Moose Management Initiative in a conventional presentation. Participants were extremely engaged with the facilitator and were eager to ask questions and learn about his work. This allowed me to see the value in the classroom styled approaches that occurred during the Summer Institute. However, I also feel that the Summer Institute provided opportunity for participants to be on the land and learn from the land, such as going on the medicine walk and participating in a traditional Mi'kmaq sweat. These activities were deemed important to participants, especially those who identified that they felt spiritually disconnected from their Indigenous cultures. However, I feel that more time spent on the land and actively participating in traditional food harvesting practices (e.g., an eel spearing trip, or a fishing trip) would have provided participants (particularly the Indigenous participants) with an even deeper understanding about IFS by physically and spiritually re/connecting to land and culture, which provides with a different type of learning that cannot be achieved in a classroom. Moving forward, I believe that considering a combination of both classroom and land-based approaches (and privileging the land when necessary) for similar health promotion programs is an effective way to explore topics such as IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing.

When reflecting on how the findings of this research study can impact future policy, there are two key two considerations after reviewing the data. To begin, it is

extremely important for policy makers to work directly with Indigenous leaders and scholars when drafting policy that impacts IFS. It is known that in order to make any change at the policy level, one must have government will and support. For example, the crisis of food insecurity has been well established by governments and across in the literature, especially when we consider Indigenous communities. Yet, there is a limited focus on IFS, even though it goes hand and hand with food security. I believe that Indigenous scholars and leaders need to come together with policy makers and governments to express the importance of IFS, engage in dialogue, and establish a common language together using principles of Two-Eyed Seeing to provide Indigenous populations with policies that support their ability to participate in their food system.

Secondly, in order to influence policy impacting IFS, an emphasis should be placed on decolonizing and indigenizing the academic settings in which these concepts are discussed. Students identified several critiques with the concept of IFS during data collection, and it could be said that this stems from systemic colonial influences where this concept is often studied and researched. For example, the participants did not particularly like the term '*sovereignty*' within the context of IFS and previously thought of IFS as a "buzzword". Therefore, it is obvious that we need to raise awareness and understanding about what IFS means; this can start by academic settings addressing decolonization and indigenization to ensure Indigenous knowledges, values and beliefs are recognized and valued. That would allow Indigenous scholars, especially those who study IFS, to continue researching and publishing important Indigenous knowledge that is supported by decolonized institutions. Increased research in this area would be beneficial to policy makers in order to address issues impacting IFS.

Future Research

Due to the limited amount of literature, it is essential for Indigenous health researchers to consider studying Indigenous food sovereignty and the importance of achieving it for Indigenous health and wellbeing. As a result of my study, I have determined four potential areas of future research that I believe would be very valuable contributions to the health promotion literature. First, I think it would be important for qualitative research to be conducted that explores the importance of Indigenous Elders traditional knowledges and teachings. Study participants were extremely inspired by the time they spent with Elder Albert Marshall at the Summer Institute, and they identified that his teachings about Two-Eyed Seeing and Netukulimk were very valuable and impactful. That being said, I think it would be interesting to study how impactful the learnings were on individuals who had the chance to learn from Elders, and from Elder Albert Marshall in particular. Secondly, I think future research should emphasize the steps needed in order to effectively support IFS policy in Canada. As mentioned in a previous section of this chapter, Godek (2015) researched the challenges associated with passing food sovereignty policy in Nicaragua. For example, it was mentioned that because food sovereignty is not broadly understood in Nicaragua, the policy faced barriers when moving through the approval process. In order for policy makers in Canada to enact policy related to IFS, it would be beneficial for them to predict any challenges they may face. The third area of research that I believe would be beneficial would be a qualitative inquiry that investigates student's long-term retainment of knowledge within a land-based initiative. In this study, participants identified that even though they saw "glimmers" in their understanding about IFS, they still needed more time to reflect on their learnings. Therefore, future research should focus on how students understand

concepts and/or teachings several months after attending similar programs. This would provide evidence that the participants engaged in a successful and effective learning opportunity and will further support Indigenous-focused, land-based learning programs. My final suggestion for future research includes a qualitative study that solely focuses on an individual's personal connection to the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing; particularly, what Two-Eyed Seeing means to various individuals across Mi'kma'ki. During data collection, participants explored their perspectives of Two-Eyed Seeing and began to share what Two-Eyed Seeing means to them. This was an extremely powerful part of data collection for me, as participants shared their personal stories and experiences with Two-Eyed Seeing. I believe that this would be an extremely interesting area to explore further.

Conclusion

In summary, the research study determined that participants who attended the 5-day Summer Institute were able to gain a more comprehensive understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty after attending. This deeper understanding experienced by participants was demonstrated by the discussions during the focus group that emphasized IFS; participants were able to discuss what IFS is as well as critique it. It can be assumed that this deeper understanding can be attributed from participants learning from the “experts”: Mi'kmaq Elders, Knowledge-Holders and scholars that have experience with Indigenous food systems. Additionally, participants were able to consider the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen their understandings of IFS. Participants had several opportunities to learn about Two-Eyed Seeing and its intended use from Mi'kmaq Elders, as well as from individuals who consider Two-Eyed Seeing in their every day

work. As a result, participants began to reflect on how Two-Eyed Seeing may be used to address issues that impact IFS. However, it seemed that with a greater understanding of IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing came more questions, particularly regarding how to move forward with the critiques they identified during data collection and how they can take what they learned at the Summer Institute and do something to impact IFS. Participants determined that they needed more time to reflect on exactly how they may contribute. However, they did discuss how they may consider Two-Eyed Seeing moving forward, such as considering its use in future research projects or teaching future students about IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing.

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Appendix A: Research Study Recruitment Script

“Hello everyone, my name is Catherine Hart, and I am the Regional Project Coordinator for the [Name of Mentorship Network]. I am going to take the next few minutes to introduce a research study that is being conducted here at the Summer Institute by one of our attendees, Megan Matthews. You will all be invited to participate in this research study.

Megan Matthews is a master’s student studying health promotion in the School of Health and Human Performance at Dalhousie University. She is attending this Summer Institute not only as a student attendee learning alongside all of you, but she will also be collecting data for her master’s thesis. Megan is working alongside her supervisor, Dr. Debbie Martin, and the [Name of Mentorship Network] to investigate the experiences and perspectives of students whom have attended this Summer Institute.

There are several land-based learning initiatives across Canada that focus on teaching students about Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems. However, up until this point there have been no such initiatives within Mi’kma’ki and there continues to be a lack of research exploring student’s experiences during these initiatives. Megan’s research will focus on the experiences and perspectives of you, the students, that attend this Summer Institute. More specifically, she hopes to determine how, if at all, the activities of the Summer Institute shaped your understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty, and how you may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty in the future. Conducting this study is important because it will offer a unique contribution to the literature that explores the perspectives of students who are learning about Indigenous food sovereignty from Mi’kmaq Elders, knowledge-holders, as well as scholars/academics who are working in this area.

If you are interested in participating in this study, it will consist of two focus groups. The first set of focus groups will occur on the last day of the Summer Institute and will last approximately 1-hour. Megan will facilitate the discussion, and you will be asked to collectively reflect on your experiences as they relate to Indigenous food sovereignty. The focus group you attend will be audio-recorded, and all participants are encouraged to bring along materials that they feel may benefit the discussion (i.e.: reflective photographs, poems, etc.). Several weeks after the Summer Institute has ended, she will invite you to review a summary report. This report will display the key findings from the initial set of focus groups. At this time, she will invite you to participate in a second focus group (via telephone or Skype) where you will have the opportunity to discuss the summary report, identify whether or not it was an accurate representation of the group’s experiences, and to reflect on the Summer Institute further. If you would like to participate in the research study but you are not comfortable having discussions in a group-setting, you may schedule a one-on-one interview with Megan instead of attending the focus group. Please discuss this with Megan if this is something that interests you, so you can make proper arrangements.

If you are interested in participating in this research study or you have any questions, please come and talk to Megan as soon as possible. Depending on the number of participants, the initial set of focus groups will be held Friday evening and/or Saturday morning. I will also pass out consent forms for you to review. Thank you!”

Appendix B: Focus Group #1 Informed Consent Form

FOCUS GROUP #1 CONSENT FORM

Project title: Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Lead researcher: Megan Matthews, MA Health Promotion (Candidate)
School of Health and Human Performance, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University

Other researchers: Dr. Debbie Martin
Tier II Canada Research Chair, Indigenous Peoples Health and Well-Being
Associate Professor, School of Health and Human Performance, Dalhousie
University

Introduction

I invite you to participate in a research study being conducted as a component of a master's thesis completed by Megan Matthews at Dalhousie University, under the supervision of Dr. Debbie Martin.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Choosing not to participate has no impact on your participation during the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. The information provided below describes the purpose of the research study, what you will be asked to do as a participant, in addition to any benefits and/or inconveniences you might experience if you decide to participate.

If you have any questions about the research study before, during or after the study, please contact Megan Matthews by email: megan.matthews@dal.ca or phone: 902.623.1500, or her supervisor, Debbie Martin at 902-494-7717 or dhmartin@dal.ca.

Purpose and Outline of the Research Study

Ongoing colonialism faced by Indigenous populations across Canada has resulted in a decreased relationship between Indigenous peoples' and their land, food and culture. There is a growing body of research that suggests reclaiming culture and reconnecting to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems and food systems are important ways to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous populations. One way to begin exploring these important concepts is through Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS), which is the right of Indigenous peoples to produce their own healthy and culturally appropriate foods in a sustainable way, while also defining their food and food systems. There are a number of land-based learning initiatives across Canada that focus on teaching university students about Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems. However, there are no such initiatives within Mi'kma'ki (the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq) and there is a lack of research exploring student experiences during these initiatives.

This research study will explore the experiences and perspectives of student participants that attended the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. I hope to determine how, if at all, the activities of the Summer Institute shaped your understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty, and how you may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty in the future.

Who Can Take Part in the Research Study

To participate in this study, you must be an undergraduate student, graduate student, or early career researcher who is attending the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. If you meet the above criteria, you may participate in the study.

What You Will Be Asked to Do

To capture your perspectives and experiences throughout the Summer Institute, you will be asked to participate a focus group. This focus group will occur on the last day of the Summer Institute and will be approximately 1.5 hours. You are encouraged to bring along materials that may benefit the discussion (i.e.: reflective photographs taken during the Summer Institute, reflective journals, etc.). You may provide these materials to the researcher but must provide additional consent to do so. These materials may be used during presentations or on the summary report to enrich the findings. During this focus group, the primary researcher will pose various questions to the group to understand your experiences during the activities of the Summer Institute. More specifically, I hope to determine how, if at all, the activities of the Summer Institute shaped your understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty, and how you may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty in the future. This focus group will be audio-recorded for analysis.

If you would like to participate in the research study but are not comfortable having discussions in a group-setting, you may schedule a one-on-one interview with the primary researcher instead of participating in either focus group. Please discuss this with Megan if it is something that interests you.

Possible Benefits, Risks and Discomforts

There are no direct personal benefits to participating in this study. However, you will be contributing to a body of knowledge about Indigenous food sovereignty. This study will offer a unique contribution that will explore the perspectives of students who are learning about Indigenous food sovereignty from Mi'kmaq Elders, knowledge-holders, as well as scholars/academics who are working in this subject area.

The risks associated with this study are minimal. The research purpose is not anticipated to expose any individual, community or population to any type of risk. Some reflective questions may prompt critical thinking and cause discomfort. If this happens, you are free to decline answering the question.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

If you are interested in participating in this research study, your identity will not remain anonymous. You will not be asked to provide any personal information about yourself, other than contact information, but your name may be posted on the Atlantic-IMN's website as an attendee of the Summer Institute. There may also be social media posts and/or pictures taken of you during the Summer Institute. There are only a small number of attendees at the Summer Institute, so it may be possible to infer who participated in this study based on who attended the Summer Institute.

All of the information you provide as a participant in this study will remain confidential in regard to the data. All personal information provided during the focus groups will be de-

identified during analysis to ensure there is no way to connect the information to specific individuals. There will be no names associated with the data. Quotes may be used to develop the thesis or during dissemination of findings, but there will be no participant names associated with quotes. Additionally, once the focus groups have been audio-recorded and transcribed, it will be very difficult to confirm the identity of the speaker

Compensation / Reimbursement

There is no compensation for those who choose to participate in this study.

How your information will be protected:

Information that you provide will be kept confidential. Only the primary researcher (Megan Matthews) will have access to contact information, and her supervisor (Debbie Martin) will only have access to the de-identified data from the focus groups. Any documents with identifying information will be kept in a separate file from the data itself. This will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked room in my primary researcher's home. All computer files will be individually password protected and stored on a password protected and encrypted external hard drive. This hard-drive will be stored in in a locked cabinet in the same locked room. All data will be stored on this external hard drive and in physical files until the study is complete and the final thesis has been submitted. At this point, the external hard drive will be transferred to the research supervisor and stored for five years in a locked cabinet in Stairs House at Dalhousie University. After five years, all data will be wiped from the hard drive. Physical documents will be destroyed by the primary researcher after the study is complete.

If You Decide to Stop Participating

You are free to withdraw from this study at any point during data collection. If you withdraw during the initial focus group, no additional information would be collected from you for the duration of the study. By participating in the focus

group, you will not be able to withdraw your information from the study once it has concluded. At this point, it would be very difficult to remove any individual information from the audio-recording. You are not required to participate in the second focus group, and so consent will be sought for that at a later date.

How to Obtain Results

A 1-page summary report, written in both English and Mi'kmaw, will be circulated by email to all participants that summarizes the key findings at the end of the research study. All student attendees will be invited to a final presentation to discuss the findings. You are also free to contact the primary researcher by email at any time.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research study, please feel free to contact the primary researcher. Megan can be reached by e-mail (megan.matthews@dal.ca) or phone (902.623.1500) at any time with questions, comments, or concerns about the research study. We will let you know if any new information comes up that could affect your decision to participate. If you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, you may also contact Research Ethics, Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462, or email: ethics@dal.ca (and reference REB file # 20XX-XXXX).

Signature Page

Project Title: Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Lead Researcher: Megan Matthews, P.Dt.
MA Health Promotion (Candidate), Dalhousie University
Megan.matthews@dal.ca

I have read the above information about this research study. I have had time to discuss it with the primary researcher and have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in a 1.5-hour focus group that is taking place at the Summer Institute. I understand that this focus group will be audio-recorded and direct quotes of what I say during the focus group may be used but will not identify me. My participation is voluntary, but I understand that I cannot withdraw from the study once the focus group has ended. I agree to participate in this focus group:

Yes

No

Name

Signature

Date

Appendix C: Interview #1 Informed Consent Form

INTERVIEW #1 CONSENT FORM

Project title: Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Lead researcher: Megan Matthews, MA Health Promotion (Candidate)
School of Health and Human Performance, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University

Other researchers: Dr. Debbie Martin
Tier II Canada Research Chair, Indigenous Peoples Health and Well-Being
Associate Professor, School of Health and Human Performance, Dalhousie
University

Introduction

I invite you to participate in a research study being conducted as a component of a master's thesis completed by Megan Matthews at Dalhousie University, under the supervision of Dr. Debbie Martin.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Choosing not to participate has no impact on your participation during the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. The information provided below describes the purpose of the research study, what you will be asked to do as a participant, in addition to any benefits and/or inconveniences you might experience if you decide to participate.

If you have any questions about the research study before, during or after the study, please contact Megan Matthews by email: megan.matthews@dal.ca or phone: 902.623.1500, or her supervisor, Debbie Martin at 902-494-7717 or dhmartin@dal.ca.

Purpose and Outline of the Research Study

Ongoing colonialism faced by Indigenous populations across Canada has resulted in a decreased relationship between Indigenous peoples' and their land, food and culture. There is a growing body of research that suggests reclaiming culture and reconnecting to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems and food systems are important ways to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous populations. One way to begin exploring these important concepts is through Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS), which is the right of Indigenous peoples to produce their own healthy and culturally appropriate foods in a sustainable way, while also defining their food and food systems. There are a number of land-based learning initiatives across Canada that focus on teaching university students about Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems. However, there are no such initiatives within Mi'kma'ki (the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq) and there is a lack of research exploring student experiences during these initiatives.

This research study will explore the experiences and perspectives of student participants that attended the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. I hope to determine how, if at all, the activities of the Summer Institute shaped your understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty, and how you may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty in the future.

Who Can Take Part in the Research Study

To participate in this study, you must be an undergraduate student, graduate student, or early career researcher who is attending the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. If you meet the above criteria, you may participate in the study.

What You Will Be Asked to Do

To capture your perspectives and experiences throughout the Summer Institute, you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview with the primary researcher. Based on the number of student attendees who opt for an interview versus attending the focus group, this interview may take place on the last day of the Summer Institute or it may occur via Skype at a later date. These arrangements will be made by the primary researcher and you will be informed when your interview will take place. This interview will take approximately 1.5-hours, and you are encouraged to bring along materials that may benefit the discussion (i.e.: reflective photographs taken during the Summer Institute, reflective journals, etc.). You may provide these materials to the researcher but must provide additional consent to do so. These materials may be used during presentations or on the summary report to enrich the findings. If your interview occurs via Skype, you may email your reflective exercises to the primary researcher. During this interview, the primary researcher will ask you various questions to explore and understand your experiences during the Summer Institute. More specifically, the primary researcher will ask you questions relating to how, if at all, the activities of the Summer Institute shaped your understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty, and how you may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty in the future. This interview will be audio-recorded for analysis and the primary researcher will take notes.

Possible Benefits, Risks and Discomforts

There are no direct personal benefits to participating in this study. However, you will be contributing to a body of knowledge about Indigenous food sovereignty. This study will offer a unique contribution that will explore the perspectives of students who are learning about Indigenous food sovereignty from Mi'kmaq Elders, knowledge-holders, as well as scholars/academics who are working in this subject area.

The risks associated with this study are minimal. The research purpose is not anticipated to expose any individual, community or population to any type of risk.

Some reflective questions may prompt critical thinking and cause discomfort. If this happens, you are free to decline answering the question.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

If you are interested in participating in this research study, your identity will not remain anonymous. You will not be asked to provide any personal information about yourself, other than contact information, but your name may be posted on the Atlantic-IMN's website as an attendee of the Summer Institute. There may also be social media posts and/or pictures taken of you during the Summer Institute. There are only a small number of attendees at the Summer Institute, so it may be possible to infer who participated in this study based on who attended the Summer Institute.

All of the information you provide as a participant in this study will remain confidential in regard to the data. The primary researcher will ensure that everything discussed during the interview is kept confidential, and all personal information provided during the interview will be de-identified during analysis. This will ensure there is no way to connect the information to a specific individual when the results are shared. There will be no names associated with the data. Quotes may be used to develop the thesis or during dissemination of findings, but there will be no participant names associated with quotes.

Compensation / Reimbursement

There is no compensation for those who choose to participate in this study.

How your information will be protected:

Information that you provide will be kept confidential. Only the primary researcher (Megan Matthews) will have access to contact information, and her supervisor (Debbie Martin) will only have access to the de-identified data from the focus groups. Any documents with identifying information will be kept in a separate file from the data itself. This will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked room in my primary researcher's home. All computer files will be individually password protected and stored on a password protected and encrypted external hard drive. This hard-drive will be stored in a locked cabinet in the same locked room. All data will be stored on this external hard drive and in physical files until the study is complete and the final thesis has been submitted. At this point, the external hard drive will be transferred to the research supervisor and stored for five years in a locked cabinet in Stairs House at Dalhousie University. After five years, all data will be wiped from the hard drive. Physical documents will be destroyed by the primary researcher after the study is complete.

If You Decide to Stop Participating

You are free to withdraw from this study at any point during data collection. If you withdraw during the initial interview, no additional information would be collected

from you for the duration of the study. You will have two weeks after the interview to withdraw your information from the study.

If you participate in an interview during the first stage of data collection, you are free to choose between an interview or focus group for the second stage. However, you are not required to participate in the second focus group or interview, so consent will be sought before you participate.

How to Obtain Results

A 1-page summary report, written in both English and Mi'kmaw, will be circulated by email to all participants that summarizes the key findings at the end of the research study. All student attendees will be invited to a final presentation to discuss the findings. You are also free to contact the primary researcher by email at any time.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research study, please feel free to contact the primary researcher. Megan can be reached by e-mail (megan.matthews@dal.ca) or phone (902.623.1500) at any time with questions, comments, or concerns about the research study.

We will let you know if any new information comes up that could affect your decision to participate.

If you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, you may also contact Research Ethics, Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462, or email: ethics@dal.ca (and reference REB file # 20XX-XXXX).

Signature Page

Project Title: Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Lead Researcher: Megan Matthews, P.Dt.
MA Health Promotion (Candidate), Dalhousie University
Megan.matthews@dal.ca

I have read the above information about this research study. I have had time to discuss it with the primary researcher and have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in a 1.5-hour interview that will either take place at the Summer Institute or via Skype after the Summer Institute. I understand that this interview will be audio-recorded and direct quotes of what I say during the interview may be used but will not identify me. My participation is voluntary, and I understand that I have two weeks to withdraw from the study once the interview has ended. I agree to participate in this interview:

Yes

No

Name

Signature

Date

Appendix D: Focus Group #2 Informed Consent Form

FOCUS GROUP #2 CONSENT FORM

Project title: Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Lead researcher: Megan Matthews, MA Health Promotion (Candidate)
School of Health and Human Performance, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University

Other researchers: Dr. Debbie Martin
Tier II Canada Research Chair, Indigenous Peoples Health and Well-Being
Associate Professor, School of Health and Human Performance, Dalhousie University

Introduction

I invite you to participate in a research study being conducted as a component of a master's thesis completed by Megan Matthews at Dalhousie University, under the supervision of Dr. Debbie Martin.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Choosing not to participate has no impact on your participation during the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. The information provided below describes the purpose of the research study, what you will be asked to do as a participant, in addition to any benefits and/or inconveniences you might experience if you decide to participate.

If you have any questions about the research study before, during or after the study, please contact Megan Matthews by email: megan.matthews@dal.ca or phone: 902.623.1500, or her supervisor, Debbie Martin at 902-494-7717 or dhmartin@dal.ca.

Purpose and Outline of the Research Study

Ongoing colonialism faced by Indigenous populations across Canada has resulted in a decreased relationship between Indigenous peoples' and their land, food and culture. There is a growing body of research that suggests reclaiming culture and reconnecting to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems and food systems are important ways to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous populations. One way to begin exploring these important concepts is through Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS), which is the right of Indigenous peoples to produce their own healthy and culturally appropriate foods in a sustainable way, while also defining their food and food systems. There are a number of land-based learning initiatives across Canada that focus on teaching university students about Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems. However, there are no such initiatives within Mi'kma'ki (the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq) and there is a lack of research exploring student experiences during these initiatives.

This research study will explore the experiences and perspectives of student participants that attended the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. I hope to determine

how, if at all, the activities of the Summer Institute shaped your understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty, and how you may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty in the future.

Who Can Take Part in the Research Study

To participate in this study, you must be an undergraduate student, graduate student, or early career researcher who has attended the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute.

Additionally, in order to participate in the second stage of data collection, you had to participate in the initial focus group or interview. If you meet the above criteria, you may participate in the study.

What You Will Be Asked to Do

You are being asked to participate in a second focus group. The purpose of this focus group is to capture your opinions on the summary report, determine whether it accurately portrayed your experiences during the Summer Institute, and to discuss any additional learnings or reflections as a group. This focus group will occur several weeks after the Summer Institute via Skype and will be approximately 1-hour. The summary report that was disseminated to all participants will be used to guide the discussion, and you will be asked to review this document before attending the focus group. Similar to the first set of focus groups, it will be audio-recorded for analysis and field notes will be taken by the primary researcher.

Possible Benefits, Risks and Discomforts

There are no direct personal benefits to participating in this study. However, you will be contributing to a body of knowledge about Indigenous food sovereignty. This study will offer a unique contribution that will explore the perspectives of students who are learning about Indigenous food sovereignty from Mi'kmaq Elders, knowledge-holders, as well as scholars/academics who are working in this subject area.

The risks associated with this study are minimal. The research purpose is not anticipated to expose any individual, community or population to any type of risk. Some reflective questions may prompt critical thinking and cause discomfort. If this happens, you are free to decline answering the question.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

If you are interested in participating in this research study, your identity will not remain anonymous. You will not be asked to provide any personal information about yourself, other than contact information, but your name may be posted on the Atlantic-IMN's website as an attendee of the Summer Institute. There may also be social media posts and/or pictures taken of you during the Summer

Institute. There are only a small number of attendees at the Summer Institute, so it may be possible to infer who participated in this study based on who attended the Summer Institute.

All of the information you provide as a participant in this study will remain confidential in regard to the data. All personal information provided during the focus groups will be de-identified during analysis to ensure there is no way to connect the information to specific individuals. There will be no names associated with the data. Quotes may be used to develop the thesis or during dissemination of findings, but there will be no participant names associated with quotes. Additionally, once the focus groups have been audio-recorded and transcribed, it will be very difficult to confirm the identity of the speaker

Compensation / Reimbursement

There is no compensation for those who choose to participate in this study.

How your information will be protected:

Information that you provide will be kept confidential. Only the primary researcher (Megan Matthews) will have access to contact information, and her supervisor (Debbie Martin) will only have access to the de-identified data from the focus groups. Any documents with identifying information will be kept in a separate file from the data itself. This will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked room in my primary researcher's home. All computer files will be individually password protected and stored on a password protected and encrypted external hard drive. This hard-drive will be stored in a locked cabinet in the same locked room. All data will be stored on this external hard drive and in physical files until the study is complete and the final thesis has been submitted. At this point, the external hard drive will be transferred to the research supervisor and stored for five years in a locked cabinet in Stairs House at Dalhousie University. After five years, all data will be wiped from the hard drive. Physical documents will be destroyed by the primary researcher after the study is complete.

If You Decide to Stop Participating

You are free to withdraw from this study at any point during data collection. If you withdraw during the focus group, no additional information would be collected from you for the duration of the study. However, you will not be able to withdraw your information from the study once it has concluded. At this point, your contributions will already be part of the overall dataset and are unable to be removed.

How to Obtain Results

A 1-page summary report, written in both English and Mi'kmaw, will be circulated by email to all participants that summarizes the key findings at the end of the research study. All student attendees will be invited to a final presentation to

discuss the findings. You are also free to contact the primary researcher by email at any time.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research study, please feel free to contact the primary researcher. Megan can be reached by e-mail (megan.matthews@dal.ca) or phone (902.623.1500) at any time with questions, comments, or concerns about the research study.

We will let you know if any new information comes up that could affect your decision to participate.

If you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, you may also contact Research Ethics, Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462, or email: ethics@dal.ca (and reference REB file # 20XX-XXXX).

Signature Page

Project Title: Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Lead Researcher: Megan Matthews, P.Dt.
MA Health Promotion (Candidate), Dalhousie University
Megan.matthews@dal.ca

I have listened to the researcher discuss the above information about this research study. I have had time have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in a 1-hour focus group that is taking place via Skype. I understand I have also been asked to review the summary report before attending the focus group. I understand that this focus group will be audio-recorded and direct quotes of what I say during the focus group may be used but will not identify me. My participation is voluntary, but I understand that I cannot withdraw from the study once the focus group has ended. I agree to participate in this focus group, and I give the primary researcher permission to sign on my behalf:

Yes

No

Name

Date

Signature of Primary Researcher

Appendix E: Interview #2 Consent Form

INTERVIEW #2 CONSENT FORM

Project title: Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Lead researcher: Megan Matthews, MA Health Promotion (Candidate)
School of Health and Human Performance, Faculty of Health, Dalhousie University

Other researchers: Dr. Debbie Martin
Tier II Canada Research Chair, Indigenous Peoples Health and Well-Being
Associate Professor, School of Health and Human Performance, Dalhousie
University

Introduction

I invite you to participate in a research study being conducted as a component of a master's thesis completed by Megan Matthews at Dalhousie University, under the supervision of Dr. Debbie Martin.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Choosing not to participate has no impact on your participation during the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. The information provided below describes the purpose of the research study, what you will be asked to do as a participant, in addition to any benefits and/or inconveniences you might experience if you decide to participate.

If you have any questions about the research study before, during or after the study, please contact Megan Matthews by email: megan.matthews@dal.ca or phone: 902.623.1500, or her supervisor, Debbie Martin at 902-494-7717 or dhmartin@dal.ca.

Purpose and Outline of the Research Study

Ongoing colonialism faced by Indigenous populations across Canada has resulted in a decreased relationship between Indigenous peoples' and their land, food and culture. There is a growing body of research that suggests reclaiming culture and reconnecting to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems and food systems are important ways to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous populations. One way to begin exploring these important concepts is through Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS), which is the right of Indigenous peoples to produce their own healthy and culturally appropriate foods in a sustainable way, while also defining their food and food systems. There are a number of land-based learning initiatives across Canada that focus on teaching university students about Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems. However, there are no such initiatives within Mi'kma'ki (the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq) and there is a lack of research exploring student experiences during these initiatives.

This research study will explore the experiences and perspectives of student participants that attended the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute. I hope to determine

how, if at all, the activities of the Summer Institute shaped your understanding about Indigenous food sovereignty, and how you may use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty in the future.

Who Can Take Part in the Research Study

To participate in this study, you must be an undergraduate student, graduate student, or early career researcher who has attended the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute.

Additionally, in order to participate in the second stage of data collection, you had to participate in the initial focus group or interview. If you meet the above criteria, you may participate in the study.

What You Will Be Asked to Do

You are being asked to participate in a second, one-on-one interview with the primary researcher. The purpose of the second interview is to capture your opinions on the summary report, determine whether it accurately portrayed your experiences during the Summer Institute, and to discuss any additional learnings or reflections. This interview will occur several weeks after the Summer Institute via Skype and will be approximately 1-hour. The summary report that was disseminated to all participants will be used to guide the discussion and you will be asked to review this document before attending the focus group. Similar to the first interview, it will be audio-recorded for analysis and field notes will be taken by the primary researcher. You are encouraged to bring along materials that may benefit the discussion if you did not in the initial interview.

Possible Benefits, Risks and Discomforts

There are no direct personal benefits to participating in this study. However, you will be contributing to a body of knowledge about Indigenous food sovereignty. This study will offer a unique contribution that will explore the perspectives of students who are learning about Indigenous food sovereignty from Mi'kmaq Elders, knowledge-holders, as well as scholars/academics who are working in this subject area.

The risks associated with this study are minimal. The research purpose is not anticipated to expose any individual, community or population to any type of risk. Some reflective questions may prompt critical thinking and cause discomfort. If this happens, you are free to decline answering the question.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

If you are interested in participating in this research study, your identity will not remain anonymous. You will not be asked to provide any personal information about yourself, other than contact information, but your name may be posted on the Atlantic-IMN's website as an attendee of the Summer Institute. There may

also be social media posts and/or pictures taken of you during the Summer Institute. There are only a small number of attendees at the Summer Institute, so it may be possible to infer who participated in this study based on who attended the Summer Institute.

All of the information you provide as a participant in this study will remain confidential in regard to the data. The primary researcher will ensure everything discussed during the interview is kept confidential, and all personal information provided during the interview will be de-identified during analysis. This will ensure there is no way to connect the information to a specific individual when the results are shared. There will be no names associated with the data. Quotes may be used to develop the thesis or during dissemination of findings, but there will be no participant names associated with quotes.

Compensation / Reimbursement

There is no compensation for those who choose to participate in this study.

How your information will be protected:

Information that you provide will be kept confidential. Only the primary researcher (Megan Matthews) will have access to contact information, and her supervisor (Debbie Martin) will only have access to the de-identified data from the focus groups. Any documents with identifying information will be kept in a separate file from the data itself. This will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked room in my primary researcher's home. All computer files will be individually password protected and stored on a password protected and encrypted external hard drive. This hard-drive will be stored in a locked cabinet in the same locked room. All data will be stored on this external hard drive and in physical files until the study is complete and the final thesis has been submitted. At this point, the external hard drive will be transferred to the research supervisor and stored for five years in a locked cabinet in Stairs House at Dalhousie University. After five years, all data will be wiped from the hard drive. Physical documents will be destroyed by the primary researcher after the study is complete.

If You Decide to Stop Participating

You are free to withdraw from this study at any point during data collection. If you withdraw during the interview, no additional information would be collected from you. You will two weeks after the interview to withdraw your information from the study. If this is the case, the researcher will ask if information collected up to the point of your withdrawal may be used; if not, all audio data will be deleted, and the information will not be included in the dataset.

How to Obtain Results

A 1-page summary report, written in both English and Mi'kmaw, will be circulated by email to all participants that summarizes the key findings at the end of the research study. All student attendees will be invited to a final presentation to discuss the findings. You are also free to contact the primary researcher by email at any time.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research study, please feel free to contact the primary researcher. Megan can be reached by e-mail (megan.matthews@dal.ca) or phone (902.623.1500) at any time with questions, comments, or concerns about the research study.

We will let you know if any new information comes up that could affect your decision to participate. If you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, you may also contact Research Ethics, Dalhousie University at (902) 494-1462, or email: ethics@dal.ca (and reference REB file # 20XX-XXXX).

Signature Page

Project Title: Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Lead Researcher: Megan Matthews, P.Dt.
MA Health Promotion (Candidate), Dalhousie University
megan.matthews@dal.ca

I have read the above information about this research study. I have had time to discuss it with the primary researcher and have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in a 1-hour interview that will take place via Skype several weeks after the Summer Institute. I also understand I am expected to review the summary report before attending the interview. I understand that this interview will be audio-recorded and direct quotes of what I say during the interview may be used but will not identify me. My participation is voluntary, and I understand that I have two weeks to withdraw from the study once the interview has ended. I agree to participate in this interview, and I give the primary researcher permission to sign on my behalf:

Yes

No

Name

Date

Signature of Primary Researcher

Appendix F: Focus Group/Interview #1 Facilitation Guide

“Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty: A Qualitative Study from the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute”

Focus Group/Interview #1 Facilitation Guide

Pre-amble: Before the focus group or interview begins, the primary researcher will seek informed consent from each participant. At this time, the researcher will briefly introduce the research topic and review the informed consent form with each participant. The informed consent form will include the purpose and objectives of the research, what participants will be asked to do, possible benefits, risks and discomforts, how your information will be protected, withdrawing from the study, and how the results will be shared. See Appendix B and C. The primary researcher will also take the time to briefly introduce herself as the researcher. It is important to note that this facilitation document is just a guide. If any questions change based on how the Summer Institute is developed, the final guide will be sent back to the ethics committee for approval.

1. Ice-Breakers

- Introductions
- Names, Community of Affiliation, Program/Institute
- Why did you attend the Summer Institute?
- What do you hope to discuss during this focus group?

2. Potential review of key terms

- Facilitator (Megan) will ask participants if they are familiar with the terms ‘Indigenous food sovereignty’ (IFS) and ‘Two-Eyed Seeing’ (TES) as they will be the concentration of this focus group.
- If participants do not understand what these concepts mean, the primary researcher will spend ~5 minutes providing a broad description of the concepts.

3. Reflections on each day

- “I am going to walk us through each day of the Summer Institute, starting with Tuesday when we all arrived here. I will ask you all to reflect on the activities of that day, and then I will ask you questions to understand how you’ve experienced those activities and learnings, and how they influence your understanding of IFS and TES”
- The following questions will be posed to the group after discussing the activities of the Summer Institute:
 - How did these activities/learnings resonate with you?
 - Did you know about IFS before attending the Summer Institute? If yes, explain.

- Now that you do know the definition of IFS, can you identify any examples in your life? (Maybe this is an example of a loss of IFS)
- Did the activities increase/change your understanding of IFS?
- Did the activities increase/change your understanding of TES?
- Tell me something about this day that was a highlight for you and that you think you will take with you beyond this Summer Institute?
- Can you think of something that was a challenge for you on this day? How so? What did you take away from this?
- The primary researcher will pose these questions to the group (or participant) after reflecting on the Summer Institute
 - Will you consider TES in your future endeavors? If yes, How? If not, why?
 - How do you think TES could be used when thinking about IFS?
 - Do you think there is a link between TES and achieving IFS?

4. Conclusions/Wrap-Up

- Is there anything else anyone would like to discuss?
- Final thoughts? Comments?

Prompting Questions:

- What else can you say about that?
- Can you give me an example?
- Is there anything else you'd like to add?
- Why do you think you feel this way?

Group Involvement Questions:

- How do others feel about that?
- Does anyone have a different perspective about this comment?
- Can anyone build on this?

Appendix G: Focus Group/Interview #2 Facilitation Guide

“Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty: A Qualitative Study from the Atlantic-IMN Summer Institute”

Focus Group #2 Facilitation Guide

Pre-ambule: Before the focus group or interview begins, the primary researcher will seek informed consent from each participant. At this time, the researcher will briefly introduce the research topic and review the informed consent form with each participant. The informed consent form will include the purpose and objectives of the research, what participants will be asked to do, possible benefits, risks and discomforts, how your information will be protected, withdrawing from the study, and how the results will be shared. See appendix D and E. The primary researcher will also take the time to briefly introduce herself as the researcher. It is important to note that this facilitation document is just a guide. If any questions change based on how the Summer Institute is developed, the final guide will be sent back to the ethics committee for approval.

1. Introductions

- Have each participant say one word/phrase that described their experience at the Summer Institute now that they have had more time to reflect on their experiences

2. Introduction of the Summary Report

- Primary researcher will begin by providing a description of the key findings from the first analysis and how those findings developed the summary report
- Describe the purpose of this focus group (which is to discuss this summary report and additional learnings)
- Ask participants if they have any questions before we begin and if they all had time to review and reflect on the report

3. Group reflection about the Summary Report

- What are your initial reactions toward this draft report?
- Were your experiences and perspectives reflected accurately by the key themes? If not, why not?
- What key themes are most important to you?
- Are there themes identified on the summary report that you think are inaccurate? If so, is this a consensus across the focus group?
- Were there key themes that were missed? If so, is this a consensus across the group? What is missing?
- How should the summary report’s findings be changed (if necessary)?

- How can this be moved forward?

4. Additional reflections

- I will open the floor back up to reflect on the initial focus group that occurred during the Summer Institute ~1 month ago.
- How did everyone feel about it? Did you leave satisfied?
- Was there something you wanted to discuss but didn't? If so, what was it? Why did you not discuss the first time around?
- Have you had any additional learnings since attending the Summer Institute about IFS or TES?
- Have you thought about IFS or TES since attending the Summer Institute? If so, in what context? Why?

5. Final Thoughts/Conclusions

- Is there anything else anyone would like to add?
- Final comments?
- Any questions about how to access the findings?

Prompting Questions:

- What else can you say about that?
- Can you give me an example?
- Is there anything else you'd like to add?
- Why do you think you feel this way?

Group Involvement Questions:

- How do others feel about that?
- Does anyone have a different perspective about this comment?
- Can anyone build on this?

Appendix H- Initial Summary Report



Exploring Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Summary of Findings

This summary report is being used to share the preliminary findings/themes with study participants. It will not be shared or disseminated widely until all participants have had the chance to comment and reflect on the findings.

Purpose of the Research

This qualitative study explored the experiences and perspectives of students who attended a 5-day Summer Institute focused on the relationships between land, food and medicine, and health and well-being.

During a focus group (n=7) and individual interviews (n=2), the students reflected on how the activities of the Summer Institute shaped their understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty, and how they might use Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty into the future.

Rationale

There are a number of land-based learning initiatives across Canada that focus on educating individuals about Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems. However, there are no such initiatives within Mi'kma'ki (the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq) and there is a lack of research exploring student experiences during these initiatives.

It is anticipated that the proposed study will contribute to the health promotion literature about Indigenous food sovereignty by offering the unique perspectives of students who are learning about it from Mi'kmaq Elders, knowledge-holders, and scholars/academics who are working in this area.

How did the activities in which the students engaged shape their understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty?

Theme #1: The Impacts of Colonialism

The activities allowed students to share and discuss their perspectives and understandings relating to the impacts of colonialism on Indigenous food sovereignty, Two-Eyed Seeing and Indigenous food systems. This discussion included 3 key points:

- A general lack of understanding among 'Western' culture about Indigenous knowledges and values surrounding land and food
- Some participants feel disconnected from their own Indigenous culture, especially after hearing from facilitators whom they view as very connected
- The decontextualization and misinterpretations of Two-Eyed Seeing: Particularly, how trying to understand Two-Eyed Seeing within academia often leads to misinterpretations of what the term actually means

"I'm the brown skin one in the room, I'm suppose to know the most, be the most spiritual", and there's that, pressure to seem connected even if you don't truly feel that full connection that you crave and need, and its taken me so long to realize and understand that its okay to not feel it yet because that process can take years, and it can take your whole life"

"What non-Indigenous people don't realize is the connection that food has to all aspects of spiritual, mental, and community well being...there is a connection with all the elements, they are all woven together"

"Indigenous people also in the academic world have become disconnected from what Two-Eyed Seeing actually really means and have sort of attached a new language to it for academia to understand it. When you read the literature, you're reading how people are using Two-Eyed Seeing, and I look at the authors and I see Indigenous authors, and I'm like, "this is not what was meant"...people are trying to move the concept forward to better understand it and share it widely, but what their doing, what they are moving forward. Is they are also taking steps backwards"

Theme #2: Reconnecting to Food and Culture

Students identified the value and importance of Indigenous populations reconnecting with their traditional foods and culture, which was deemed even more important when considering the context of food sovereignty.

Two activities from the Summer Institute really helped to shape their understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty; a presentation focused on Mi'kmaq relationships with moose, and a medicine walk led by a Mi'kmaq scholar.

These activities emphasized work being done in Mi'kma'ki to improve Indigenous food systems and food sovereignty, such as passing down traditional Mi'kmaw knowledge, and promoting sustainable ways to consume traditional foods (such as moose).

Theme #3: Taking Action

"[Facilitator Name] summed that up for me, like, sometimes, things do take a lot of careful thought and planning, but every once in awhile, you do have to take a step back and say, hey look, we are talking about people here... and people can be incredibly complex to understand, but, in the end, we all eat food. We all need food and we all deserve a right, an equal right, to have access to good food"

Engaging in the activities highlighted to students the importance of initiating change and taking action in order to address Indigenous food sovereignty.

An activity led by a Mi'kmaq facilitator, which focused on their own personal journey with food, made an impact on students and encouraged them to advocate for issues surrounding food.

"I think the passion and the drive is important for the whole food sovereignty thing, having people like [Facilitator Name] who are so passionate about it and really want to help other people, you know, take control of those issues that they have surrounding food"

How might students anticipate using Indigenous and Western knowledge systems collectively (Two-Eyed Seeing) to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty into the future?

Theme #4: "Deeper than a Methodology"

Students indicated that considering both Indigenous and Western knowledge systems collectively (Two-Eyed Seeing) will continue to be a life-long learning process and will guide them for the rest of their lives.

Students were impacted by time spent with Elder Albert Marshall, who taught about his own experiences with Two-Eyed Seeing, but also encouraged the students to explore and critique their own perspectives.

"Two-Eyed Seeing is something that is within me, and something that is guiding me, as opposed to something that is telling me what is right and what is wrong in some sense, because I'm exploring and I will figure out what is right and what is wrong...and I believe that Two-Eyed Seeing sort of guides someone and pushes someone to maybe continue to be a learner, to be a life-long learner"

Theme #5: Critical Reflection

Students identified that critical, continued reflection is necessary to truly understand how their understandings have evolved as it was the first time many of the students discussed these issues with others.

Students plan to consider Two-Eyed Seeing in many aspects of their lives, especially when considering issues relating to Indigenous food. The participants plan to consider Two-Eyed Seeing when...

- Facilitating their own classes
- Conducting future research studies
- Navigating academia
- Working with Indigenous groups

"Here in this time and place, I now became convinced (and that's new for me to be convinced) that this [Two-Eyed Seeing] is the way forward, this is the way that everything will come together"



REB # 2018-4547

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact the primary researcher, Megan Matthews at megan.matthews@dal.ca or by phone (902) 623-1500

Student Perspectives of Indigenous Food Sovereignty



Summary of Findings

This summary report is being used to share the research findings with study participants. It will not be shared or disseminated widely.

Purpose of the Research

- In August 2018, a 5-day Summer Institute was hosted in Mi'kma'ki (Nova Scotia) that explored the relationship between land, food and overall health and well-being, with a particular focus on Indigenous food sovereignty (IFS).
- This qualitative study explored the experiences and perspectives of students who attended the Summer Institute. Particularly, how the students' perceived the activities of the Summer Institute shaping their understanding of Indigenous food sovereignty, and how they might use the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing to consider issues relating to Indigenous food sovereignty into the future.
- To collect data, two sets of focus groups took place; the first occurred at the Summer Institute and the second set occurred eight weeks later via video-conference. The focus groups were audio-recorded, and the data was analyzed thematically.

Rationale

- Ongoing, systemic colonialism faced by Indigenous populations across Canada, including the disregard of traditional Indigenous knowledges, has resulted in a decreased connection to land, food and culture.
- There is a growing body of literature that suggests reconnecting to traditional Indigenous knowledge systems and reclaiming culture are important ways to improve the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples.
- There are a number of land-based learning initiatives across Canada that focus on educating individuals about Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems. However, there are no such initiatives within Mi'kma'ki (the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq) and there is a lack of research that explores student experiences during these initiatives.

Findings

Theme 1: Understanding and Critiquing Indigenous Food Sovereignty

- Participants indicated that by attending the Summer Institute, they were able to gain a deeper understanding about IFS and what it means.
- Participants came to the Summer Institute with varying amounts of knowledge about IFS, but they were able to explore it further and critique it with others while attending the Summer Institute's activities and presentations.
- Students identified potential tensions relating to IFS. This included a lack of understanding among Western society about Indigenous cultures, as well as the problematic Westernized language often used to describe IFS. As a result, several participants identified that they often feel disconnected from their own Indigenous cultures and face barriers when trying to communicate beliefs to others.

"I think it [Indigenous food sovereignty] is more than just, you know, Indigenous people governing how resources are allocated and how resources are used. I think it's having people outside Indigenous communities understand that as well, and being understanding of why that is"

"For a lot of my life, there has been the expectation that like, 'I'm the brown skin one in the room, I'm supposed to know the most, be the most spiritual', and there's that, pressure to seem connected even if you don't truly feel that full connection that you crave and need, and its taken me so long to realize and understand that its okay to not feel it yet because that process can take years, and it can take your whole life"

"When you think about 'sovereignty' and 'security', like that has a certain... like there is...it is coming from a certain worldview, and a certain place, and it's uh, militaristic, it's western, and I mean you know, what does that...how does that influence our thinking about food and about food systems when we use words like that?"

Theme 2: Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen understandings of Indigenous food sovereignty



- By attending the Summer Institute, students began to view Two-Eyed Seeing as a means to deepen their understandings of IFS.
- The activities of the Summer Institute provided participants with the chance to explore what Two-Eyed Seeing is, critique the current use of Two-Eyed Seeing within academia, and learn about its intended use from those who use Two-Eyed Seeing in their work.
- Participants also discussed how they hope to use Two-Eyed Seeing moving forward.

Understanding and Critiquing Two-Eyed Seeing

- Students indicated that by attending, they gained a deeper perspective about what Two-Eyed Seeing is and they began to view the potential to address issues from both the Indigenous and Western perspectives.
- However, they also discussed their critiques about the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing, especially as it relates to the potential improper use of the term within academia.
- Students shared their personal and professional experiences with Two-Eyed Seeing, which highlighted the importance of increasing knowledge and understanding about these terms.

Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS in Mi'kma'ki

- Students identified specific activities during data collection that resonated with them or uniquely impacted their understanding of Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS.
- These four activities included a discussion with a Mi'kmaq Elder, a presentation on a Moose Management Initiative in Unama'ki by Clifford Paul, a medicine walk led by Tuma Young, and a presentation about Mi'kmaq food sovereignty from Nadine Bernard.
- Students indicated that they valued learning about Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS during the Summer Institute, especially during these activities, as it showed them different ways one can address IFS issues.

Moving Forward with Two-Eyed Seeing and IFS

- Students expressed the need for continued reflection in order to determine how they think Two-Eyed Seeing could be used as a means to address issues that impact and influence IFS.
- The discussions and teachings related to IFS and Two-Eyed Seeing were viewed as important to participants, but they felt it was difficult to understand how their understandings may have evolved at that moment in time.
- Regardless for the need for continual, critical reflection, students also spent time considering how they think they may use Two-Eyed Seeing moving forward, including teaching about it in their classrooms or through their future research.

"Indigenous people also in the academic world have become disconnected from what Two-Eyed Seeing actually really means, and have attached new language to it in order for academia to understand it and for them to be able to place it somewhere when that's actually not what it is meant to be...people are trying to move the concept forward to better understand it and to share it widely, but what they're doing, what they are moving forward is...they're also taking steps backwards"

"I feel like I had some background knowledge a little bit, but I feel like I've learned a lot too at the same time. Especially with the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing"

"For me, it's not new territory...but what I would say is that, you know, I feel like I'm going to need time to reflect on a lot of what I heard and shared and heard other people share, and I feel like I'm you know, I'm getting glimmers of the evolution in my understanding"



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