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Building Leadership Capacity: Embracing of Inclusive and Culturally Responsive Practices to Promote Succession and Sustainability of Principals in Arctic Canada

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Abstract

This Dissertation-in-Practice (DiP) aims to explore organizational change frameworks to address the problem of practice in the Tundra Education System (TES, pseudonym), which has resulted in inconsistent implementation of inclusion and culturally relevant policies by principals. TES is situated in an Indigenous region of Arctic Canada and about eighty percent of principals are non-Indigenous people. To make a change process relevant to the context of TES, the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) principles, upon which education in TES is built, are integral components of the change implementation processes. Furthermore, the DiP addresses the questions "what", "why", and "how" of the intended change using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The leadership theories explored in leading the change are transformational and culturally responsive leadership; Critical theory, however, is the overarching theory that frames the change process because its tenets align with the leadership theories and promote social justice, equity, inclusion, and decolonization. For the desired outcomes to be achieved using a composite solution, the DiP embraces Nadler Tushman's congruence model for gap analysis, Deszca et al.'s change path model for leading the change, an integrated framework (e.g., Hirsch's framework and Deszca et al.'s model) for the change implementation plan, Haiilo's framework for change communication plan, and Deming's PDSA model for monitoring and evaluation of the change process. It is envisaged that effective facilitation of the change process by the change agents, and active engagement of all participants, will lead to improved cultural competence, higher retention rate of principals, and knowledge mobilization across TES.

Keywords: transformational leadership, culturally responsive leadership, mentorship program, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, cultural competence, knowledge mobilization

Executive Summary

The Tundra Education System (TES), through effective policy implementation, training and support for principals, and strategic action plans has the mandate to empower and produce well-educated and self-reliant Indigenous youths ([Territorial] Government, n.d.). TES, however, lacks the culturally responsive leadership capacity to fulfil this mandate (Ferguson, 2013), which is evident in the inconsistent implementation of its inclusion and culturally relevant policies by principals (Niishi & Leroy, 2021, 2022); the problem of practice to be addressed in this DiP. There are three regions in TES and each has a regional school operation (RSO) under the leadership of the Executive Director (ED). A community in each region has a local school board referred to as the District Education Authority (DEA) which oversees the affairs of schools at the community level. The DEA has direct oversight of school operations in tandem with the Regional School Operations (RSO), and school finance. The governance structure of TES has about seventy percent non-Indigenous leaders and thirty percent Indigenous staff. Also, over eighty percent of principals identify as non-Indigenous. Indeed, the role of the principal in TES is demanding because they are often required to take on multiple roles with limited cultural competence, which often leads to work-related stress and low retention rate (Ljubicic et al., 2018; McGregor, 2013; Tester & Irniq, 2008).

Chapter one presents the historical and recent contexts of TES, as well as the factors that influence organizational change; among these factors are my leadership agency and positionality as a change initiator and change agent, the vision for change, theories that frame the problem of practice (PoP), and the complex issues underlying the PoP. Leadership agency, for example, can affect the success of any organization (Amanchukwu et al., 2015); as a result, the influence of TES leadership is extended to the organizational context and the responsiveness of principals to

the culture therein (Schein & Schein, 2017). In this chapter, the focus is influencing organizational change through a shared understanding of the PoP, by principals and educational partners. Also, the need to address political, environmental, social, technological, economic, legal, and human resources challenges, is highlighted. The framing of the PoP using transformational and culturally responsive leadership theories is articulated through a critical theory lens, and the vision for change, a major element of chapter one, is achieving a higher principal retention rate, improved leadership succession, and sustainability.

Chapter two presents the questions “what to change” and “how to change”, to explore the planning and development stages of the change process. The major elements, such as leadership approaches, frameworks for leading change, change readiness, leadership ethics, and change solutions, are discussed to address the above questions. For the “what to change” question, Nadler Tushman’s congruence model (1989) is used for gap analysis, for a detailed understanding of TES's current state relative to the desired future state. The alignment of all components of Nadler Tuchman’s framework, with the feedback loop feature, is required to achieve desired outcomes. More so, the proposed composite solution, a new TES leadership framework with an integrated mentorship program, must align with the other components of the framework. The “how to change” question is addressed using Deszca et al.’s change path model; it is a structured, descriptive, and prescriptive model for leading change, using the four steps, awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization (Deszca et al., 2020). The change path model is an iterative process that facilitates change improvement through various stages with feedback from all participants and change agents.

The aforementioned leadership approaches, which are required to lead change, are applied in ways that motivate all participants, assess change readiness, and promote cultural

responsiveness throughout the change process. Indeed, the leadership approaches align with the fundamental leadership strategies in TES and promote ethically minded leadership (Khalifa et al., 2019; MacKinnon & Milic, 2018; Taylor, 2022). Before the commencement of the change process, organizational readiness is attained using surveys, interviews, focus-groups, and collaborative methods to assess participants' readiness. Knowing that leadership is contextual (Fisher, 2021), leading the change requires leadership cultural competence. The IQ principles of *Aajiiqatigiingniq* (decision-making through conversation and consensus), *Qanuqtuurunnarniq* (being innovative and resourceful to resolve a problem), *Piliriqatigiinniq* (working together for a common cause), *Pijitsirniq* (serving and providing for others), *Tunnganarniq* (fostering good spirits by being welcoming, open, and inclusive), and *Inuuqatiqiitsiarniq* (respecting others, caring for people, and relationship building), guide the leadership approaches during change implementation and promote the modelling of culturally responsive practice.

In chapter three, the connections between the change implementation plan, change communication plan, knowledge mobilization, and the monitoring and evaluation process, are explored to attain a successful change process. For an effective change implementation in TES, an integrated framework is adopted, which constitutes Hirsch's framework and Deszca et al.'s model. The integrated framework provides broader engagement of all participants and structured transitions during the change process. Furthermore, among other key elements discussed in this chapter is the significance of an effective communication plan, and participants' engagement in the change process. To answer the "why", "what", and "how" of the change (Beatty, 2015), Haiilo's (2023) four-stage change communication framework is at the heart of the change communication plan. It is worth noting that front-loading communication at the start of the change process and inconsistent communication during the process can contribute to the change

implementation failure (Malek &Yazdanifard, 2012). The change agents facilitate a dialogic communication method throughout the change process (Beatty, 2015; Simoes & Esposito, 2014), an approach to communication that focuses on promoting a dialogue between the change agents and participants. In addition, the implementation of Deming's PDSA cycle (Moen & Norman, 2009), an effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) model, promotes a process of capacity building in participants by revealing mistakes and offering paths for improvements (Hartung & Reimer, 2019; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Put together, the aforementioned plans and processes enable the creation of new knowledge (e.g., cultural competence) in TES, and the mobilization of the knowledge is through the four key elements—knowledge creation, knowledge exchange, strategies and tactics to advance learning, and levels of participants' engagement)—of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC, 2023) knowledge mobilization (KMb) framework.

This DiP, through existing research, has shown that leadership may vary based on the context and setting to which it is applied; according to Yukl (2013), it is a process of intentional influence on people in an organization for an intended goal or outcome. Furthermore, organizational improvement through the aforementioned change process, to address a problem of practice, can be positively influenced by building leadership capacity. To promote leadership succession and sustainability in TES, for example, principals must be supported and empowered to effectively implement TES inclusion and culturally relevant policies. Finally, to sustain and improve the organizational change, this DiP presents the next steps and future considerations, which include a cultural orientation workshop, cultural competence training, and basic language competence assessment. TES leadership practice must shift in ways that promote the significance of cultural competence and responsiveness as new principals assume their new roles.

Acknowledgements

The journey through this doctoral program and the completion of my DiP have been a dream come through. This would not have come to fruition without the support of my wife, Abisola Tomoloju, and Children (Eniola, Ayomide, and Princess Olabamidele), my appreciation for your unwavering faith and confidence in me cannot be expressed in words. During my doctoral program, I lost two of my siblings and it was a challenging time for my family, especially, my eighty-seven-year-old mother who also passed away a month after the passing of my sister and a few months to the end of my doctoral program. I dedicate this DiP to my late mother, Florence Olufunmilayo Tomoloju, may her soul rest in perfect peace.

Also, I would like to appreciate members of the K-12 cohort who have built a collegial bond from the beginning of the program to the end, as we support and encourage each other throughout the doctoral journey. Furthermore, my appreciation goes to all my instructors who contributed to this achievement, Dr. Scott Lowrey, Dr. Katie Maxwell, Dr. Erin Keith, Dr. Sonia Halpern, Dr. Ken MacKinnon, Dr. Dianne Yee, Dr. Rania Gameil, Dr. Erin Courtney, and my role model, Dr. Sonia Osbourne. It has been a great privilege to work with everyone of you; your feedback and support have made my doctoral journey seamless and successful. In addition, the guidance and instruction received from you have greatly deepened my knowledge, skills, and ability to become a better scholar-practitioner. Thank you all!

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List of Acronyms

ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
CIP	Change Implementation Plan
CNDEA	Coalition of Northern District Education Authority
DM	Deputy Minister
DEA	District Education Authority
DED	Director of Educator Development
ED	Executive Director
I	Indigenous
IQ	Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit
ISV	Inuit Societal Values
KMb	Knowledge Mobilization
KMbP	Knowledge Mobilization Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NI	Non-Indigenous
PDSA	Plan-Do-Study-Act
PESTEL	Political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal
PoP	Problem of Practice
RSO	Regional School Operations
SOS	Superintendent of Schools
TES	Tundra Education System
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

Glossary of Terms

Decolonization	Divesting of colonial ideology, power, ways of thinking and leading (Smith, 2012).
Followers	They are referred to as collaborators
Indigenous People	They are First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit with distinct social and cultural norms. They are tied to the lands and natural resources where they live. (Statistics Canada, 2021; United Nations, n.d.)
IQ Principles	All aspects of the traditional Inuit societal beliefs, culture, values, language, worldview, and social norms ([Territorial] Department of Education, 2007; McGregor, 2013).
Non-Indigenous People	These people do not identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit (Statistics Canada, 2021)
North	A geographical region in Arctic Canada
South	A geographical region in the southern part of Canada
Stakeholders	They are referred to as educational partners

Chapter 1: Problem Posing

School leaders assume a more critical role today than ever before. Principals especially, constitute a central position of authority and influence and are held accountable to provide evidence of school effectiveness (Oudat, 2021) and student learning outcomes. While earlier models of leadership emphasized a principal's managerial role, today's principals have countless roles and responsibilities that cut across all aspects of schools and involve community members (Medford & Brown, 2022; Oudat, 2021). School leaders are expected to lead and oversee a variety of functions. Medford and Brown (2022) argue that principals' roles are all-consuming, as they are expected to directly interact with all educational partners, establish collaboration with the school partners and external agencies, and serve as experts in numerous areas outlined by leadership standards and policies within the education system.

Tundra Education System (TES, pseudonym), an organization situated in Arctic Canada (North) has various challenges within its education system (Hall, 2015) and these require immediate intervention, especially in the areas of inclusive and culturally responsive leadership practice. In context, inclusive education in the North is built on Indigenous societal beliefs and values, with the combination of contemporary inclusive practices ([Territorial] Government, 2008). The cultural context of the region has made it more challenging for novice and experienced educators, especially those from the southern regions of Canada (South), to effectively implement the inclusion policy to its fullest, due to the amalgamation of Western and Indigenous inclusive concepts. McGregor (2013) examines education in the Arctic Canada context, in comparison to other Indigenous jurisdictions in Canada, and presents some of the challenges inherent in school leadership practice in TES. The report from McGregor's (2013) study aligns with some of my observations and experience concerning the inconsistent

implementation of inclusion and culturally relevant policies by school principals. This experience has informed the problem of practice (PoP) which will be discussed in this Dissertation-in-Practice (DiP).

This DiP will be presented in multiple folds (chapters one, two, and three) to address the "What" (Problem Posing), "Why" (Planning and Development of Change Process), and "How" (Communication, Implementation, and Evaluation) of the change process respectively. In chapter one, I will introduce the complexity within the leadership agencies in TES, my positionality, leadership lens, organizational context, leadership PoP and theoretical framing of the PoP.

Leadership Position, Positionality, and Lens

Understanding the complex nature of change is important and necessary to facilitate true cultural change (Fisher, 2021; Fullan, 2002, Lumby & Foskett, 2011). As a change agent and an educational leader in TES, it is important to reflect on my positionality, leadership style, and worldview. My leadership styles and practices are situated within Capper's epistemological framework under the modernism ideology (Capper, 2019). These styles are guided by critical theory epistemology to bring about social change and decolonization within the Indigenous context.

Positionality

I have been privileged to practice in Africa, England, the United States, and Canada within twenty-seven years of experience. These experiences have enhanced a positive professional interaction with colleagues and students from different cultural backgrounds across the territory. I relocated to the North as a classroom teacher with a wealth of experiences and later sought administrative opportunities in TES. As a minority of African descent, growing up as a child, my parents were very passionate about sharing with less privileged people, and being

respectful and tolerant of other people despite their socio-economic background, race, ethnicity, culture, and religion. These values were well ingrained in me as part of my cultural values. Growing up in a middle-class family and among the less privileged families in the western part of Africa has positively shaped my worldview as a leader. Most importantly, my recent experience in Arctic Canada has greatly influenced my leadership practice due to the awareness of the residential school system's impact on Indigenous people (TRC, 2015), especially, in the areas of loss of language, poverty, social injustice, and generational trauma.

In Africa, I have witnessed the impacts of colonization, poverty, and the inability of families to send their children to school for financial, economic, and socioemotional reasons. Also, a lack of resources in the public schools to support students, staff, and principals. In some cases, the teachers in remote and some urban communities are unqualified, and some children walk miles to attend school. According to Brighouse et al. (2016), the understanding or experience, by an individual, of what constitutes human well-being helps to activate the needed knowledge, disposition, attitude, and skills to aspire for. All these images and experiences have somehow influenced my leadership positionality. It is evident from my positionality that I align with a critical theory epistemological worldview, the concern for the oppressed and disadvantaged people (Capper, 2019), to bring about a change that will empower principals to effectively implement inclusion and culturally relevant policies to promote leadership succession and sustainability in TES.

I acknowledge the fact that my gender as a male and minority of African descent may tend to create biases in my view of the problem inherent in TES, due to colonization and slavery experienced by my grandparents. Education involves a very socially dynamic environment; therefore, we need to use our current realities to shape research within the education system that

is emboldened by reflective practice (Ersozlu, 2016). If we embrace French's (2016) definition of mindset, as a combination of perception, beliefs, dispositions, and thoughts that have implications on professional practices, it means that when we know ourselves, as professionals; what our beliefs are and how those beliefs shape our practice, we can better serve our students, staff, and community. Thus, leadership critical self-reflection can influence how leaders interact with students, staff, and educational partners to promote an equitable and inclusive mindset in schools. As leaders, we all need to consistently question our values and the philosophy that guides our practice (Ersozlu, 2016). We must immerse ourselves in critical reflective practice, which is a way to address the issues associated with social injustice and decolonization in an increasingly complex Indigenous environment due to the perceived revisitation of colonization ideology in the 21st century through education (Tester & Irniq, 2008). That being said, our personal and professional experiences influence how we lead as educational leaders (Zeichner & Liston, 2014). Furthermore, our reflective ability is partially rooted in the extent to which those experiences shape our practice (York-Barr et al., 2016; Zeichner & Liston, 2014), and allow us to continue to grow as thoughtful leaders.

I concur with the notions presented by Zeichner and Liston (2014) and York-Barr et al. (2016), which corroborate the early work of Connelly and Clandinin (1990), that images are retrieved from our narratives of experiences, and these images are available to us as guides to future actions. Every leader is unique, and leaders develop their leadership skills based on how they are positioned, and position themselves, in professional settings. It will be fair to say that experience is a distinct, situational phenomenon, strengthened by the contexts in which it is acquired and used, as supported by the aforementioned studies.

Leadership Position and Lens

In every leadership practice, context matters (Brauckmann et al., 2020) and leadership may vary based on the context and setting to which it is applied (Schein & Schein, 2017). The influence of leadership is extended to the organizational culture and the responsiveness of staff to the culture therein (Fisher, 2021; Lumby & Foskett, 2011; Schein & Schein, 2017). Navigating the space between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school leaders' worldviews is complex and demands allyship guided by ethical engagement and relationality (Osmond-Johnson & Turner, 2020; Steinman, 2020).

According to Capper (2019), the tenets of critical theory support addressing issues that concern the oppressed and disadvantaged people; it promotes social justice within the education system with emphasis on disrupting power via communication and dialogue, praxis, and leadership practice. An epistemological stance that is grounded in the belief that knowledge is shaped by power dynamics and social structure (Scotland, 2012). Furthermore, Taylor and Brownell (2017) note that the complex and evolving education system demands critical leadership that can align and re-align with the expectations that come with the change within our education system.

Indeed, my years of leadership experience in Arctic Canada and my understanding of the culture, history, and current status of TES are indispensable as a change agent. As a superintendent of schools (SOS) within TES, I am entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing and inspiring an environment of respect for Indigenous cultural identity based on Inuit societal values (ISV) and the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ) principles, particularly the principles of *Pijitsirniq* (serving and providing for family and/or community) and *Aajiiqatigiinniq* (decision-making through discussion and consensus) among the eight IQ principles listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Principles

IQ Principles	Definitions
Innuqatigiitsiarniq	Respecting others, relationships and caring for people.
Tunnganarniq	Fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.
Pijitsirniq	Contributing to the common good through serving and leadership.
Aajiiqatigiingniq	decision-making through discussion and consensus.
Pilimmaksarniq	Concept of skills and knowledge acquisition.
Piliriqatigiingniq	Working together for a common cause.
Qanuqtuurunnarniq	Being innovative and resourceful in seeking solutions.
Avatittingnikkamatsiarniq	Respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment.

Note. Adapted from [Territorial] Department of Education (2007). *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Education framework for Territorial curriculum*. [Territorial] Government.

The IQ principles depict the Inuit societal values, beliefs, culture, language, worldview, values, and social organization ([Territorial] Department of Education, 2007). These expectations align with my positionality as a minority, who grew up in a cultural setting with similarities to Indigenous culture and tradition. As a senior manager within the governance structure of TES, I play a critical role in informing the senior management team and other educational partners on how to best support school principals, build leadership capacity, and improve student achievement. I am responsible for ensuring that principals are provided with appropriate support to succeed. With these responsibilities come trusting relationships with other

key actors and educational partners within my scope of influence, to initiate a change based on the IQ principles, *Aajiiqatigiigniq* and *Piliriqatigiingniq* (Smits & Bowden, 2015).

Research has shown that school leaders are positioned to operate in a complex environment resulting from the intricacies of navigating the political, social, and economic demands of our society (Biesta, 2010). Northouse (2021), however, emphasizes the appropriateness of transformational and culturally responsive leadership approaches to increase the level of motivation among school principals. Demoralization on the side of the principals, for example, can appear in different shapes and forms, especially when the feeling of operating in a silo with limited support is overwhelming. As an SOS, aside from supporting principals, I must ensure that the strategic plans, goals, and objectives set out for schools are being pursued and adhered to. In addition, I must ensure that the education program is being delivered as directed by the Minister of Education; while I work closely with principals and the District Education Authority (DEA), the local school board, on school-related matters to create a safe school. The next section will present the organizational context of TES and highlight the key actors within the governance structure.

Organizational Context

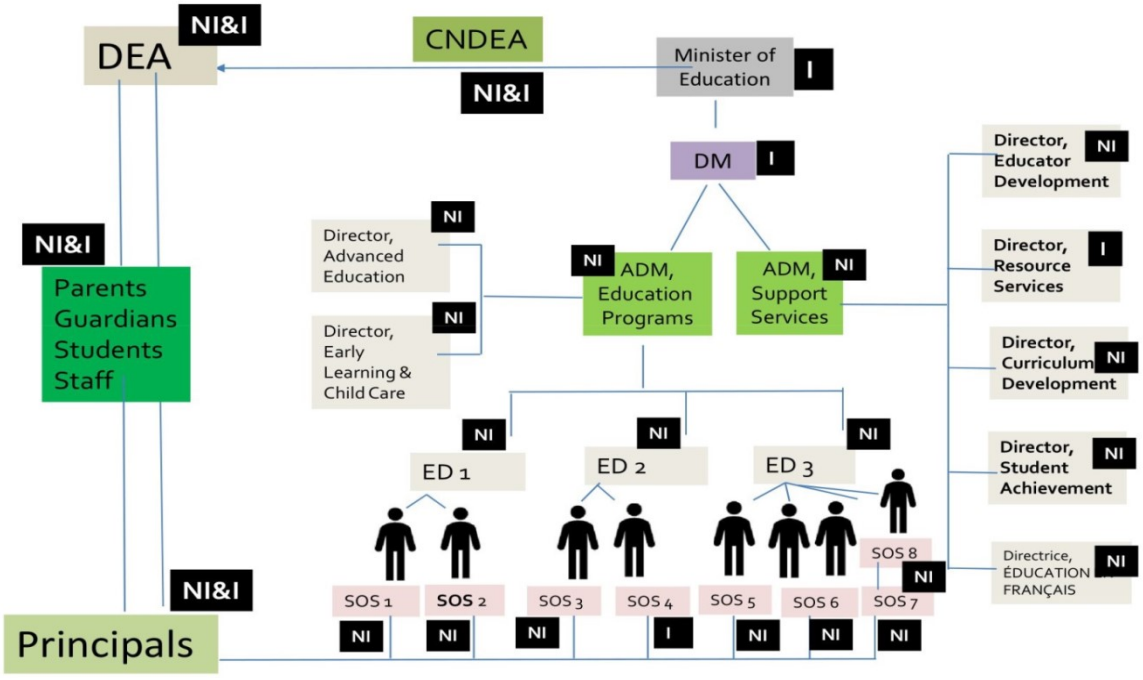
Brauckmann et al. (2020) critically examine the existing perspectives of educators and researchers on the challenge of establishing a more context-sensitive school leadership program. They introduce the Swedish model of principal preparation as an example of a more context-sensitive leadership preparation program. A deeper understanding of the relationship between context and leadership practice will, therefore, be valuable to the succession and sustainability of leadership in TES as argued by Brauckmann et al. (2020), Fisher (2021), Lumby and Foskett (2011), and Tester and Irniq (2008).

Historical Context

Before the official recognition of the territory upon which TES is situated, the education system in the North was managed by the church in conjunction with the Government of Canada, which is historically known as the residential school system (Tester & Irniq, 2008; TRC, 2015). The education system was founded on Western education system practice (Berger, 2009). Tester and Irniq (2008) and Berger (2009) emphasize that the loss of Inuit language, tradition and cultural values led to the intervention of Inuit leaders, demanding an education system that promotes Inuit societal values, tradition, language, and culture. The current practice at TES still reflects elements of colonial educational practice and it is also evident in the composition of the leaders within the governance structure, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

TES Governance Structure



Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *The governance structure of TES*.

In 1999, the territory was officially recognized and a land claim agreement between the Inuit and Her Majesty the Queen in the right of Canada was signed. This agreement mandates the territory to promote and manage the values, tradition, culture, and vision of its people. It is an agreement that promotes self-governance and is rooted in Inuit self-determination to be governed by Inuit (Tungavik Federation of [Territory], 1993). This achievement led to the conversation on creating culturally relevant curricula for the newly emerging TES. According to Berger (2009) and McGregor (2012), TES foundational documents are rooted in the traditional Inuit ways of knowing and guided by the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ) principles.

Aylward (2009) emphasizes that the integration of the IQ principles into the operations of TES depicts "using the community values of their students and schools as a basis for pedagogies while at the same time raising their socio-political consciousness to avoid oversimplification and essentialist views of cultures" (p.78). More so, knowledge acquisition and the actions of individuals within TES are guided by the IQ principles (Mercer, 2019). For instance, the Education Act provides the DEA with the mandate to design local education programs for students through consultation with the principals and oversight by the [Territorial] Department of Education. The DEA members are predominately Indigenous people, but the bigger communities have a few non-Indigenous individuals, with years of residency in Arctic Canada, as members. The [Territorial] Education Act of 2008 guides the operations of TES. According to McGregor (2012), "the Act calls on the education system to account for linguistic, cultural, and local relevance to Inuit" (p. 27); it governs all aspects of the education system from kindergarten to grade twelve, including the design, administration, and operation of the territory's education system ([Territorial] Government, 2008). As stated in the Education Act ([Territorial] Government, 2008), "It is the responsibility of the Minister of Education, the district education

authorities (DEA) and the education staff to ensure that Inuit societal values, principles, and concepts of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit are incorporated throughout, and fostered by, the public education system" (p. 2).

Organizational Structure

The structure of an organization speaks to its operational efficacy and influence on the system in its entity, as well as the management of the external factors that have influences on the organization (Ahmady et al., 2016; Gupta, 2015; Zheng et al., 2010). An organization cannot exist in isolation and there must be connectivity between its components and the environment, what Deszca et al. (2020) refer to as an open system concept. In TES, the organizational structure and operations are rooted in a transformational leadership approach (Khan et al., 2020; Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016) and underscored by structural functionalism epistemology (Capper, 2019). The transformational leadership approach aligns with Indigenous ways of leading (Stephens & Tallman, 2014), however, the primary focus of structural functionalism epistemology is efficiency, and it aligns with Bolman and Deal's (2017) structural frame and the top-down leadership approach. There seems to be a misalignment between the organizational leadership structure and the Indigenous context, nevertheless, the three tiers of systems (micro, meso, and macro levels) within the TES organizational structure will be discussed in the next sections.

Micro (Community) Level

Schools at the micro level are managed by the DEA, known as the local school board in other jurisdictions in Canada. The DEA is made up of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members and is responsible for providing locally developed programs ([Territorial] Government, 2008). The DEA has the mandate, under the Education Act, to establish local

education program enhancements as additional courses in all grade levels, or as modifications to the curriculum ([Territorial] Government, 2008). As a result, the Minister is required to provide funding to support education programs at the community level. The DEA is particular about promoting culturally relevant activities and programs in schools. The objectives of the DEA align with the need for consistent and effective implementation of culturally relevant policies in TES. The DEA can influence the hiring of principals and the provision of support and resources for schools. As an SOS, I work in collaboration with the DEA concerning school programs, policy implementation, and school operations.

In TES, there are forty-five schools within the three regions of the territory, and each school is categorized as K-12 (kindergarten to grade 12), elementary (Kindergarten to grade 6), middle school (grades 7-9), or secondary (grades 10-12). The grouping of grades within schools varies from community to community. Also, the type of school in each community is informed by the population and the school-age children and youths between the ages of five and twenty-one. Smaller communities have K-12 schools and some bigger communities have up to three schools except for the territorial capital which has four schools.

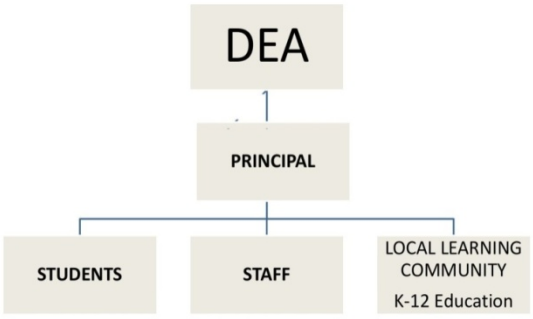
It was reported in the Department of Education annual report ([Territorial] Department of Education, 2021) that the student population in TES was about 10,902 and the territorial-wide student attendance rate was 57.7%. The low attendance rate is often linked to students' disengagement and dropping out of school for various reasons. Furthermore, the number of high school graduates in the 2020-2021 school year was reported to be about 287 and the graduation rate was about 40% ([Territorial] Department of Education, 2021), which has implications on the number of Indigenous graduates pursuing post-secondary institutions. This data shows the need

for a change by assessing the current leadership practice in TES and addressing the identified problem toward the desired vision.

The principals at the micro level are entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing and inspiring an environment of respect for Inuit cultural identity based on Inuit societal values (McGregor, 2012, 2013). The voices of parents, guardians, and students are heard through the DEA and principal, as shown in Figure 2. This is vital to decision-making, governance, and policy implementation in TES. Most importantly, it promotes the collective responsibility of empowering the northern students.

Figure 2

TES Micro Level Governance Structure



Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *TES governance structure at the micro level*.

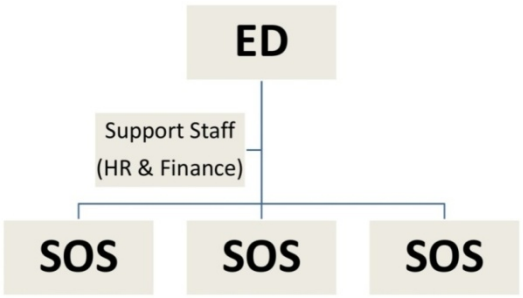
Meso (Regional) Level

There are three regional school operations (RSO) within TES. Each regional school operation is under the leadership of the Executive Director (ED), as shown in Figure 3. As a member of the senior management team, the ED helps to ensure the effective delivery of education program plans in each region and provides strategic leadership by setting strategic direction for the region. Furthermore, the ED supervises the SOS and other regional staff while

ensuring that the services and supports they provide align with the IQ principles. The SOS works closely with the regional office staff and the divisions within the Department of Education concerning support and policy implementation at the micro level. It is worth noting that the number of schools in each region varies, as well as the dialectical differences from one region to another.

Figure 3

TES Meso Level Governance Structure



Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *TES governance structure at the meso level*.

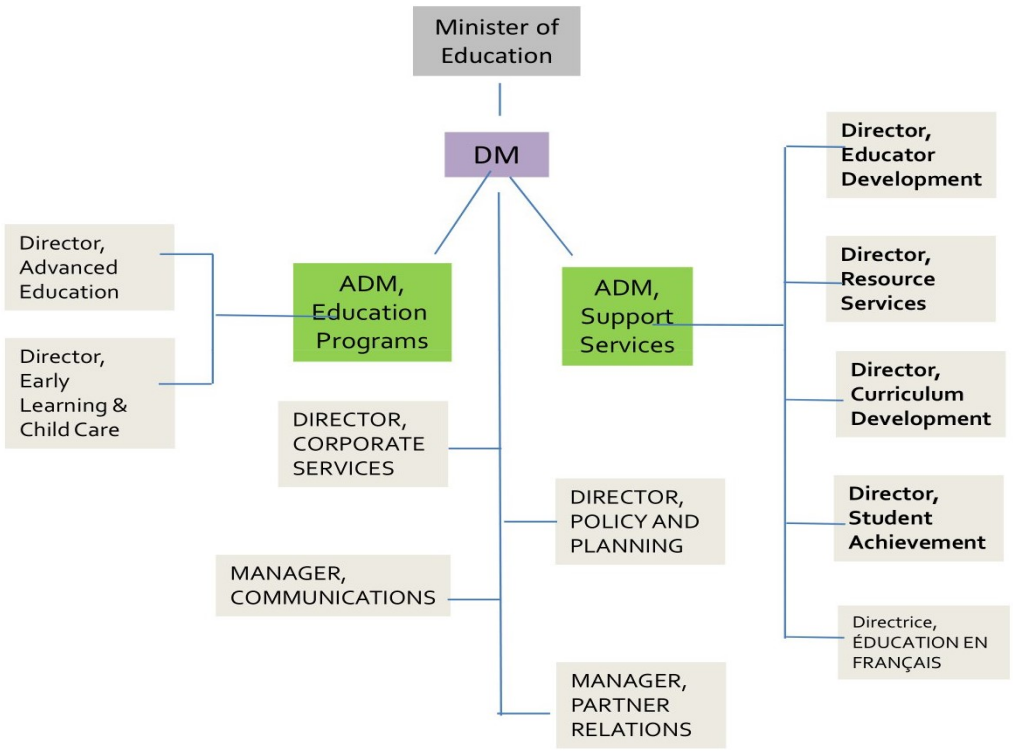
Macro (Territorial) Level

Figuratively, I consider the governance structure as the "Mitochondria", the powerhouse of TES (Vinten-Johansen, 2020), where decisions on various aspects of the education system at the macro level, are made. As shown in Figure 4, this is where the majority of the key actors within the TES governance structure are situated. In TES, the internal change drivers are the Minister of Education, Deputy Minister of Education (DM), Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADM), ED, SOS, Director of Educator Development (DED), DEA, principals, and other educational partners. Whereas, the external change drivers are political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal (PESTEL) factors. The DED is responsible for principals' professional

development, mentorship opportunities, and delivery of training designed to improve professional practice so that instructional, assessment, culturally responsive, and inclusive practices are of the highest standard possible. The Coalition of Northern District Education

Figure 4

TES Macro Level Governance Structure



Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *TES governance structure at the macro level*.

Authority (CNDEA) plays an active role in voicing the concerns of the DEAs to the Minister of Education, such as financial and human resource concerns at the schools. With organization context in mind, the leadership PoP to be discussed in the next section is inherent in TES leadership context and to address this problem requires a shift in TES leadership thinking toward a positive change in TES leadership cultural responsiveness.

Leadership Problem of Practice

A growing concern in the education system in the North is the lack of knowledge and understanding principals have for implementing inclusion and culturally relevant policies in their schools (Nishii & Leroy, 2021, 2022). The framing of the inclusion policy in TES often creates implementation challenges for non-Indigenous school leaders due to the lack of understanding of the IQ principles as a theory of knowledge (Ljubicic et al., 2018; McGregor, 2013; Tester & Irniq, 2008), the uniqueness of the region, and lack of an inclusive and culturally responsive leadership framework. Tester and Irniq (2008) describe IQ from a critical stance, not only limited to the knowledge of Inuit tradition, beliefs, values, and culture but "from a position of resisting coercion of consciousness today and for the future" (p. 98).

Limited studies on the Tundra Education System among other Indigenous contexts may be considered a contributing factor to the ongoing struggles embedded in the region's education system (Tester & Irniq, 2008). This notion raises the question of identifying the gaps and addressing them through critical, progressive, and culturally relevant studies (McGregor, 2013). "Advocating IQ can be a political act, advancing a social and cultural agenda that attempts to counter, or at least buffer, the totalizing agenda of a colonizing culture" (Tester & Irniq, 2008, p. 51); a notion that invites further studies as a means toward Calls to Action (Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC], 2015). Novice and experienced principals, especially non-Indigenous principals are often struggling in their professional practice due to the lack of resources and support as they begin their new roles in TES. That being said, the problem of practice under investigation is the inconsistent implementation of inclusion and culturally relevant policies by principals in Arctic Canada and the impact on leadership succession and sustainability.

Ciotti et al. (2019) argue that when an inclusive leadership practice is neither informed by culture-based knowledge nor congruent to Indigenous ways of learning; it creates a gap in student achievement and leadership sustainability. I can relate to the challenges faced by principals and the resultant symptoms, such as burnout, low morale, and workload-related stress (McGregor, 2013; Sallaffie, 2022). During my first year in the North, for example, I had no understanding of how Indigenous cultural knowledge could have a positive influence on student engagement in the classroom. I had to learn through collaboration and support from experienced returning staff. Sallaffie et al. (2022) corroborate the work of Berger and Epp (2007) and Aylward (2009) by presenting the experiences of some educators in Northern schools, and the feelings of being thrown to the wolves in an unfamiliar environment and system. This is a reflection of the existing literature on the experiences of non-Indigenous teachers and principals in Indigenous communities.

Framing of the Problem of Practice

Within the governance structure of TES are politically appointed individuals, an indication that principals work within a social, cultural, and political context. In light of this context, it is important to embrace transformational and culturally responsive leadership approaches that reflect culture-based knowledge and are congruent with Indigenous ways of learning and leading (Banwo et al., 2021; Ciotti et al., 2019; Khalifa et al., 2019; Khalifa et al., 2016). These approaches will promote effective inclusive leadership practice and alleviate the frequent ethical tension between Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators, in light of the residential school experiences and generational trauma among Indigenous people. Currently, it is of equity and ethical concern that the number of non-Indigenous principals surpasses that of the Indigenous principals for various reasons in Arctic Canada ([Territorial] Department of

Education, 2021). According to Lees et al. (2010), for example, the education system is not set up to effectively promote and encourage Indigenous people as preservice teachers.

Furthermore, principals are positioned to operate in a complex environment (Constantinides, 2023) that requires intentional critical reflection (Taylor & Brownell, 2017) irrespective of the contextual discourses within our school systems. Banwo et al. (2021) further argue that the complexity of the globally evolving education systems demands a combination of culturally responsive and positive school leadership approaches guided by critical self-reflection to promote equity, social justice, and inclusion in schools. I strongly agree with the notions presented by Banwo et al. (2021) regarding the building of trusting relationships in an organization to address the challenges faced by minoritized students, non-Indigenous and Indigenous staff, and school leaders.

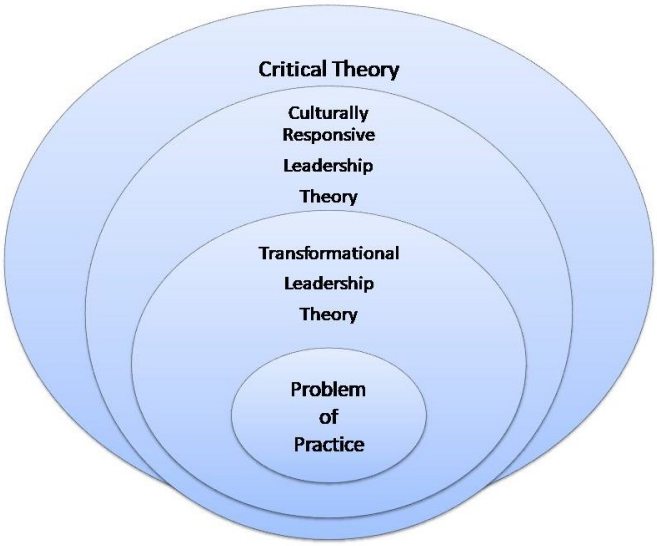
The leadership theories that frame the PoP in this DiP are built upon the inherent leadership approach (transformational leadership) in TES and align with the TES vision and mandate ([Territorial] Department of Education, 2007) which is guided by the IQ principles. The core theories are culturally responsive and transformational leadership theories, through a critical theory epistemological lens, as shown in Figure 5.

In light of the Indigenous context of TES, the leadership theories will also be explored through the following IQ principles' lenses: *Innuqatigiitsiarniq* (respecting others) depicts respectful communication about the vision and mission of the change plan with all principals and educational partners. It will be demonstrated through active listening and dialogic communication; *Qanuqtuurunnarniq* (being innovative and resourceful in seeking solutions) depicts the need, as a change agent, to be open-minded during conversations with all educational

partners to solicit new ideas to overcome some of the problems principals have faced implementing TES inclusion and culturally relevant policies. A principle that aligns with the

Figure 5

The Theories that Frame the Problem of Practice



Note: Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *The theories that frame the problem of practice in TES*.

tenets of culturally responsive leadership theory; and *Pilimmaksarniq* (capacity building through knowledge and skills acquisition) corresponds with a transformational leader's individualized experiences. The differences in principals' level of training, knowledge, and understanding will be kept at the forefront, before, during, and after the change process.

Complex Issues Underlying the Problem of Practice

Some of the issues underlying the PoP within the organizational structure of TES can be divided into external (e.g., environment, resources, culture, and history) and internal (e.g., people, task, formal, and informal structures within the governance structure) (Deszca et al., 2020). Issues such as lack of funding, training, resources, and interpersonal problems, for

example, are bound to arise during the change process. Also, political, economic, and social forces may constitute potential problems within the governance structure (Hall, 2015; McGregor, 2013; Tester & Irniq, 2008). In TES, principals are expected to be culturally responsive by integrating Indigenous values, beliefs, and culture into their practice to empower staff and promote student achievement ([Territorial] Department of Education, 2007; [Territorial] Government, 2008; McGregor, 2012). However, for practicing principals to be culturally responsive, they must have the ability to understand and respond to cultural knowledge, and the learning styles of ethnically diverse Indigenous students to make learning encounters more meaningful and relevant (Banwo et al., 2021; Ciotti et al., 2019; Fullan, 2011; Khalifa et al., 2019; Khalifa et al., 2016). Unfortunately, this is not the case for some non-Indigenous principals who are new to the North. Although a culturally responsive leadership concept is evident within the leadership framework of most jurisdictions across Canada, its applicability to the real experience of principals in Arctic Canada is limited in practice, due to factors such as generational trauma and high rate of poverty, to mention a couple.

Gordon Foundation (2018) reports that appropriate policy development is vital to the success of Indigenous governance, and Indigenous educational partners must have a voice in the decision-making for their people. Likewise, novice and experienced principals in the North must be well informed and supported; their voices must be heard to effectively implement the inclusion and culturally relevant policies across the territory. Stevenson (2007), in a study that was conducted in a predominately Inuit school, notes that the joint leadership of non-Indigenous and Indigenous leaders was vital to the success of the school vision in an Indigenous setting, and the creation of an equitably just environment for all.

Early studies have shown the applications of critical theory in the education system to disrupt oppressive structures that favour certain groups over the minoritized others. (Dei, 2011, 2018; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2007; Foster, 1986; Kumashiro & Ngo, 2007; McLaren, 2007). Furthermore, the study carried out by Kandjanga (2023) corroborates the notion that leadership practice rooted in critical theory epistemology can address the issue of marginalization and create strategies toward change through the empowerment of people. It is about embracing an approach that aligns with Indigenous knowledge, culture, and traditions infused with modern concepts to build leadership capacity (Khalifa et al., 2019; Munroe et al., 2013). As a change agent, the leadership approach to be embraced must align with the stance of empowering the principals in TES to challenge inequities that disadvantage them in the area of implementing culturally relevant policies and promoting leadership capacity building.

For the educational concerns among Indigenous people to be addressed as reported by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), a culturally responsive leadership approach must be adequately supported to define effective leadership and student success in TES (TRC, 2015). Culturally responsive and transformational leadership approaches can help to alleviate ethical issues arising from biases, social injustice, inequities, and racism between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across Canada (Khalifa et al., 2019; MacKinnon & Milic, 2018; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021).

As an educational leader, I am passionate about building a positive school culture and lasting relationships with all educational partners to ensure the succession and sustainability of leadership in TES and, likewise, the improvement of student achievement. When students and staff are empowered through a culturally responsive leadership practice, the result is a successful and enjoyable experience (Banwo et al., 2021; Kandjanga, 2023; Khalifa, 2016). It is no surprise

that Mkhize et al. (2014) argue that professionals must understand the contextual implications of ethical decision-making in Indigenous settings, and the Indigenous societal beliefs and values must also be understood to promote effective inclusive practice. Culturally responsive leadership practice promotes inclusive environments and improved learning for students with culturally diverse backgrounds (Johnson & Fuller, 2014). It takes a reflective school leader to understand the effects of cultural responsiveness in promoting effective inclusive practice (MacKinnon & Milic, 2018).

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

Some students in Arctic Canada see no value in attending school for various reasons, for example, due to the impact of generational trauma rooted in the residential school experiences of their parents and grandparents, and poverty. Moreso, the appearance of majority settler teaching staff often reignites the historical educational experience of Indigenous people despite the settlers being allies to bring about positive change in the education system. To many Indigenous people, it is a reflection of the historical context of colonialism and the lack of cultural responsiveness in the schools (Castellano, 2014; Gordon Foundation, 2018). However, the emerging questions from these notions are: a) why are principals in TES struggling to implement the inclusion and culturally relevant policies?; b) what are the barriers to culturally responsive leadership practice in TES?; c) how can the identified problem be fixed? d) how can principals be further empowered to be culturally responsive leaders?; and e) how can leadership succession and sustainability be promoted in TES?

As noted in the annual report of the [Territorial] Department of Education (2021), 82% of educators in TES are non-Indigenous, and Indigenous educators are about 18%. The low percentage of Indigenous educators can be attributed to various challenges facing the Indigenous

youth to pursue post-secondary education. For example, most of the youths after completing high school tend to seek employment to support their immediate and extended families (Lees et al., 2010; McGregor, 2013). The need to support and provide for the family takes precedence over education among the Indigenous people of the North due to limited job opportunities. Most families survive off the land, hunting and engaging in handiwork such as sewing and carving (Tester & Irniq, 2008). In addition, non-verbal communication (e.g., the raising of the eyebrows) by an Indigenous student or staff to indicate a 'yes' response to a question, for example, could be unintentionally ignored or interpreted otherwise by a non-Indigenous school leader, thereby creating a communication breakdown, or severing the relationship. This can often lead to ethical dilemmas relating to the differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous school leaders regarding culture, values, race, and language.

On the issue of ethics, I reference the work of Shapiro and Stefkovich (2021) regarding the ethic of critique which is inherent in critical theory and awakens principals to the issues of social injustices and inequities in schools. Capper (2019) emphasizes the need for educational leaders to go beyond questioning and begin to critically examine themselves and their approach to ethical dilemmas. As noted by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2021), addressing ethical dilemmas is not a one-size-fits-all approach. The potential ethical dilemmas that may arise due to the different worldviews of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous principals in TES are inevitable. This notion must be acknowledged and addressed for an effective change process toward envisioned outcomes, which will be discussed in the next section.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

The notion that Indigenous people of Arctic Canada are conservative concerning the protection of their land, culture, tradition, and language is explicitly underscored in the

[Territory] Land Claim Agreement Act (Branch, 2022). In other words, the agreement provided the territory with a true self-governing status and an ethnic-based territorial government. The report of the Auditor General of Canada to the legislative assembly of [Territory] (Ferguson, 2013) on education in the North presents a case study of a group of grade 12 students examined over three years. The students had 30% higher grades in the classroom than obtained on the standardized Alberta diploma exams. This report identifies a gap in student achievement and a need for change to improve student achievement. Unfortunately, TES does not have standardized culturally relevant high school diploma exams for grade 12 students, and this could be the reason for the outcomes presented in the case study.

Post-colonialism, TES is instituted to promote culturally relevant pedagogy that engages students within the scope of Inuit societal beliefs and values, language, and culture. However, the current practice within the governance structure of TES is rooted in a structural functionalism epistemological approach with minimal elements of the Indigenous leadership approach (McGregor, 2013), which in totality is contrary to Indigenous ways of leading and learning. Capper (2019) notes that "the goal of structural functionalism remains efficiency, not equity. Thus, from a structural-functional epistemology, equity or social justice is not considered, implicitly or explicitly" (p. 41).

Decolonizing Education

According to Munroe et al. (2013), decolonizing education in the North will not only benefit the Indigenous students, but all students because research has shown that the 21st-century pedagogy is deeply rooted in Indigenous knowledge. Castellano (2014), a lead advocate for Indigenous education in Canada, argues that there is an urgent need for Indigenous knowledge to be overtly represented in the Canadian education system. Castellano's (2014) notion echoes

Weenie's (2009) argument on the need to critically examine the Indigenous educational approach and its importance in modern society. Iseke (2013), on the other hand, supports Weenie's (2009) notion from the perspective of fostering identity, facilitating well-being, connecting to the land, honouring language, infusing with teachings, and recognizing the inherent right to self-determination. Lopez (2020) asserts the need to decolonize educational leadership. She emphasizes that decolonizing education demands "resisting the ways in which colonial education separates the body from the mind of educators, and positions knowledge as emanating from the external" (p. 70). Lopez's (2020) argument aligns with the Indigenous belief that educational leaders can be empowered through the embodiment of knowledge from elders, Indigenous people, culture, history, and the land (Khalifa et al., 2019). The knowledge must be followed by deliberate practice that promotes decolonization against any appearance of colonization in the present time (Mackenthun & Mucher, 2021; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018).

Corroborating the notion presented by Schein and Schein (2017) that leadership may vary based on the context and setting to which it is applied, Northouse (2021) argues that leadership style must be adapted to different situations to be an effective leader. Through a critical lens, principals who are new to the North must be appropriately supported (Kolzow, 2020); they must actively engage in learning the Indigenous ways of leading and knowing, in addition to the wealth of personal and professional experiences they brought with them, which is also relevant to their leadership practice in TES. It is important to recognize these experiences and have principals construct new knowledge (Amineh & Asl, 2015) to help shape their leadership styles in the Indigenous context. Decolonization of leadership practice constitutes the need for non-Indigenous principals to critically examine their beliefs concerning Indigenous people and culture (Mackenthun & Mucher, 2021; Reynolds, 2013; Smith, 2012).

Vision for Change

I envision principals, through effective culturally responsive practice, to be open-minded to one or more ethical paradigms to resolve conflicts because issues relating to culture, religion, ethics of justice, ethics of care, and professionalism are inevitable in Indigenous communities. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2021) elaborate that ethical dilemmas do not have a one-size-fits-all solution. The aforementioned notions call for ethically minded leadership, that is, leaders who understand the potential ethical concerns that may arise in an Indigenous setting in light of residential school experiences and generational trauma. Principals must be able to create an inclusive environment for staff and students irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, and identity. It would be fulfilling to witness a change toward decolonization of education (Smith, 2012) and leadership practice due to the predominately Indigenous students in the territory. Decolonizing leadership from the stance of empowering and supporting school leaders (Khalifa et al., 2019; Lopez, 2020; MacKinnon & Milic, 2018) to be culturally responsive in practice through effective implementation of TES inclusion and culturally relevant policies. This desired outcome will promote leadership succession and sustainability in ways that culturally relevant pedagogy will be at the core of instructional strategies, thereby improving student achievement and encouraging aspiring school leaders to pursue their leadership ambitions due to positive school improvement.

In addition, I envision effective support for newly hired non-Indigenous principals in the areas of effective implementation of inclusion and culturally relevant policies, a vision that aligns with the expectations outlined in the TRC Calls to Action (TRC, 2015). Aylward (2009), in a study, notes that principals must actively engage in learning and understanding the IQ

principles to be more culturally responsive school leaders. The idea of risking the continuation of the colonial approach to schooling can emerge if the teaching and learning in schools is not deeply rooted in IQ principles (Berger, 2007, 2009).

Calls to Action

In an attempt to amend the bridges burnt between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, and the social injustice resulting from historical experiences of the residential school system, Calls to Action 62 to 65 of the TRC (2015) emphasize the significance of education and the need to integrate Indigenous content, culture, knowledge, and tradition into the curriculum in schools across Canada. According to the Government of Canada (2018), some of the objectives of the calls to action are to promote reconciliation through the building of capacity among students, staff and leaders in school, to promote respect for Indigenous culture and tradition, empathy, and Indigenous cultural knowledge (TRC, 2015).

The tension between education and the influence of politics is inevitable. In TES, for example, politicians are positioned to make decisions that may have implications for the education system. The tension is exacerbated by the need to promote culturally relevant instruction, assessment, and practice but there are limited Inuit educators in TES to support the mandate (Ferguson, 2013). Currently, the territory is struggling to retain Indigenous educators in schools because they can easily get a Government (e.g., non-teaching) job with more pay and less work-related stress. As a result, there is a disparity between the numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous principals practicing in TES, with the majority being non-Indigenous. As a change agent, I envision an education system that will uphold the calls to action 62 to 65 through the implementation of a change that promotes Indigenous voices at all levels of the organization (Gordon Foundation, 2018).

Organizational Challenges

It is worth noting that TES currently has no comprehensive leadership framework for school leaders, and no well-structured mentorship program facilitated by the Department of Education to promote leadership succession and sustainability. Looking back at the historical context of education in the territory and fast-forwarding to the current education system, progress has been made in TES; however, there lies complex and real discourses between the role of education and its purpose (Alyward, 2009) in promoting the Inuit culture, tradition, and language. That being said, the limited leadership capacity in TES and political inability may become impediments to achieving the desired outcomes.

The study by Gilham and Williamson (2014) centres around Alberta's inclusion model, for example, presents the case of students on the special needs spectrum who were excluded from education programs. Also, the article shows that developing and implementing an inclusion policy can be very challenging if it is not contextually formulated to meet the needs of all students in any jurisdiction in Canada. From the perspective of a superintendent of schools in TES, if a survey is conducted about principals' understanding of TES inclusion policy and culturally responsive leadership practice, the outcomes will differ depending on the individual experience of each principal in the region and interactions with the community. If the inclusion policy of a province, like Alberta, could be so confusing as presented by Gilham and Williamson (2014), TES is not immune from the same state of confusion in the implementation of its inclusion and culturally relevant policies, as most principals are currently experiencing. Moreso, aside from the challenges faced at the school level, the problems linked with the implementation of policies are often from inexactness within the government or policymakers (Greany &

Higham, 2021). Sometimes the ambiguity in responsibilities and financial commitment may be intentional or politically motivated (Gilham & Williamson, 2014).

As a change agent, I am positioned to thoroughly examine organizational culture and policies through a critical lens (Semantic Scholar, 2014), an approach that aligns with critical theory. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2021) note that it is essential for educational leaders, as in the case of TES, to move away from a top-down, hierarchical model for making decisions and, instead, to turn to a leadership style that emphasizes relationships and connections (Khalifa et al., 2016; Khalifa et al., 2019). As a change agent, I must deepen my knowledge of the concept of balancing "Top-down and Bottom-up" change processes due to my leadership position within the governance structure of TES and to facilitate an effective change implementation process at all levels (micro, meso, and macro), in collaboration with other change agents and TES leadership. My position as an SOS plays a critical role in informing the ED and other key actors within the governance structure on how to best support school leaders. This alliance enables task-driven collaboration between the initiator, facilitators (i.e., SOS, ED, ADM, DM, and DEA), and the implementer (DED) to bring about the desired outcomes. For example, if individuals with the desired skill sets and knowledge are not hired for the right positions and tasks within TES, it will have implications on the change process.

Conclusion

As a change agent, an in-depth understanding of the organization's dynamic, culture, and historical context is valuable to the gap analysis regarding the current and future state of the organization. In addition, the theoretical framing and leadership lens are essential in grounding the PoP within scholarly and professional knowledge. I recognize in chapter one that the challenges faced by novice and experienced principals in TES regarding leadership practice

could be daunting relative to student achievement, as echoed by Shields (2019). Principals, however, must effectively lead staff and students by embracing inclusive and culturally responsive leadership approaches in an Indigenous context. Mkhize et al. (2014) note that professionals must understand the contextual implications of ethical decision-making in Indigenous settings, and the Indigenous societal beliefs and values must also be understood to promote effective inclusive practice. It is therefore essential to ensure effective leadership practices that promote leadership succession and sustainability in TES. As noted above, it is not going to be a "cut and paste" process but one that demands allyship through a critical lens, rooted in the eight IQ principles. In chapter two, the planning and development of the change process will the explored toward a better understanding of an effective change implementation process, a topic that will also be discussed later in the DiP.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

As part of the planning and development process, organizational leaders are positioned as change drivers, a role that calls for an assessment of ways to achieve leadership competence among aspiring organizational leaders (Kolzow, 2020). In chapter one, I argued that the understanding of organizational context, culture, leadership position and positionality, vision, and goals are vital ingredients for effective planning, development, and leading change (Kolzow, 2020; Schein & Schein, 2017). In the case of the Tundra Education System (TES), for instance, principals will benefit from a positive change process by TES leadership, through effective change planning and development. According to Kumarasinghe and Dilan (2021), the understanding and development of leadership inform how to lead a change within a leader's scope and agency.

Furthermore, the organizational changes, such as organization-wide, subsystem, transformational, incremental, remedial, and developmental (Kumarasinghe & Dilan, 2021), show that leading change is not a one-size-fits-all approach; rather, it is indicative of the need for various leadership competencies to navigate an organizational change successfully. Given that leadership practice is contextual (Fisher, 2021), leadership competence must align with organizational context, vision, and goals (Fullan & McEachen, 2018; Lumby & Foskett, 2011). Indeed, the inconsistency in the implementation of culturally relevant policies by principals in TES hinges on their limited leadership cultural-competence skills. This chapter will focus on the "why" of the Dissertation-in-Practice (DiP) by presenting the leadership approaches to change, the framework for leading the change process, change readiness, and solutions to address the problem of practice (PoP). These topics will be presented through the lenses of equity, ethics, social justice, and decolonization.

Leadership Approaches to Change

Leadership plays a significant role in an organization, and the success of any organizational change relies on the leadership approaches and the organizational culture (Schein & Schein, 2017). If applied effectively, the understanding of transformational (Cobanoglu, 2021; Northouse, 2021) and culturally responsive leadership approaches (Banwo et al., 2021; Ciotti et al., 2019; Khalifa et al., 2019) can help transform an organization. From the perspective of liberalism, positive social change results from individualized empowerment and a progressive mindset (Plazek, 2012); this notion aligns with the early work of Bass (1990), who presents the transformational leadership approach as one that brings about change in individuals through the motivational skills of a leader. Moreover, through a critical lens, the aforementioned leadership approaches align with the notion of empowerment to address the PoP identified in TES. Non-Indigenous principals, for example, irrespective of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, language, and culture, should not have to contend with challenges in the implementation of TES culturally relevant policies. An examination of leadership through critical self-reflection, however, can improve how change agents, principals, and TES leadership interact with each other before, during, and after the change process (Ersozlu, 2016; Lopez, 2020; Shields, 2019).

Transformational Leadership Approach

The concept of the transformational leadership approach was first introduced by Burns (1978), and it focuses on the collaboration of leaders and collaborators (e.g., followers), through leadership motivational skills and influence, to achieve common goals. This leadership approach is about transformational change in individuals and organizations to achieve collective efficacy (Northouse, 2021). Early research has shown that the efficacy of teachers can be elevated by a school leader through a transformational leadership approach (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Leithwood

& Jantzi, 2005), thereby increasing student achievement. This notion is corroborated by the recent work of Northouse (2021) who argues that followers, whom I refer to as collaborators in this DiP, are positively influenced by transformational leaders, to raise their level of morality and shared vision.

Transformational leadership is foundational to leadership practice within TES because it will facilitate the swift adaptability of principals to the change process. In recognition of this connection, leaders have always linked leadership efficacy to the transformational leadership approach (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016; Northouse, 2021; Wang et al., 2011). In TES, it is about motivating aspiring school leaders, one of the core tenets of transformational leadership theory (Hooper & Bernhardt, 2016; Northouse, 2021). Moreso, the transformational leadership approach is known to promote effective leadership practice without leading by power or authority but by passion and critical thinking (Jung et al., 2009), which results in communicating effectively and leading by example (Taylor, 2022). When aspiring and newly hired non-Indigenous experienced principals are motivated and supported, it promotes leadership succession and sustainability within TES (Hooper & Bernhardt, 2016).

Culturally Responsive Leadership Approach

Embracing a culturally responsive leadership approach, rooted in critical theory, calls for ethically minded leadership (Khalifa et al., 2019; MacKinnon & Milic, 2018), that is, leaders who understand the potential ethical concerns that may arise in an Indigenous context. One reason for choosing this approach is that it aligns with the involvement of students, parents, staff, and community voices in the change process (Antrop-González, 2011). In addition, the leadership approach, when applied effectively by change agents, will help create an inclusive environment for staff and students irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status,

and identity. As a change leader, I must be ready to examine organizational culture and leadership cultural responsiveness through a critical lens; according to Capper (2019), one of the main tenets of critical theory is to critically examine the issue of systemic social injustice within educational organizations. By extension, this theory has supported educational reform in the areas of decolonization, equity, and inclusion (Semantic Scholar, 2014).

When school leaders are provided with the appropriate tools and support, it activates interior freedom, leading to authentic freedom and desired outcomes (Gary, 2006). In light of the Calls to Action 62 to 65 (TRC, 2015), it is my responsibility to lead change in a way that promotes Indigenous culture and to be mindful of the generational trauma among Indigenous people from the experiences of the residential school system and colonization. I will acknowledge the ongoing healing process and the knowledge that the education system, in which we practice, has been used in the past to rob the Indigenous people of their cultures, languages, and communities through the residential school system (Freeman et al., 2018).

Leadership and school culture are inseparable, as argued by Khalifa et al. (2016). More so, context matters in leadership practice and the cultural responsiveness of principals to the context often results in improved student outcomes for minoritized students (Banwo et al., 2021; Khalifa et al., 2016; Khalifa et al., 2019). Leadership practice has implications for the growth and success of any organization, especially in the areas of organizational improvement (Amanchukwu et al., 2015). The influence of the culturally responsive leadership approach is extended to the organizational culture and the responsiveness of principals and staff to the culture therein (Schein & Schein, 2017). In addition, leading change through transformational and culturally responsive leadership approaches focuses on establishing a vision and motivating collaborators. The approaches can be applied to a wide range of contexts, and they permit change

agents to determine individual differences that move collaborators forward to accomplish more than what is expected of them during a change process (Northouse, 2021).

Framework for Leading the Change Process

To lead a change process effectively, change agents need to understand both "what to change" and "how to change"; an in-depth understanding of an organization's dynamics, culture, and history is valuable to the gap analysis at each level of an organization. Moreso, understanding the complex nature of change is an important component of facilitating true cultural change (Fullan, 2002, 2007; Fullan & McEachen, 2018). In the next couple of sections, I will elaborate on "what to change" and "how to change" through a critical lens, using conceptual frameworks.

What to Change

Using Nadler and Tushman's congruence model (1989) for the gap analysis in TES (see Appendix A), change agents will work collaboratively to bring about gap identification through the breakdown of the organizational system into manageable parts (Wyman, 2004). This approach will facilitate a better understanding and prediction of the alignments between the organizational components for the best fit (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). As shown in Figure 6, the model is divided into the following sections: the input, which plays a role in influencing what TES chooses to do in the change process; solutions, which must be in sync with inputs and the transformational components; the transformational process presents the alignment or misalignment of the internal components, and the expectation is that all the internal components must align with solutions for a desired outcome; the output shows the result of the entire process, and congruence must be achieved among all components to achieve a desired output; and the

feedback loop is used to address the unfit status of components within the framework to bring about realignment.

Furthermore, under the input section of the model, the external factors depict the Inuit societal beliefs, values, and traditions that have implications on the internal components (the governance structure, participants, roles and responsibilities of individuals in the organization, and outputs). I and the other change agents must understand what is required, and how to carry out a gap analysis to devise a strategy for the transformation process section, where the organizational components align (Kolzow, 2020). Moreso, to address the potential issues of social injustices, inequity, and ethical concerns during the gap analysis, all change agents must be knowledgeable and aware of the organization's culture, to bring about the expected change (Banwo et al., 2021; Khalifa et al., 2016; Schein & Schein, 2017). As discussed in chapter one, for example, TES leadership constitutes a majority of non-Indigenous people, which may present differences in worldviews; however, by embracing culturally responsive and transformational leadership approaches, change agents can effectively engage with all educational partners, collaborators, and key actors to alleviate or eliminate resistance to change (Kolzow, 2020).

Furthermore, I will examine organizational culture through a critical lens, in tandem with the other change agents, while evaluating organizational readiness for change through quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. According to Ersozlu (2016), for change to be accomplished toward effective implementation of inclusive and culturally responsive leadership practice, I must be able to critically evaluate my leadership practice to support and enhance the change process in meaningful ways. Research has shown that professional development, collaborative support, and critical reflection are necessary to achieve a successful positive change (Göker & Bozkus, 2017; Renihan, 2012; Sallaffie et al., 2022). In addition, there

will be an assessment of TES readiness for the change and the assessment process will be discussed in the subsequent section.

How to Change

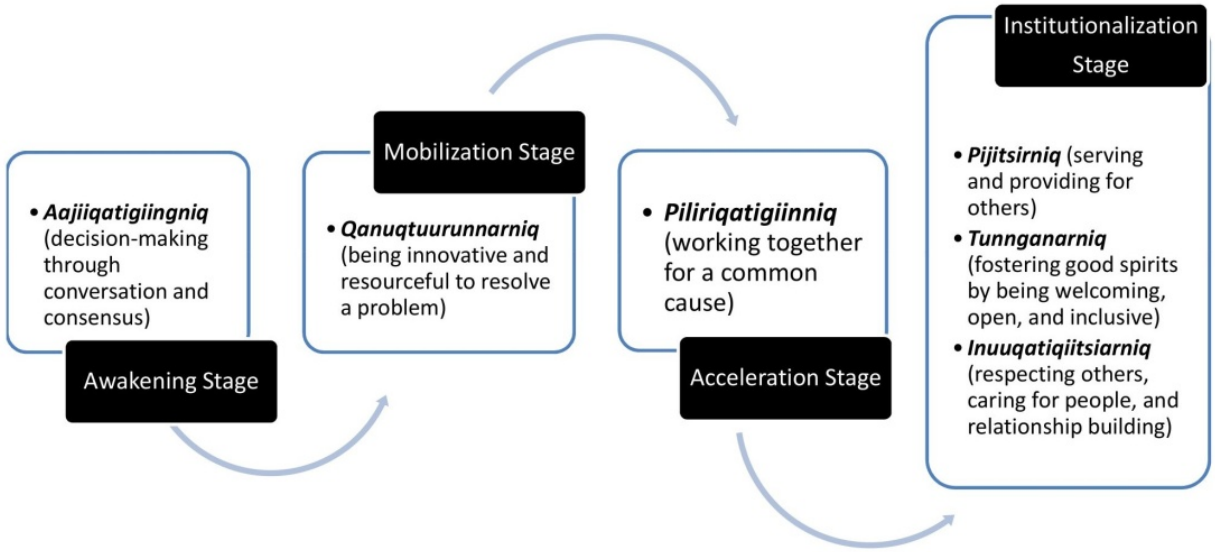
Over the years, researchers have proposed various frameworks for leading change processes in organizations; some of these frameworks are prescriptive and descriptive, which define the suitability of an individual framework or combination of frameworks for a specific change process. Amongst the various change process frameworks, the change path model (Deszca et al., 2020) combines both prescriptive and descriptive processes for leading change, making it a unique and preferred framework for my PoP. The change path model presents more instructions, details, and directions, which makes it the best model for my PoP. In terms of simplicity, for example, it is more than Lewin's three-stage model but less than Kotter's eight-stage model (Deszca et al., 2020). Most importantly, the simplicity will enhance adaptability by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants due to the differences in worldviews and leadership capacities. On this premise, I select the change path model to lead the "how to change" process and each stage within the model will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

Awakening

This stage focuses on the need for change through gap analysis and the emergence of a new vision for the organization. The gap analysis results from the evaluation of the current and desired future state of the organization (Deszca et al., 2020). To achieve a progressive and well-thought-through change process, the implications of the external factors on the alignment of the internal components of the transformational process (Nadler & Tushman, 1989), must be considered at this stage. Also, the awakening stage will facilitate dialogue and collaboration among change agents, collaborators, and other educational partners, to identify gaps and barriers

Figure 6

IQ Principles and Change Path Model



Note. Adapted from Deszca, G., Ingols, C., & Cawsey, T. (2020). *Organizational change: An action-oriented toolkit* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

in the areas of leadership practice, retention, succession, and sustainability. At this stage of the change path model, the IQ principle, *Aajiiqatigiingniq* (decision-making through conversation and consensus) guides the engagement of all participants (see Figure 6). An in-depth understanding of the IQ principles and values is vital to the effective implementation of the change process through a culturally responsive lens, and this will be made possible through monthly consultation with Indigenous elders, and the knowledge keepers.

Mobilization

This stage explores the need for further dialogue with key actors and educational partners, to promote active engagement in the change process and provide additional rationale for the need for change (Deszca et al., 2020). Research has shown that the key to successful

mobilization is effective communication strategies (Beatty, 2015; Elving, 2005) through multiple channels and shared understanding among the change agents, collaborators, and educational partners. The mobilization stage is guided by the IQ principle, *Qanuqtuurunnarniq* (being innovative and resourceful to resolve a problem). The deployment of this IQ principle will help to galvanize Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants to share their experiences toward achieving the desired outcome (Deszca et al., 2020); it will allow critical analysis of the current state of TES to inform the envisioned state.

Acceleration

This stage furthers the efforts displayed in the earlier stages, leading to the development and implementation of action plans which involve human resources, that is, people with desirable skill sets, whose abilities are required to support the change process. The acceleration stage aligns with Bolman and Deal's (2017) human resource frame of organizational change. In addition, the human resource frame focuses on the alignment of the needs of people with the organizational needs to achieve a perfect fit (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Israel & Kasper, 2005). In the context of my PoP, change agents, within the human resource frame, are posited by Bolman and Deal (2017) as consensus-builders and facilitators of knowledge and change. The leadership approaches (transformational and culturally responsive) that will be explored to lead change in TES align with these tenets of Bolman and Deal's (2017) human resource frame (Khalifa et al., 2016; Northouse, 2021). Furthermore, at the acceleration stage, the IQ principle, *Piliriqatigiinniq,* (working together for a common cause) guides the communication process, planning, and collaboration between the change agents and other participants in the change process. It is a stage in which there is a shift in system thinking, structure, and function within TES. This shift demands flexibility and adaptability of all participants, during and after the

change process; it is at this stage that planning, building momentum, and handling of transition take place (Dezsca et al., 2020).

Institutionalization

This final stage marks the creation of new knowledge, and the feedback provided by all participants ensures the effectiveness of the change process. At this stage, principals will feel immersed in the Indigenous ways of knowing and leading. It is worth noting that challenges are associated with change, for example, uncertainty may lead to resistance (Terhart, 2013) to change. An effective change process, however, can be achieved through collaboration, effective communication, and a trusted relationship with all participants (Stewart, 2006; Stoll & Temperley, 2009). Furthermore, at the institutionalization stage, various IQ principles will be embraced: *Pijitsirniq* (serving and providing for others), *Tunnganarniq* (fostering good spirits by being welcoming, open, and inclusive), and *Inuuqatiqiitsiarniq* (respecting others, caring for people, and relationship building). The integration of the IQ principles in the change process reflects the importance of modelling culturally responsive practice at every level in TES (Khalifa et al., 2016, 2019).

Change Process Challenges

Obstacles are bound to be in the path of the change process (Terhart, 2013), for example, the need for additional funding may pose a delay to the swift implementation of the change process. Also, leadership training and the limitations in the area of human resources may create another level of challenges (Erwin & Garman, 2009; Jones & Van de Ven, 2016). A department within TES, for example, that will play a key role in the change process, often has high staff turnover due to limited Indigenous support staff in TES, leading to increased workload for incumbent staff and work-related stress. These challenges, however, can be alleviated through

effective communication, aligning resources to priorities, collaboration, proactiveness, and positive relationship-building with all participants (Beatty, 2015; Greany & Higham, 2021). A positive relationship within a leadership team helps to foster a safe environment where leaders feel comfortable and ready for change (Fullan & McEachen, 2018; Stoll & Temperley, 2009). The variability of leadership approach based on organizational context (Brauckmann et al., 2020) means that a change agent must be ready to face both external and internal resistance to the change process. Resistance to change is inevitable (Kumarasinghe & Dilan, 2021) and it is considered a natural emotion that must be addressed by identifying its root. It may, however, create an opportunity for change realization (Mento et al., 2002). That being said, TES readiness for the proposed change will be assessed through the process that will be discussed in the next section.

Organizational Change Readiness

The global education system is evolving and the readiness of the people in the system must be considered to transform our education system, through seeking new solutions to address potential organizational problems (Zayim & Kondakci, 2015). No wonder Shirley (2017) argues that educators are faced with various challenges within the evolving education system. A notion that echoes the statements of Biesta (2010), Meyer and Patuawa (2020), and Constantinides (2023), that educators are working in a complex system influenced by political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors. TES is a typical example of a complex system, plagued with historical experiences of colonization, in which peoples (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) with different worldviews are expected to work together for a common goal. Furthermore, early studies (Choi & Ruona, 2011; Lewin, 1951) have shown that failure can be attributed to a lack of readiness by the organizations, what Lewin (1951) referred to as an

ineffective unfreezing process before change implementation which has implications on outcomes. Indeed, many organizations have instituted changes that have not resulted in intended outcomes or sustainable change (Fullan, 2007, 2016; Fullan et al., 2018). To avoid this type of situation, a change readiness framework will be used to conduct a readiness assessment in TES and enhance the change implementation process.

Change Readiness Framework

Armenakis et al. (1993, 2007) argue that resistance to change, the importance of change agents' credibility; and balancing urgency with individual and organizational change readiness, correlate with effective implementation of change. In a recent study on organizational readiness, Chiu (2020) corroborates the work of Armenakis et al. (1993, 2007) by presenting the importance of individual readiness for change, and its implications for human resource and organizational development (Chiu & Ruona, 2011). The change readiness framework determines the readiness of participants for change before change implementation begins; it is an assessment process that facilitates the identification of individual and group perceptions of the change, and how to alleviate or eliminate resistance to change (Allaoui & Benmoussa, 2020). Organizational readiness in this DiP, therefore, is defined as individual or group readiness for change through collaboration (Jäppinen et. al., 2016) and active engagement to achieve a common goal (Wang et al., 2020) at the micro, meso, and macro levels in TES.

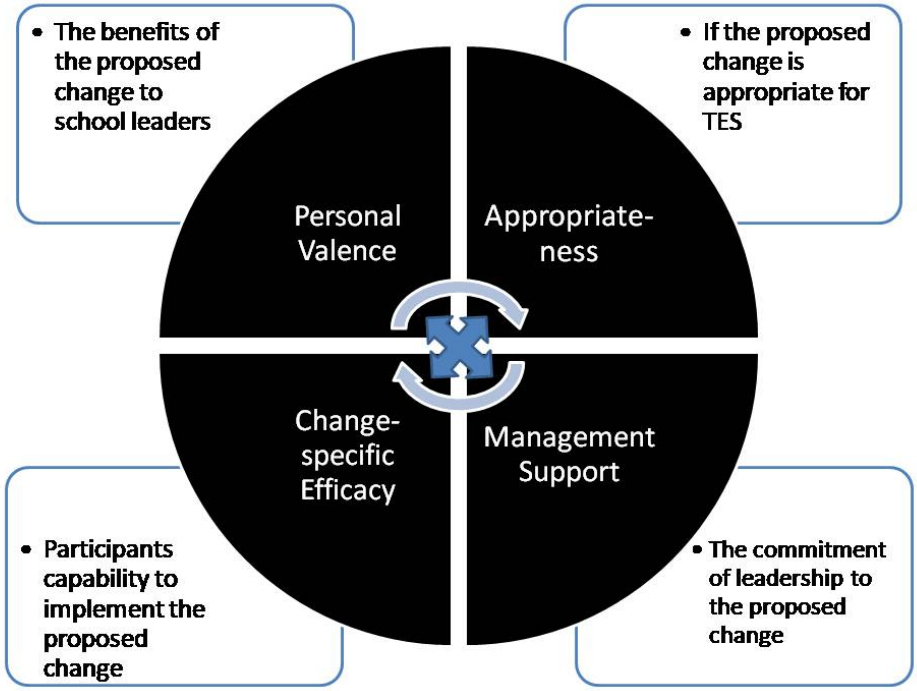
As the lead change agent, I will facilitate the administration of quantitative (e.g., questionnaire) and qualitative (e.g., interview, and observation) methods of assessing change readiness in TES (Queirós et al., 2017; Rahman, 2017). It is important to note that these methods will be adapted to be culturally relevant to Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and leading (Lees et al., 2010; Ljubicic et al., 2018), through consultation with Indigenous educational

partners, to facilitate active engagement by all participants. Examples include translating the questionnaire into local languages and dialects, and conducting interviews with interpreters, guided by the IQ principles. The quantitative method of assessing readiness will enable a speedy collection of data across TES for a swift decision-making process (Queirós et al., 2017). Although the qualitative method will result in active engagement and the ability to assess non-verbal communication cues during an interview process, it is time-consuming among other limitations (Rahman, 2017).

The change readiness assessment tool to be used, as shown in Appendix B, is an adaptation of the change readiness assessment template in the Change Management Toolkit (The University of California, n.d.). The assessment form will be made available in print form to all principals and educational partners and translated into official languages. The availability of digital copies will also facilitate the swift submission and processing of the completed forms. According to Holt et al. (2007), navigating the challenges of the change process will be informed by educational partners' prior experiences regarding the implementation of organizational change. The assessment of change readiness and the process of leading change will be conducted through an ethical lens to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and decolonization. Furthermore, the change readiness implementation process will be framed using the four elements of Armenakis et al.'s (2007) change readiness model, personal valence, appropriateness, management support, and change-specific efficacy, as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 7

Change Readiness Conceptual Framework



Note. Adapted from Holt, D. T., Armenakis, A. A., Feild, H. S., & Harris, S. G. (2007). Readiness for organizational change: The systematic development of a scale. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *43*(2), 232-255.

Personal Valence

According to Holt et al. (2007), readiness for change is a multifaceted construct influenced by participants' values and beliefs about the change. The principals and educational partners are expected to have various perspectives about the change; some participants might think the change is not needed, worthwhile, or beneficial (Armenakis et al., 2007), while other participants might value the change as urgently needed. The value of the change to an individual participant, nevertheless, is considered a function of the individual's commitment to the change

(Neves, 2011; Schein, 2010). Personal valence, therefore, can bring about coherence among participants or resistance to change (Neves, 2011). To assess the personal valence of participants, as shown in Appendix B, questions relating to this element of the framework are presented on the change readiness assessment questionnaire, among other change readiness assessment tools to be explored.

Appropriateness

The change might be seen as not necessary by some participants, for example, long-term service and Indigenous principals because they see themselves as having the cultural competence required as school leaders in TES. The type of possible mindset may raise ethical and equity concerns, and the reasons for questions on the assessment form (see Appendix B) to assess the thinking of participants regarding the change.

Management Support

Participants must be informed about the commitment of TES leadership to the change process, and this knowledge will promote positive change behaviour and commitment (Fournier et al, 2021). Yang et al. (2020), in a study, argue that change-related behaviour can be inspired through effective management support and commitment to organizational change. An assessment of TES leadership support and participants' perspectives on this support will be reflected through the questionnaire and qualitative method (interview) of readiness assessment.

Change-Specific Efficacy

According to Weiner (2009), the change efficacy correlates with participants' appraisal of situational factors, availability of resources, participants’ capacity, and task. Some of the key questions to determine participants' capability to implement change effectively reflect on the questionnaire (see Appendix B). The data collected through the quantitative method will

constitute part of the change readiness process, which will inform whether or not to proceed with the change process.

In TES, all participants must be able to articulate the components of the change readiness conceptual framework to promote active engagement during the change process. The framework is expected to guide the quantitative and qualitative change readiness assessments, with the new vision in mind. Complementary to effective implementation of change readiness, Holt et al. (2007) emphasize the connections between what is to change (content); how to conduct the change implementation (process); the condition under which the change is happening (context); and characteristic features of change participants (individuals involved). It is about altering the status quo by participants through embracing, accepting, and adopting the new change for a new vision (Chan, 2014). For the new vision to be sustained, leadership ethics must be considered at every stage of the change process, a topic that will be discussed in the next section.

Leadership Ethics in Organizational Change

In light of the Calls to Action 62 to 65 of the TRC (2015), the need for ethical leadership is vital to the success of the CIP, due to the Indigenous territory upon which TES is situated. TES is made up of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across Canada, as a result, inclusive and ethical approaches must be embraced by change agents to achieve organizational success (Khalifa et al., 2016, 2019). Also, TES has the mandate to provide quality education for students and training for staff, with the vision of graduating well-educated and self-reliant Indigenous youth ([Territorial] Government, 2008). With the responsibilities of TES leadership, comes the need for consistent assessment of areas for improvement and challenges against the organizational goals. Indeed, it is about recognizing self-determination, fostering identity,

connection with the land, and promoting well-being (Iseke, 2010; Marule, 2012; Toulouse, 2016).

As a change agent and Superintendent of Schools (SOS) in TES, it is my responsibility to promote Indigenous culture in a way that enhances the healing process, knowing that the education system in which we practice, has been used in the past to rob the Indigenous people of their cultures, languages, and communities through the residential school system (Freeman et al., 2018). Although leadership may vary based on the context and setting to which it is applied, in a general sense, leadership is "a process whereby intentional influence is exerted over other people to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization" (Yukl, 2013, p. 2). As a settler-ally, challenges are bound to occur in leading the change process, however, these challenges will be mitigated through active listening and collaboration with Indigenous educational partners. There may be a difference in required leadership styles at different organizational levels, but the leadership approach employed at each level matters.

Furthermore, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to solving problems within an organization. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2021) argue that due to the complexity of our education system, two or more ethical paradigms may be required to solve a problem. The challenges encountered by school leaders in the North vary from one community to another, and a major concern is the inadequate support for principals to effectively implement TES inclusion and culturally relevant policies across the territory (McGregor, 2013). Aside from the limited resources in schools and high staff turnover, the main drawback is keeping students and staff motivated amidst challenging circumstances (Hall, 2015; Lee et al., 2010). This is one of the reasons why I chose to embrace transformational and culturally responsive leadership approaches for leading the change in TES; the major tenets of the leadership approaches include

motivating individuals (Northouse, 2021), promoting equity, social justice, and decolonization (Banwo et al., 2021; Khalifa et al., 2016, 2019).

Building a strong team to lead the change is easier when change agents know the values and skill sets of all participants, and what they need to actively participate in the change process. Mkhize et al. (2014) note that professionals must understand the contextual implications of ethical decision-making in Indigenous settings, and the Indigenous societal beliefs and values must also be understood to promote effective inclusive practice (Nishii & Leroy, 2021, 2022; Osmond-Johnson & Turner, 2020). TES leadership must, therefore, model and ensure effective leadership practice with the key ethical paradigms shown in Appendix C in mind, before, during, and after the change process (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021).

First, the ethic of justice, for instance, promotes fairness, equity, and justice when dealing with ethical dilemmas. It is a feature of the liberal tradition, which promotes fairness, equity, and justice when dealing with ethical dilemmas (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021). Second, the ethic of care plays a prominent role in moral decision-making, through active listening, observation, collaboration, trauma, and cultural responsiveness. All participants, therefore, must be conscious of their decisions and actions through critical self-reflection. The ethic of care promotes effective relationships, connections, and a sense of belonging toward leadership sustainability (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019). Third, the ethic of critique is deeply rooted in critical theory with an emphasis on the analysis of social class, race, gender, religion, and inequities (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021) in TES. The application of the ethic of critique goes beyond the questioning status quo and critical analysis; it enables the opportunities for principals and educational leaders in TES, irrespective of their race, social class, and gender, to thrive as professionals (Cherkowski, 2015). Fourth, the ethic of profession emphasizes the need for personal and professional codes, and

guides decision-making (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021) during the change process when change agents are dealing with ethical dilemmas. Change agents and TES leadership will benefit from exploring ways of promoting an ethical change process and building leadership among diverse worldviews while maintaining professional integrity.

Considering the complexity of our education system (Meyer & Patuawa, 2020), change agents must be mindful of the ethical consideration of choice when dealing with ethical dilemmas during the change process. Issues relating to religion, for example, may require drawing on the ethic of care by the show of empathy and compassion or the ethic of justice by emphasizing the rights of individuals regarding the law. Furthermore, the knowledge and effective application of the ethical paradigms are relevant to leading the change, and the implementation of the proposed solution to address the PoP.

Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

Leadership practice has implications for the growth and success of any organization, especially in the areas of school improvement and capacity building (Amanchukwu et al., 2015). Novice and experienced principals must be aware of the factors (internal and external) in their school communities and the implications on their leadership practice. Most often experienced school leaders come to TES with positive intentions to make a difference in the lives of Indigenous children. Some leaders, however, are confronted with various challenges at the school level concerning the implementation of TES inclusion and culturally relevant policies (Hall, 2015). In light of these challenges, a key PoP was identified in chapter one; I will present and discuss, in the next section, the three possible solutions to address the PoP.

The Three Possible Solutions

The design and implementation of an inclusive and culturally responsive leadership framework are essential to support and guide effective leadership practice in TES (Banwo et al., 2021; Ciotti et al., 2019; Niishi & Leroy, 2021, 2022). To effectively implement a school-wide inclusive practice, principals must be reflective in practice with a high level of self-awareness and interpersonal skills to improve their professional practice and staff professional development (Ersozlu, 2016). For change to be accomplished, the senior leadership team in TES must critically examine their practice to support principals in a collaborative way (Niishi & Leroy, 2021). If the PoP is not addressed within TES, it will lead to declining student achievement, unmotivated principals, diminished productivity, burnout, and a high rate of leadership turnover. Also, when principals are not provided with the appropriate tools and training, it can lead to demoralization and lack of commitment (Gary, 2006). The possible solutions and the preferred solution for the PoP will be presented in subsequent sections.

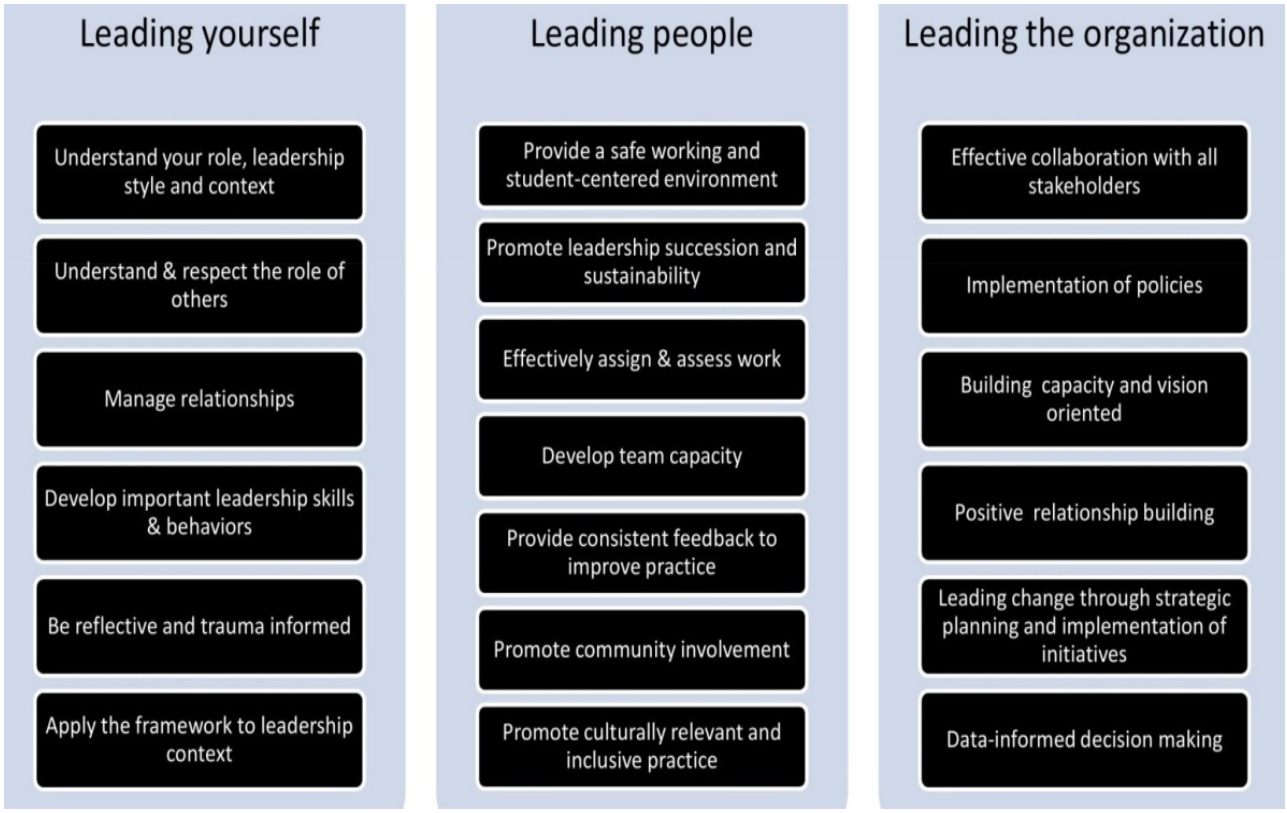
Solution 1: Leadership Framework

The first proposed solution is a value-based (Armstrong et al., 2018) leadership framework that focuses on three key leadership domains as shown in Figure 8, and each domain has associated leadership expectations. The leadership framework, shown in Figure 9, is intended to help principals and TES leadership develop a deeper understanding of what is expected of them as leaders, build positive relationships with educational partners (Voegtlin, 2016), improve cultural competence, and promote sustainable culturally responsive leadership practice guided by the IQ principles (Bergsteiner & Avery, 2011; Shaaban, 2020).

Also, the essence of the leadership framework is about improving student-centred practices that affirm cultural identities, foster positive academic outcomes, and develop students'

Figure 8

The Three Domains of the Leadership Framework



Note. Adapted from The Leadership Framework (n.d.). *An introduction to leadership framework*.

abilities to connect with culturally relevant curriculum and leadership styles (Khalifa, 2012; Khalifa et al., 2019; Lopez, 2020; Lumby & Foskett, 2011). TES currently has a few leadership initiatives to support principals, for example, the professional development framework but no leadership framework that encapsulates resources, supports, praxis, and theory, as a one-stop shop for TES leadership. The first step in designing the TES leadership framework is through the formation of a committee of senior managers, change agents, policy and planning division, and educator development division, which will be tasked with the responsibilities of designing the framework. The committee will work collaboratively through biweekly and monthly meetings, to

Figure 9

Solution One Conceptual Framework

Note: Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *Solution one: Conceptual leadership framework.*

deliberate on the content and purposes of the framework in alignment with the vision of TES (Cherkowski et al., 2015). Also, the designing process will be in consultation with the union to align the leadership framework with the collective agreement to avoid potential issues in the areas of inequity, social injustice, and unethical expectations (Cherkowski et al., 2015; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021). The committee will be tasked to deliver a concise and culturally relevant leadership framework in the first year of the change process, the awakening stage (Deszca et al.,

2020). The input garnered from participants in the awakening stage will be valuable to the process of designing the leadership framework.

It is worth noting that a leadership framework may pose implementation challenges if it is not designed with the organizational context in mind. In TES, for example, the framework must reflect Indigenous ways of leading, knowing, and learning, as well as, including Indigenous voices and representation (Gordon Foundation, 2018*)*. The implementation of the leadership framework will involve principals of the piloting schools during the change implementation process, which will be discussed in chapter three.

Furthermore, the leadership framework will embody transformational and culturally responsive leadership approaches, which are critical to the advancement of the inclusion agenda for minority students or groups (Mackinnon & Milic, 2018), and stopping the perpetuation of exclusionary practices that marginalize them (Banwo et al., 2021). Moreso, principals play a critical role in mobilizing staff and school community members to challenge the status quo and create conditions that realize inclusion for all students (Lopez, 2020). Research has shown that culturally responsive leadership practice supports inclusive environments and improves learning for students with culturally diverse backgrounds (Johnson & Fuller, 2014; Toulouse, 2016). As school leaders, we are positioned to operate in a complex environment that requires intentional critical reflection (Reid, 2021) irrespective of the contextual discourses within our school systems; it takes reflective leadership to understand the effects of cultural responsiveness in promoting effective inclusive practice (Kolzow, 2020; MacKinnon & Milic, 2018; Taylor & Brownell, 2017). A well-designed and implemented leadership framework will, therefore, greatly benefit principals and educational leaders in TES.

In addition, TES leadership values, through the newly developed leadership framework, can be promoted with an emphasis on ethical considerations. The ethic of profession, for example, emphasizes the need for personal and professional values to guide decision-making when principals are dealing with ethical dilemmas (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021). The practice of principals in TES is guided by specific professional standards, therefore, the core tenets of the ethic of profession will inform the guidelines in the leadership framework and must be considered when implementing this solution. Moreover, the ethic of profession is necessary to promote expected leadership values, such as reliability, trust, professionalism, honesty, integrity, and performance-related requirements through leading yourself, leading people, and leading the organization. Other ethics that will be considered in the implementation of this solution are the ethics of care and responsibility, to address the need for compassion, empathy, equity, and accountability within the framework.

Solution 2: Mentorship Program

There is a plethora of meanings for the word mentor by early researchers, which can be collectively interpreted as an experienced person (mentor) who is positioned to share knowledge with a mentee (less experienced person), in a mutual relationship based on trust (Boon, 1998; Bush & Middlewood, 2005; Daresh, 1995). This interpretation is corroborated by Haggard et al. (2011) that "mentoring requires a reciprocal relationship, involving mutuality of social exchange as opposed to a one-way relationship" (p. 292) between the mentor and mentee. Jugmohan (2010) argues that all school leaders and aspiring leaders need to be empowered and that all schools greatly benefit from quality leadership through a mentorship program. A structured mentorship program that is rooted in Indigenous ways of leading and learning will benefit both novice and experienced principals in TES because it will provide a seamless transition and

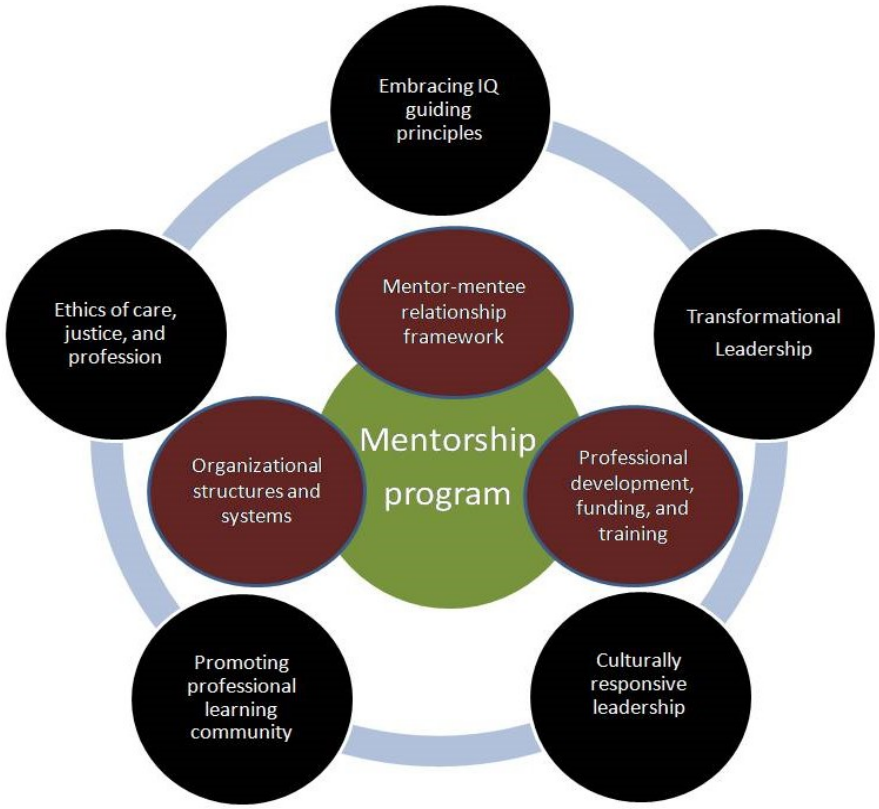
immersion into the communities and alleviate culture shock (Jugmohan, 2010). The call for mentoring of principals aligns with the vision of TES concerning leadership succession, however, there is no well-defined mentorship program to promote leadership capacity building.

According to Christos (2022), some of the many benefits of a mentorship program include the mentor collaboratively helping the mentee; providing emotional and professional support to the mentee; elevating self-esteem by providing the mentee with the opportunity for critical reflection; and recognizing the strength and weaknesses of mentee to promote improvement. Furthermore, the Wallace Foundation Report (2007) notes that a mentorship program will provide school leaders with the skills, knowledge, confidence, and courage to become change instructional leaders in their schools because principals' jobs are not getting any easier. According to early research by The Education Alliance (2003) and corroborated by current studies (Constantinides, 2023; Reid, 2021), principals' jobs have become complex and stressful because they are expected to swim in the deep without a life jacket. Figuratively, an effective mentorship program can come to their rescue by providing life jackets; it can provide an additional layer of support, for example, on how to navigate the systemic challenges in TES. The mentorship program will be framed within three domains: the mentor and mentee relationship framework, organizational structures and systems, and professional development, funding, and training. These domains are interconnected and driven by the surrounding elements shown in Figure 10.

A structured mentorship program will promote an inclusive and culturally responsive leadership practice rooted in Indigenous values, beliefs, culture, and tradition (Christos, 2022). The mentor will be tasked with providing professional development advice and guidance

Figure 10

Solution Two Conceptual Framework



Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *Solution two: Conceptual mentorship program framework.*

(Christos, 2022), as well as valuable information about the effective implementation of inclusion and culturally relevant policies in TES. As an SOS, my agency will enable direct collaboration with mentors to offer support and guidance concerning the implementation of the mentorship program through scheduled regular check-in meetings. Also, as a member of the senior management team and a change agent, I can influence the provision of necessary resources to facilitate and support the smooth running of the program within TES.

To implement a mentorship program in TES, the ethic of care, ethic of justice, and ethic of profession will be considered to help frame the program, among other considerations. These

key ethical considerations will help individuals (mentor and mentee) to consider the consequences of their decisions and actions (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021). The ethic of care plays a prominent role in moral decision-making by educational leaders, through active listening, collaboration, trauma-informed practice, and cultural responsiveness. It also promotes effective relationships, connections, and a sense of belonging (Cherkowskiet al., 2015; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021). Jug et al. (2019) note that effective feedback from mentor to mentee through direct observation can improve the performance of mentee.

It is worth noting the limitations concerning the implementation of a mentorship program, for example, research has shown that a mentor-facilitated assignment can be problematic and requires the voluntary matching of both mentor and mentee (Christos, 2022; Daresh & Playko, 1992; Grow, 2005). Moreso, an inappropriate mentor may be overprotective and critical of the mentee. In other words, the mentee may be excessively dependent on the mentor and become less confident as a professional. Another limitation is the tendency of tension between a mentor and mentee due to differences in worldviews, leadership philosophies, and approaches. The mentor, however, has a greater influence on the mentee, a notion that aligns with the tenets of the transformational leadership approach as discussed earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, the mentorship program will be guided by the IQ principles, *Innuqatigiitsiarniq, Tunnganarniq,* and *Pilimmaksarniq* to emphasize the cultural connection to Indigenous values, tradition, and beliefs.

Solution 3: Committee for leadership succession and sustainability

The creation of a leadership focus group consisting of both non-Indigenous and Indigenous school leaders, to discuss possible barriers, and ethical concerns against leadership succession and sustainability in TES will be invaluable. The committee will constitute school

leaders from each organization level, as part of the feedback mechanism in the change process, to provide recommendations on how to eliminate potential barriers to leadership improvement in TES. The committee's task will be guided by the IQ principles (*Pijitsirniq, Piliriqatigiingniq,* and *Qanuqtuurunnarniq*), with a focus on three domains, support, engagement, and leadership-focused deliberations, as visually represented in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Solution Three Conceptual Framework

Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *Solution three: Committee for leadership succession and sustainability conceptual framework*.

The application of the congruence model (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) will be valuable to the work of the committee by identifying gaps and engaging with TES leadership on leadership-focused deliberations to support principals, collaboratively (Osmond-Johnson & Turner, 2020).

The major limitations concerning this solution, however, are human resources and commitment on the part of committee members. Staffing is a major challenge in TES (Hall, 2015) and having people take on additional responsibility plus their primary assignment voluntarily may be challenging. Nevertheless, it will be a great opportunity for educators in TES to contribute positively to the system in which they practice, in the area of leadership capacity building.

Leading change through ethical and decolonization lenses represents the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 62 to 65 (TRC, 2015). Osmond-Johnson and Turner (2020) note that "traversing the space between Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews is complex and complicated" (p. 54). Furthermore, Shapiro and Stefkovich (2021) emphasize that school leaders must understand the potential ethical concerns that may arise in light of residential school experiences and generational trauma among Indigenous people. On this premise, the ethic of critique and the ethic of profession, among other ethical considerations, will guide the decision-making of the committee in connecting people and breaking down barriers against leadership succession and sustainability. Based on the comparison of the three possible solutions shown in Appendix D, I conclude that a composite solution will be the best choice to address the problem of practice.

Composite Solution

In TES, support and resources are limited in some communities due to staffing and other issues (Lees et al., 2010), as a result, some school leaders are not well supported in their roles (Tester & Irniq, 2008). Hall (2015), in a study, notes that principals in TES are not empowered to manage the school effectively, and this is evident in high principal turnover, low retention rate, and low student achievement. According to The Wallace Foundation Report (2007), if a mentor-mentee relationship program is integrated into the leadership framework, it will provide school leaders

with the skills, knowledge, confidence, and courage, to be better instructional leaders in their schools and communities. Based on the critical analyses of the aforementioned possible solutions and the comparison presented in Appendix D, a composite solution shown in Figure 12 is the preferred solution for my PoP.

Figure 12

Composite Solution Conceptual Framework

Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *Preferred solution: Composite solution conceptual framework.*

The solution is made up of the leadership framework from solution one and a domain (mentor-mentee relationship program) from solution two (mentorship program). While the leadership framework, rooted in IQ principles, acts as guidelines for effective inclusive and culturally responsive leadership practice in TES, the mentor-mentee relationship program will

serve as an additional layer of support for principals (Jugmohan, 2010) to immerse themselves into the Indigenous culture and ways of leading. Moreso, experienced non-Indigenous mentors will have the opportunity to collaborate with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous mentees, to promote a professional learning community and improve leadership capacity. Revisiting the guiding questions in chapter one, the culturally relevant leadership framework, for example, will inform leadership practice in TES, guided by the IQ principles and the leadership framework key elements (leading yourself, leading people, and leading organization). In addition, the mentorship program element of the composite solution will address the question of how to promote leadership succession and sustainability holistically at all levels of the organization.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the leadership approaches intended for leading the change in TES and the various frameworks for change implementation. Most importantly, the correlation between all processes is defined and they are intended as part of the process of addressing the PoP. The three possible solutions for the PoP are discussed, and the preferred solution is a composite solution which is composed of elements from solutions one and two. Also, the inevitability of ethical dilemmas considering the combination of Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews within the TES context has prompted the discussion of ethical considerations (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021). The alignment and integration of the IQ principles (Ljubicic, et al., 2018; [Territorial] Department of Education, 2007) at various stages of the change process reflect the significance of cultural responsiveness in leading change in TES; and the promotion of inclusive and culturally responsive practice (Khalifa et al., 2019; MacKinnon & Milic, 2018). The topics covered in chapter two set the stage for the discussion in chapter three, the change implementation, change communication, change monitoring, and evaluation of change.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Communication, and Evaluation

As discussed in chapter one, principals in Arctic Canada are faced with inadequate or lack of support to effectively implement the inclusion and culturally relevant policies in TES, to promote leadership retention, succession, and sustainability. Across the territory, this problem often results in high principal turnover, burnout due to a lack of motivation, low morale, and workload-related stress (Ferguson, 2013). Furthermore, in chapter two, I presented the preferred solution (composite solution) among the three possible solutions discussed, and how to lead the change process in TES. Indeed, a change is inevitable if an organization must achieve a set goal and vision (Zorn & Scott, 2021), and change agents must be able to effectively communicate the "what", "why", "how", "who", "when", and "where" of the change to all participants (Hirsch, 2019), as discussed in chapter two. To further the discussion on how to achieve a successful change process, I will discuss, in this chapter, the change implementation plan (CIP), change communication, monitoring, and evaluation of change to achieve the desired outcomes.

Change Implementation Plan

The CIP is an integrated system of reinforcing parts, which combines Hirsch's (2019) change implementation framework and Deszca et al.'s (2020) change path model. The choice of combining two frameworks results from the desire to have an effective CIP (Drake & Savage, 2016; Drake & Reid, 2018; Patra & Basantia, 2021); and the alignment of both frameworks, in ways that promote an effective change process in TES, supports this choice. The key features of Hirsch's (2019) framework are components (the tools and strategies for implementing a change), roles (the people who drive and adopt the CIP), phases (a multi-stage and possibly iterative process), and context (the organizational settings, internal, and external factors, such as resistance to change, that can impact the change process).

The integration of Deszca et al.'s (2020) change path model stages (awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization) into the CIP, as shown in Appendix E, helps to create a structured plan with defined transition points. The management of the transitions is informed by the feedback obtained through the monitoring and evaluation processes, which will be discussed in a later section. The feedback will inform change agents if a stage is on track to proceed to the next or needs an extended time to address identified concerns. The change path model will be explored to outline the work at each stage of the CIP.

Awakening

It is worth noting that before the commencement of the change process, the Senior Management Committee (SMC) will work collaboratively with the key actors (change initiator and change agents) to initiate dialogue about the "why", "what", and "how" of the change, and to gain support from other educational partners. The change agents, selected individuals among the key actors by the SMC, must possess high levels of risk tolerance and positive self-concept so that they are equipped to lead and implement change (Erwin & Garwin, 2009). The selected change agents (a few selected members of the SMC, Policy and Planning Division, and Educator Development Division), will work collaboratively (Medford & Brown, 2022) with the change initiator (myself), experienced principals, and other educational partners to bring about the envisioned change guided by the relevant IQ principles ([Territorial] Department of Education, 2007): *Pijitsirniq* (serving and providing for others), *Tunnganarniq* (fostering good spirits by being welcoming, open, and inclusive), and *Inuuqatiqiitsiarniq* (respecting others, caring for people, and building relationship). The assignment of tasks to the change agents will reflect their strengths, and all three regional school operations will have representation on the team. As the

change initiator, I, and the selected change agents, will work in tandem with the policy and planning division to design the TES leadership framework and assess the CIP to ensure that it aligns with the Education Act ([Territorial] Government, 2008). A representative from the policy and planning division will be among the change agents to support and guide them in addressing issues related to policies and external change drivers (politics, technology, legal, resources, training, and funding) during the change process.

In the awakening phase, the need for dialogue and collaboration among all participants in the change process will be emphasized and facilitated by the change agents, to identify gaps (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) and barriers to leadership retention. During this stage, change agents will strategically assess organizational readiness for change using a change readiness questionnaire (see Appendix B) and qualitative methods (e.g., interviews) of data collection (Creswell, 2014). Also, an inquiry-based process, which aligns with Indigenous ways of knowing, is necessary for active engagement by Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants (Bartlett et al., 2012; Mistry & Berardi, 2016; Peltier, 2018). Principals and educational partners will have the opportunity to voice their opinions and engage in the process by providing culturally relevant ideas.

The timeline of the CIP is four years due to the yearly cultural events (e.g., hunting, fishing derby, hamlet days, and community events) which must be observed by participants and educational partners; these events will have implications on the timeline and must be acknowledged to achieve a successful change process. Also, the timeline is divided into four iterative phases (each lasting one year): decide, prepare, execute, and improve and maintain (see Appendix F). Each of the phases aligns with the change path model stages to bring about a coherent process; however, the transition between any two phases will depend on the outcome or

feedback during the change process. The four-year implementation plan is divided into four academic years, each beginning in August and ending in June, with each year representing a stage of the change path model (see Appendix F). In the first year, the "decide" phase, consultations will commence with various key divisions within TES, educational partners, and principals. Furthermore, in consultation with the Executive Director (ED) of each school operation, a community with multiple schools, from kindergarten to grade twelve (K-12), will be selected to pilot the change process.

The change process will, therefore, commence as a pilot program in a community with multiple schools in each of TES's three regional school operations. In total, three communities and approximately nine out of forty-five schools in the territory will initiate the change process. The essence of the pilot program is to have a manageable number of participants, schools, and resources to monitor and evaluate the impact of the change before extending it to all principals in the territory (Punukollu et al., 2020). The EDs of the three school operations in TES will facilitate the effective implementation of the CIP in their respective regions in tandem with the change agents. The context (Hirsch, 2019) of the CIP will, therefore, be a pilot program at the micro (community) and meso (regional) levels, to reduce or eliminate resistance to change.

The goals for the pilot program can be assessed in terms of short-term, medium-term, and long-term accomplishments. The short-term goal of the change is the design of the TES leadership framework with the integration of a structured mentorship program within the first year. The medium-term goal is for eighty percent of principals and educational partners to support the change, while the long-term goal is to achieve a ninety percent retention rate of principals. The overarching goals are that Indigenous and non-Indigenous principals feel

supported and confident to implement culturally relevant policies and establish a positive school environment for students and staff.

Near the end of the awakening stage, surveys will be provided to all participants to garner their perspectives and address any questions concerning the initial success of the CIP. The data collected by engaging with Indigenous and non-Indigenous principals through dialogue and focus groups will inform the need for additional resources and revised strategies for advancing the change in the mobilization stage (Schweiger et al., 2018).

Mobilization

Knowing that the change involves both Indigenous and non-Indigenous school leaders, the change agents must embrace suitable leadership approaches at each stage of the CIP (Brenner, 2015). A culturally responsive leadership approach is most appropriate, for example, at the awakening stage during collaboration and consultation with educational partners, and members of the District Education Authorities (DEA) who are predominately Indigenous people. At the mobilization stage, further consultation and collaboration will require the transformational leadership approach (Bass, 1990; Jung et al., 2009; Northouse, 2021) to promote beneficial change to principals, educational partners, and TES leadership. The transformational leadership approach is deemed to be the foundation of leadership practice in TES, an approach that is evident in the mandatory transformational leadership course requirement for TES principal certification (University of Prince Edward Island [UPEI], 2024). In addition, the culturally responsive leadership approach works in conjunction with the transformational leadership approach to promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice (Hooper & Bernhardt, 2016). The culturally responsive leadership approach is necessary at this stage to garner support from

Indigenous educational partners while, through transformational leadership, further motivating participants to actively engage with the change process.

At the mobilization and "prepare" stages (see Appendix F), the change agents will communicate in detail to all participants the need for change (Beatty, 2015), using the components of Hirsch's (2019) change implementation framework. During monthly meetings of school leaders, facilitated by the regional Executive Director (ED), the solution to the problem will be presented to principals and vice-principal for their feedback (Jäppinen et. al., 2016) through online questionnaires, and the feedback provided will be factored into the implementation process to alleviate potential change resistance (Erwin & Garman, 2009). It is worth noting that the need for this change is recognized by leadership at all levels in TES, due to the historical experiences of colonization (Mackenthun & Mucher, 2021) and generational trauma associated with the residential school system. Moreover, TES welcomes a change that will build leadership capacity in schools, within a reasonable timeline, as a means of addressing the challenges associated with the region's lack of principal retention (Hall, 2015). During an annual principals' conference in 2023, for example, a speaker emphasized the need to promote cultural competence, collaboration, and effective communication among principals toward improving leadership capacity within TES (personal communication, September 25, 2023). Also, transformational and culturally responsive leadership approaches that are chosen to lead the CIP align with the above notion of empowering school leaders (Cobanoglu, 2021; Khan et al., 2020), and addressing inequity and social injustice (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016; Northouse, 2021) to promote principals' retention and succession. Based on this context, the mobilization stage's medium-term goals are effective communication through multiple channels and the support of

eighty percent of principals and educational partners, to advance the change to the acceleration stage.

Acceleration

The acceleration stage will involve the implementation of the composite solution, a leadership framework with a mentorship program component. To ensure that the acceleration stage proceeds, the potential for change resistance must be addressed. As an educator, I have witnessed ethically questionable change implementations that resulted in resistance to change. According to Oreg et al. (2018), resistance to change often has implications on the social construct within an organization due to individuals' subjectivity, and it must be confronted to achieve a successful change. Furthermore, resistance to change can also lead to constructive outcomes based on the positive reinforcement of the change rationale among participants over time (Oreg et al., 2018; Jones & Van de Ven, 2016). The participation by the majority of the principals, therefore, can lead to positive change and the alleviation of concerns regarding inequity and social injustice (Schweiger et al., 2018).

To advance change implementation at the acceleration stage, I must recognize the power of diversity and the differences in principals' worldviews (Ferdman, 2017). At this stage, also called the "execute" phase (timeline), change agents will have the opportunity to acquire training and support based on their assignment in the change process. Change agents assigned to monitor and evaluate the CIP, for example, may require training on using a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tool, referred to as the PDSA cycle (Moen & Norman, 2009), which will be discussed in a later section. This method garners feedback from participants to advance, or not, to the final stage of the CIP. In addition, at this stage, the voices of principals and educational partners must be heard to tackle the potential issue of inequity. Indeed, the use of questionnaires, interviews,

town halls, and virtual and in-person conferences to collect data throughout the change process suggests inclusivity because these methods are diverse and can be accessed in multiple and varied ways.

A combination of both transformational and culturally responsive leadership approaches will be necessary to lead the acceleration stage of the CIP to facilitate effective implementation; if sensitive and context-relevant leadership approaches are not utilized, iteration will be required (Brauckmann et al., 2020; Meyer & Patuawa, 2020). Most principals from the South, for instance, need to understand the Inuit culture, beliefs, traditions, and values, and their influence and implications, on school climate. The leadership approaches will promote shared understanding, new knowledge building, and improved cultural competence, especially among non-Indigenous principals (Khalifa et al., 2016, 2019; Northouse, 2021). At this stage, the key indicators of a successful implementation are a ninety percent retention rate of principals, and positive feedback from principals, TES leadership, and educational partners.

Institutionalization

Institutionalization is the final stage of the CIP, in which, provided the desired outcomes are achieved, the implementation of change is rolled out organization-wide (Deszca et al., 2020). This stage aligns with the final stage of the CIP timeline, the "improve and maintain" phase (Hirsch, 2019), in which the implementation is revised using the feedback provided from the previous phases to long-term goals. At the institutionalization stage, the long-term goals are the creation of new knowledge that will enable principals to consistently implement culturally relevant policies and the promotion of leadership succession and sustainability in TES. Effective M&E plan will be at the forefront of strategies to improve and maintain change implementation at this stage. Moreso, continuous M&E will help to identify emerging gaps (Laverentz & Kumm,

2017; Taylor et al., 2014) and opportunities to effectively support newly hired Indigenous and non-Indigenous school leaders as they transition to their respective roles. Every change process has its challenges, and these can appear in different forms as discussed in the next section.

Change Implementation Challenges

The need for legislative support regarding additional resources such as funding, may pose a delay to the swift implementation of the change, as obstacles are bound to be in the path of the CIP (Oreg et al., 2018). Also, a lack of leadership training and limitations in human resources may create another level of challenges; this challenge relates to the guiding question in chapter one regarding why principals are struggling to implement TES inclusion and culturally relevant policies. It is worth noting that the current staff shortage in TES may have implications on the roles and responsibilities of individuals within the governance structure, especially the change agents because new staff will need to be trained to support the change process in various capacities, and most of the support staff positions can only be filled by Indigenous people based on the Article 23, to protect Indigenous employment within TES ([Territorial] Tungavik Inc., 2010). As a result, this potential change of duties will inform the required training and support that is necessary to advance the CIP and address challenges concerning human resources; some of the CIP challenges are presented in the next few sections. These challenges, however, can be alleviated through effective communication (Simoes & Esposito, 2014), proactiveness, and positive relationship-building with key influential actors in TES. Confronting inevitable challenges is crucial because, according to Stoll and Temperley (2009), a positive relationship among school leaders will help foster a safe environment where leaders feel comfortable and ready for change.

Funding and Resources

The allocation of funds for the change implementation plan can be problematic if it is not considered well before the commencement of the change process (Errida & Lotfi, 2021). Funding of the CIP will require consultation with TES policy and planning division, so that they can assess the scope of the change and the necessary funding in the areas of human resources and training, for the successful implementation and sustainability of the change, in the short-term, medium-term, and long-term. Although most of the human resources for the change implementation are within TES, the involvement of external supports for training and capacity building among change agents may be necessary to monitor and evaluate the change process, which would require financial considerations.

Communication

Communication in both local and official languages is essential to the success of the change to ensure a clear understanding of the change process and what is expected of participants (Beatty, 2015; Erwin & Garman, 2009). Indeed, based on my eight years living in Arctic Canada, I have witnessed that the differences in dialects across the three regions in the territory have contributed to change implementation challenges. As such, facilitating a pilot program in each region simultaneously will promote effective communication across the three regions (Christensen, 2014) by addressing the issues of dialect differences and community uniqueness. As the change initiator and lead change agent, my role is to facilitate synchronous change implementation across the three regions using the same framework, and through scheduled monthly meetings with all the participants and assigned change agents from the regions. During the joint meetings, all participants will have input regarding effective change processes and change alignment across the regions. Furthermore, the communication division of

TES will play an active role in the communication process and information dissemination due to the established communication structures and resources within the organization. TES's involvement, including translating the change process documents and interpreting during conferences, will benefit communication involving both Indigenous and non-Indigenous principals and educational partners.

Union Involvement

Unlike some jurisdictions in Canada, the principals in TES are members of the teachers' union and must be duly represented in all conversations regarding the change. To avoid resistance from the teachers' union, a consultation between the TES and the union is necessary before the advent of the change process (Jäppinen et. al., 2016). Together, they must ascertain the alignment of the leadership framework and CIP with the collective agreement between the teachers' union and the territorial government (Wang et al., 2011, 2020). The active representation of the union will help to address potential ethical concerns before, during, and after the change.

Participation

Some experienced and long-term service principals may be reluctant to participate in the mentorship program due to past failed initiatives or lack of trust in the TES leadership; however, this challenge can be overcome. Incentivizing the program will promote the participation and commitment (Will, 2015) of experienced school leaders as mentors, thereby encouraging more mentees' involvement. As discussed in chapter two, a larger mentor pool will provide more options for pairing mentors and mentees to create collegial and productive relationships.

Complacency is not an option at the final stage of the CIP; rather, change agents must continue to engage in effective communication, monitoring, and evaluation of the change

process. Continuous monitoring and evaluation will help to identify emerging gaps (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017; Taylor et al., 2014) and opportunities to effectively support newly hired Indigenous and non-Indigenous school leaders as they transition into their respective roles in TES. Change communication, a significant element of the change process, which will be explored in the next section, must be well-planned and implemented throughout the process.

Change Communication

Effective communication means that I and other change agents must not assume that everyone involved in the change process, who is familiar with it, necessarily has a good knowledge of it. Indeed, participants and recipients of change should have a good understanding of the "what", "why", and "how" of the change process (Beatty, 2015). To achieve a successful change, effective communication strategies will be implemented throughout the change process taking into account the Indigenous ways of communicating, knowing, and leading (Beatty, 2015; Khalifa et al., 2016). Ineffective communication, front-loading communication at the start of the change process, and inconsistent communication during the process can all lead to the failure of a well-intentioned organizational change (Beatty, 2015; Malek & Yazdanifard, 2012).

Before the implementation of the change communication plan, all change agents will be made aware of the unique communication patterns and preferences of the Indigenous population. Indigenous people can be very reserved and withdraw easily from conversations that align with Western worldviews (Kovach, 2021; Lees et al., 2010); this tendency is often due to their traumatic experiences in the residential school system and colonization, which have historically silenced their voices (Castellano, 2014; Taylor, 2022; Tester & Irniq, 2008; Weenie, 2009). As a result, Indigenous principals may be reluctant to engage in formal communication toward change and prefer informal communication rooted in the Indigenous oral tradition and way of knowing.

Moreover, English is recognized by non-Indigenous people as the second language of Indigenous principals, so they may not be as eloquent in English as their non-Indigenous colleagues whose first language is English, a factor that can contribute to the non-Indigenous having a "louder" voice. To address this concern, various forms of communication media will be adopted in the official languages, through TES communication department, using tools that are readily available for use. Change agents will make every effort to be concise and clear in their communication, provide opportunities for clarifying misconceptions, answer all questions about the change, listen to diverse perspectives, and collect valuable feedback from Indigenous and non-Indigenous principals.

Change Communication Plan

Change agents will require a strategic communication plan to inform principals, collaborators, and educational partners about key elements of the organizational change. This communication plan will promote the dissemination of information and awareness of the need for change (Heide et al., 2018), which will commence at the micro level. In addition, all communication throughout the change process will be in the territory's official languages: Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, English, and French. The change communication framework aligns with the change path model (Deszca et al., 2020) to provide a linear but iterative process.

Furthermore, the participants' feedback will be reviewed to ensure that the participants' concerns are sufficiently addressed. The communication plan for the change process is adapted to the context of the region in which TES is situated and the potential communication challenges will be discussed later in this chapter. It is worth noting that, because there is no need to reinvent the wheel, the communication plan is built on the current communication platform and resources at TES, as mentioned above. The significance of developing a clear communication plan cannot

be over-emphasized for effective change implementation (Beatty, 2015; Malek & Yazdanifard, 2012). To drive the communication plan are questions within the communication framework which consists of four stages (Haiilo, 2023): awareness, understanding, acceptance, and commitment, as shown in Appendix G.

Awareness

At the awareness stage, the question "Why the need for change?" is considered by experienced principals, DEAs, and educational partners and will be addressed using dialogic communication, an evidence-based communication approach. The change agent team, other senior managers, and I will communicate the specific leadership problem in question, the reasons that the problem must be solved, solutions to the problem backed with data, and motivational messaging about the envisioned future. The key communication approach at this stage and throughout the change process is dialogic communication, which is rooted in dialogic theory, a theory that encompasses various communication principles and promotes interpersonal relationships between individuals or groups of people (Taylor & Kent, 2014; Theunissen & Wan Noordin, 2012). As the lead change agent, I will work in tandem with other change agents to facilitate monthly meetings with the participants about the need for change based on the problem of practice identified in chapter one of this DiP.

In addition, there will be scheduled consultations with the DEAs and other educational partners in the first few months of the awareness stage, thereafter, a quarterly meeting to address concerns and collect feedback from them using virtual and in-person conferences. Indeed, according to research, dialogue as a fundamental component of a dialogic communication approach, is connected with resolving issues concerning inequity and social injustice among disadvantaged people or within a complex system of diverse people (Gurin et al., 2013; Muller &

Miles, 2016). Dialogic communication will facilitate commitment from change agents to engage in meaningful and challenging interactions, such that participants can make sense of the need for change, from different perspectives through shared understanding (Bohm, 2010).

Understanding

The benefit of the change to principals, leadership, and educational partners will be communicated at this stage in ways that address further skepticism and possible resistance to change (Oreg et al., 2018). A predictable question from experienced principals, aspiring principals, and other collaborators is "What's in it for me?" This question is considered a communication driver to initiate further dialogue with individuals (Simoes & Esposito, 2014; Taylor & Kent, 2014) who cannot see a path to successful change implementation due to the experience of a failed change process in TES or a lack of trust in leadership to implement the change. Moreso, knowing the benefit of the change, some motivated principals may positively influence the skeptics (Jones & Van de Ven, 2016; Oreg et al., 2018). With this phenomenon in mind, newly hired and existing non-Indigenous principals will be targeted to garner buy-ins; they can relate to the problem and support skeptical principals to acquire the knowledge to effectively implement TES inclusion and culturally relevant policies. In addition, TES leadership is bound to benefit from the change, through knowledge-building and knowledge mobilization (Cooper, 2011; Pollock et al., 2019), to promote leadership succession and sustainability. Furthermore, at the understanding stage, other communication strategies in addition to the dialogic approach, for example, radio, surveys, online platforms, and handouts, will be the responsibility of change agents to facilitate and monitor, to close communication gaps while promoting change benefits.

Acceptance

At this stage, the principals in TES are expected to accept the change through effective communication (Beatty, 2015; Elving, 2005) and collaborative efforts (Jäppinen et. al., 2016) by the change agents, and the change agents will continue to reinforce the benefits of the change and support from the SMC toward a positive change process. This phase involves answering key questions: what is the support (training, coaching) provided to principals, change agents, and key actors to implement the change effectively?; and what lessons from the past (successes or failures) have informed the change implementation plan? The participants will be provided elaborate answers to the aforementioned questions and other key questions in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) leaflet and on the TES website, by the change agents, to promote acceptance of the change, which will lead to a promising commitment from principals to actively engage in the change process. Also, the active engagement by principals, TES senior leadership, and educational partners will likely help eliminate barriers to positive relationship-building (Govender & Bussin, 2020).

Commitment

Change communication is not completed, despite the acceptance of the change by principals (Malek & Yazdanifard, 2012; Simoes & Esposito, 2014), until change agents articulate TES commitment to the change. To accomplish this goal, change agents must solicit the commitment of principals and educational partners. Furthermore, because this stage is prone to failure, communication must be consistent throughout the change process to facilitate commitment (Simoes & Esposito, 2014) and enable principals to provide feedback to improve the change process.

Change Communication Challenges

Regardless of the change acceptance and commitment, various challenges are anticipated that may hinder the implementation of the change communication plan (Oreg et al., 2018), due to the uniqueness of the region in which TES is situated. First, the differences in dialect across the three regions will need to be addressed (McGregor, 2013). It is not enough to have all documents related to the change translated; each region will need to have key actors and change agents participating in the pilot program at the micro level. They will be the voices of all participants in each region and facilitate effective communication about the change process. In addition, other communication tools, such as local radio stations, interviews, questionnaires, and surveys will help promote active engagement of other educational partners at the micro level. Second, effective communication is compromised by geographical factors, such as the lack of accessible roads from one community to the other. This barrier isolates communities from one another, potentially limiting in-person meetings and professional networking among participants, especially the principals. Third, extreme weather conditions during the winter season often hinder travelling by air, which is the fastest means of transportation across the territory; this challenge will compromise the cultural continuity of the oral tradition and the consistency of Indigenous language, which are considered essential to Indigenous people (Mundy & Compton, 1991; Williams, 2024). Although a virtual platform could be an alternative medium to facilitate communication and engagement of participants, it has inherent challenges: limited bandwidth and lagging during video conferencing. Fourth, ineffective leadership communication, if not addressed, may lead to a lack of trust, clarity, and transparency, an overload of irrelevant information, and the use of wrong communication tools (Erwin & Garman, 2009; Christensen, 2014). Research has shown that communication as a technique, and a tool plays a significant role

in a change process by informing, involving, and motivating participants throughout the process (Beatty, 2015; Simoes & Esposito, 2014). It serves as a two-way means of engagement among educators and educational partners, based on information sharing, participatory involvement, change process assessment, feedback, and shared leadership (Malek & Yazdanifard, 2012).

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

Knowledge mobilization (KMb) is an iterative process and functions as a means, not an end (Pollock et al., 2019); therefore, knowledge must be easily accessible, useful, and used by participants in an organizational change. In the case of TES, the geographical location and context (Pietrzak & Paliszkiewics, 2015) must be considered by change agents during knowledge building (organization learning) and mobilization, to promote equity and social justice among all participants. The knowledge building that is anticipated during and after the change process is the significance of cultural competence in leadership practice. Furthermore, the knowledge will be captured and transferred in multi-dimensions due to the complexity of the education system (differences in participants' worldviews and leadership capacities), as discussed in chapter one, and the diverse change participants (Indigenous and non-Indigenous). The knowledge mobilization plan (KMbP) for the change process is an adaptation of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC, 2023) knowledge mobilization (KMb) framework, and it includes four key elements: knowledge creation, knowledge exchange, strategies, and tactics to advance learning, and levels of participants' engagement, as shown in Appendix H.

Knowledge Creation

The creation of knowledge will commence with the change process and be sustained through the KMbP, and it will involve the change agents and all participants, regardless of their levels of engagement in the process. It is essential to co-create the knowledge so that everyone is

recognized as an active participant who has input in mobilizing knowledge (Campbell et al., 2017) through collaborative efforts. The co-creation of knowledge allows diverse perspectives and is indicative of the collaborative efforts (Armitage et al., 2011, 2015) necessary to address the problem of practice and to promote a shared understanding of the problem. In addition to exploring a collaborative approach, dialogic communication, active engagement, and consultation will be explored in alignment with the aforementioned CIP.

Levels of Participants' Engagement

As a change initiator and lead change agent, I have multiple functions. My role will involve collaborating with other change agents to achieve collective efficacy by assigning tasks to individuals based on their agencies within TES. In addition, I will be responsible for identifying training and support opportunities for change agents and participants to move the change process in the right direction. My role will also include supporting principals and other educational partners, in their primary roles as they actively engage and provide actionable feedback to advance the learning in a way that promotes knowledge mobilization.

The multiple layers of engagement presented in Appendix I will define the levels of participants' engagement. The change agents, for example, will fully engage in the change process, while the principals and vice principals (school leaders) are the targeted audiences who are considered active participants. The school leaders are expected to provide feedback that will help move the change forward to achieve the desired outcomes. Moreover, monthly meetings will occur, and reports will be submitted to monitor and evaluate the impact of the change. The SMC and DEAs will occasionally participate when there is a topic of special interest or when they have something specific to contribute. The peripheral participants include the aspiring leaders and other educational partners, who have a sustained connection to TES and the various

communities; although they have less authority and engagement to influence the change process, they are recognized as allies in promoting the change and valued as collaborators.

Knowledge Exchange

As the change agents present the "what", "why", and "how" of the change, they will be positioned to learn and witness, in real-time, the benefits of the newly implemented TES leadership framework and mentorship program. Through interactions with, and feedback from participants, one of the benefits will include improved cultural competence of principals (Davis, 2020; Gopalkrishnan, 2019); it will be evident in a high retention rate, consistent implementation of culturally relevant policies, improved leadership networking (Campbell et al., 2014, 2017), and professional development workshops. The multi-dimensional knowledge exchange is an integral part of the KMbP to advance organizational learning beyond TES. In addition, I will share updates on the progression of the new knowledge against desired outcomes at the SMC quarterly meeting, to promote system-wide knowledge mobilization, after thorough monitoring and evaluation of the change process.

Strategies and Tactics to Advance Learning

Before I commence the change implementation plan, participants will be required to complete a questionnaire shown in Appendix I, to assess their cultural competence skills. This questionnaire will reveal participants' understanding of what constitutes just treatment of diverse peoples, with a focus on Indigenous people of Arctic Canada and other cultures that are prominent in TES (Queirós et al., 2017). These questionnaire results will constitute part of the data collection strategy that will inform the implementation and communication plans. The data will be collected by assigned change agents and it will be aggregated using TES data-analysis resource. Moreover, as part of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan, the cultural

competency attainment of principals will be monitored by selected change agents through monthly school leaders' reports and the assessment of the effective implementation of culturally relevant policies by the superintendent of schools at the micro level. There will be monthly meetings between change agents and principals of piloting schools, to garner inputs and shared learning experiences. Storytelling is an effective strategy that allows principal to share their success stories from applying the knowledge created (Hargreaves et al., 2010), and its positive impact on their practice. The tactic is to have school leaders learn from each other by telling their stories (a form of data), and establish a professional network within TES (Kovach, 2021).

Monitoring and Evaluation

During the change process, an effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan will promote a process of capacity building in participants by revealing mistakes and offering paths for improvements (Hartung & Reimer, 2019; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). According to Armenakis et al. (2007), "if significant gaps are observed and no action is taken to close those gaps, resistance would be expected and, therefore, change implementation would be threatened" (p. 233). As such, the common goal of the M&E process is to improve the cultural competence of principals in TES through the testing of various assumptions during the change process via questioning and feedback (Moen & Norman, 2009; Taylor et al., 2014). This testing process involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, and based on the results, the change agents will act accordingly (Analytical in Action, 2019). A holistic approach to the M&E process will result in the effective assessment of the impact of the process in the short-term, medium-term, and long-term. The M&E processes will be repeated until a successful and sustainable improvement is attained (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017; Taylor et al., 2014).

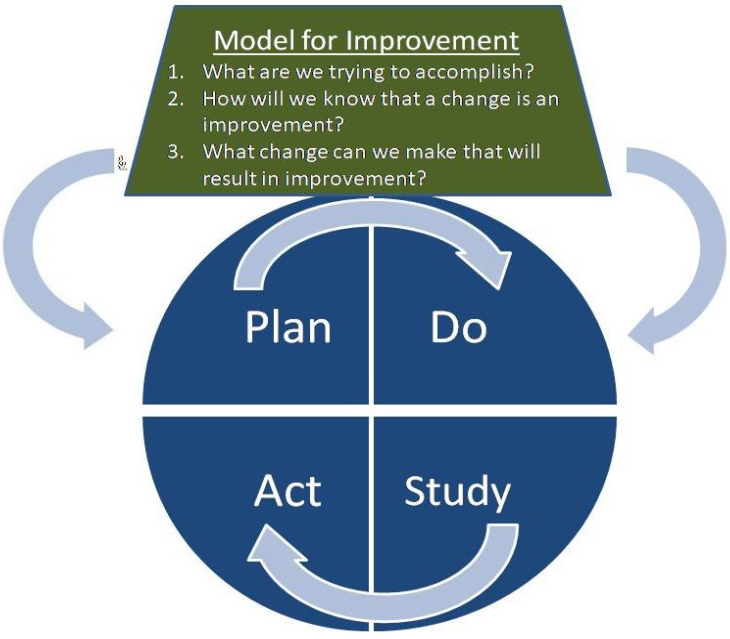
Chosen Monitoring and Evaluation Model

Deming's PDSA cycle, with four stages—plan, do, study, and act—is considered an effective M&E model for the change process. It is the chosen M&E model because an outcome can be achieved in the short term to inform the next cycle or stage during the change process; improvement is pursued until the desired outcome is achieved (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017). Due to the simplicity of the cyclical PDSA model, it will promote clear communication and an efficient M&E process (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017; Moen & Norman, 2009; Taylor et al., 2014).

The model of Deming's PDSA cycle, by Associate in Process Improvement (API) (Moen & Norman, 2009), will be adapted for the M&E process. This model is divided into two parts that include the four stages, as shown in Figure 13. The API model of the PDSA cycle called the

Figure 13

PDSA Model



Note. Adapted from Moen, R., & Norman, C. (2009). *Evolution of the PDCA Cycle*.

Model for Improvement can be applied to various change processes, from simple to the most complex (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017; Moen & Norman, 2009; Taylor et al., 2014).

Part one of the model, referred to as the "Thinking Phase", will initialize the M&E process by asking three key questions; part two, the PDSA four-stage cycle, involves testing, implementing, and spreading changes. Although the major drawbacks of the PDSA cycle are that the four stages must be performed in the correct order and the cycle must be continuous (Taylor et al., 2014), these drawbacks are worth the benefits. The ability to carry out frequent testing (M&E) that can be used for targeted objectives will promote prompt attention to gaps in TES.

Monitoring and Evaluation Tools

The M&E tools that will be used in the change process include quantitative, shown in Appendix L, and qualitative methods of collecting data; these combined methods are considered to result in swift intervention toward change improvement (Queirós et al., 2017). The quantitative and qualitative methods have their pros and cons in a change process (Rahman, 2017). Research has shown that the quantitative method deals with statistical analysis and measurement that are considered accurate and reliable (Creswell, 2014; Queirós et al., 2017); and the qualitative method tends to make meaning of a complex reality, such as the experiences of participants, their behaviours, interactions, and social contexts (Queirós et al., 2017). Depending on the type of quantitative or qualitative method explored, there is variability in strengths and potential limitations. In conjunction with other change agents, we will consider the tools that will best fit the context of TES and take advantage of available M&E tools or resources within TES.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The M&E plan framework (see Appendix K) of the change process will involve four loops of incremental improvement during the pilot program before regional-wide

implementation. Each loop represents a year of the four-year strategic CIP, to facilitate effective M&E of the change process at the micro, meso, and macro levels in subsequent years. M&E tests will also be conducted by the change agents within each loop of the CIP stages to identify implementation gaps and address them promptly. The M&E process will be monitored by the change agents using M&E tools that will generate data using quantitative (e.g., questionnaire) and qualitative (e.g., interview, storytelling) methods. The PDSA cycle will be implemented in steps:

Step 1: Plan

At the "plan" stage of the PDSA cycle, the change agents will be specific about the objective of the M&E test at each CIP stage and predict the outcome and why it occurred (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015; Moen & Norman, 2009). At this stage, the purpose of the test will be identified through the collective decision of all change agents, for example, the understanding of the TES leadership framework by the principals. The data collected will inform the necessary support needed for principals to grasp the implementation of the leadership framework. This data will be collected at the mobilization stage where further clarification about the change process is required before the acceleration stage. In the planning process, the M&E tool allows for the necessary guiding questions shown in Appendix L, based on the testing objective.

Step 2: Do

The change agents, at this stage, will explore qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct and document the test outcomes and other observations depending on the objective of the test. To maintain the anonymity of principals' responses, an online survey will collect data every month during the pilot program. Relative to the qualitative method, this quantitative method of data collection is time and cost effective, can be analyzed using statistical methods,

and is not affected by the possible subjectivity of the change agents (Creswell, 2014; Kelley et al., 2003). Some of the limitations of this quantitative method are the dependence of data reliability on the quality of answers, the framing of the survey structure, and the survey's content rigidity (Queirós et al., 2017). Respondents' emotions and their changes, and respondents' behaviour, will not be captured using this method (Rahman, 2017); however, these factors will be monitored through qualitative methods (interview, observation, and feedback), to provide in-depth findings by directly engaging with participants through the dialogic communication approach (Gurin et al., 2013; Taylor & Kent, 2014). These quantitative and qualitative methods will allow the formulation of appropriate guiding questions and strategies to collect reliable data (Rahman, 2017).

Step 3: Study

At the "study" stage, the change agents will collaboratively analyze the data by comparing it with predictions and discussing with participants and SMC what has been learned, to improve the change process. During the change process, my role as the lead change agent is to work collaboratively with other change agents to develop strategies to address the change process' potential challenges (Wielkiewicz & Stelzner, 2005). According to Deszca et al. (2020), it is important to engage all participants in discussion about what to change and promote their participation in the change process. Furthermore, Deszca et al. (2020) argue that recognizing various perspectives from change agents and participants will benefit the change process because they take ownership of its success; these notions are also connected to the underpinnings of transformational and culturally responsive leadership approaches (Northouse, 2021). To collect extensive feedback from all participants for the advancement of the change process and

knowledge mobilization, monthly review meetings of PDSA test cycles' results will occur between change agents and participants.

Step 4: Act

At this stage, the change agents in conjunction with the SMC will decide whether to improve the current cycle of testing or advance to the next cycle or stage (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017). If an improvement is necessary based on the predictions against goals, the change process will move on to the next stage; otherwise, changes will have to be made by the change agents to address the gaps (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015). A potential gap, for example, is that principals do not fully grasp how to navigate and explore the new TES leadership framework. If this is the case, additional resources, such as workshops, will be required during the CIP to connect the problem of practice to the composite solution.

As the M&E progresses throughout the CIP using PDSA testing cycles, midterm and final evaluations will be conducted by designated change agents at the end of the CIP mobilization and institutionalization stages, respectively, with inputs from all participants. The evaluation method will involve the use of questionnaires in all official languages in TES, as well as interviews with selected participants and educational partners. The evaluations, which will be conducted twice (end of the second and fourth years) within the four years, will be presented to the SMC to inform decisions about improving the change process and sustaining the change. It is worth noting that the evaluation in the fourth year (Institutionalization stage) will be similar to that of the second year (Mobilization stage) but will be more holistic in approach by measuring the success of the change process (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017) during the pilot program.

Conclusion

It is evident in this chapter that the application of the composite solution (discussed in chapter two) to the problem of practice (discussed in chapter one) demands the appropriate leadership approaches, an effective change implementation plan, a change communication plan, and M&E processes. To effectively advance the change process, several studies in the area of organizational change have provided the basis for choosing the appropriate frameworks and approaches (Errida & Lotfi, 2021). Moreover, the change implementation plan, framed using the change path model (Deszca et al., 2020), must be strategically initiated, facilitated, monitored, and evaluated to achieve the desired outcome. This process works in tandem with the change communication strategies (Haiilo, 2023) and the PDSA cycle for an effective change process. Taylor and Brownell (2017) argue that it is incumbent upon leaders to demonstrate the ability to attain collaborators' support to achieve the organizational goals for positive change; indeed, in a successful change process, there must be an effective communication plan from start to finish (Beatty, 2015). Obstacles are bound to arise, such as predictable delays and resource limitations, but these challenges can be mitigated through effective communication with all participants (Elving, 2005). It is evident throughout this DiP that the emerging guiding questions, relative to the PoP presented in chapter one, have been discussed and addressed using various theories, frameworks and composite solution. This DiP presents the groundwork required to shift leadership practice to a more effective level in schools across TES, such that principals will have greater confidence to implement culturally relevant policies and demonstrate cultural responsiveness in their practice. This change is indicative of a growth mindset (Derler, 2019) among principals, for progressive and sustainable improvement in schools.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

As presented in this DiP, non-Indigenous principals took up leadership positions in schools across TES without understanding, in most cases, the context in which their schools are situated and the regions' effects on leadership approaches. These principals often came with a wealth of experience, but this factor was not enough to enable full immersion into the Indigenous culture and tradition. As such, this DiP also highlights the importance of supporting principals in developing cultural competence through knowledge mobilization (Cooper, 2011; Pollock, 2019), to address the problem of practice (PoP). Research has shown that a successful change process requires the collective efficacy of various processes and frameworks to achieve a common goal (Laverentz & Kumm, 2017; Smits & Bowden, 2015); however, this attainment can be challenging due to barriers during the change process (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). As substantiated in this DiP, the need for change in TES is not a fallacy; it is a call to TES leadership to implement the solution to the PoP experienced by Indigenous and non-Indigenous principals.

For the next steps, which are defined by increasing the retention rate of principals and furthering the work of the improvement process, TES leadership practice must shift toward promoting the significance of cultural competence and responsiveness (Davis, 2020; Gopalkrishnan, 2019) as principals assume their new roles. Some of the considerations for the next steps include implementing mandatory cultural orientation workshops for newly hired principals and vice-principals, leadership cultural competence training, and basic language competence tests with monetary incentives for non-Indigenous principals.

Cultural Orientation Workshop

Cultural orientation is recognized in TES as a fundamental starting point for newly hired educators to acquire cultural knowledge ([Territorial] Government, 2008); however, there is no

cultural orientation designed specifically for school leaders. From my years of experience as an administrator in TES, newly hired educators rarely attend the cultural orientation workshop, which is designed purposely for new educators and facilitated by the Educator Development division of TES. Some of the possible reasons for low attendance are the scheduled dates for the workshop and the fact that it is optional. The workshop is consistently scheduled during early summer when the majority of the newly hired educators are away on vacation; moreover, they lack motivation to attend a work event that carries no negative sanctions if it is missed and no incentive if it is attended. Based on this poor attendance, then, the workshop has not garnered the momentum to yield the desired result of improving cultural awareness among newly hired educators (Noman & Gurr, 2020), which would prevent culture shock and conflict. For future consideration, I strongly recommend a mandatory cultural orientation workshop for school leaders that is specific to leadership practice, with flexible in-person and virtual scheduling options (Burhanuddin et al., 2018). I also propose mandatory attendance, which will send a message to all newly hired principals of the workshop's importance to leadership practice in TES. Before the beginning of the new school year, and as a way to foster greater attendance, remuneration will be recommended for all newly hired principals and vice principals from the South who require funds to attend in person.

Cultural Competence Training

The change process, as presented in the DiP, will result in knowledge building (e.g., cultural competence), and the newly acquired knowledge will be mobilized in TES for sustainable change. Based on the knowledge mobilization plan discussed in chapter three, another consideration is the implementation of annual cultural competence training for school leaders. This training will help to reinforce the applicability of cultural competence in leadership

practice and provide opportunities for critical self-reflection by school leaders (Gopalkrishnan, 2019). The training must be mandatory for new and returning school leaders, and it must function as a requirement for principal certification in TES.

Basic Language Competence Assessment

TES has an incentivized language proficiency assessment for Indigenous educators to promote Indigenous language instruction in schools, but no such assessment exists for non-Indigenous educators who would like to be proficient in the language. The design and implementation of an incentivized basic language competence assessment for non-Indigenous educators, a future consideration, can help galvanize the interest of non-Indigenous principals to learn the languages (Naoua, 2019). This consideration will promote the use of Indigenous languages in schools and the encouragement of students to speak their first language without repercussions (Mclvor et al., 2020). In addition, when non-Indigenous principals learn Indigenous languages, they lead by example, which encourages non-Indigenous teachers to learn the Indigenous languages. The Indigenous students will be instrumental in this educational process, as they can assist non-Indigenous school staff on this journey and contribute to forming positive relationships between students and staff.

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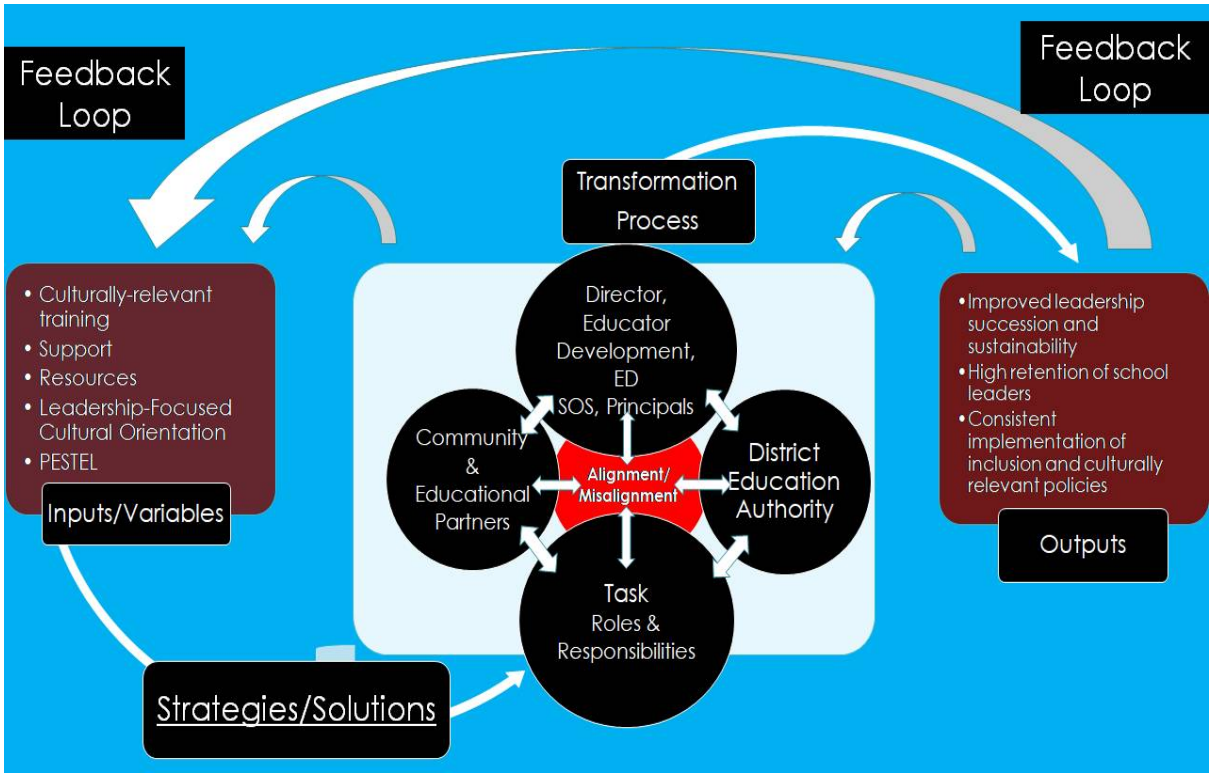
Appendix A

Gap Analysis Conceptual Framework



Note. Adapted from Nadler, D. A., & Tushman, M. L. (1989). Organizational frame bending: Principles for managing reorientation. *Academy of Management Executive*, 3(3), 194-204.

Appendix B

Change Readiness Assessment Form

The below assessment will be used to assess change readiness of individual/group.

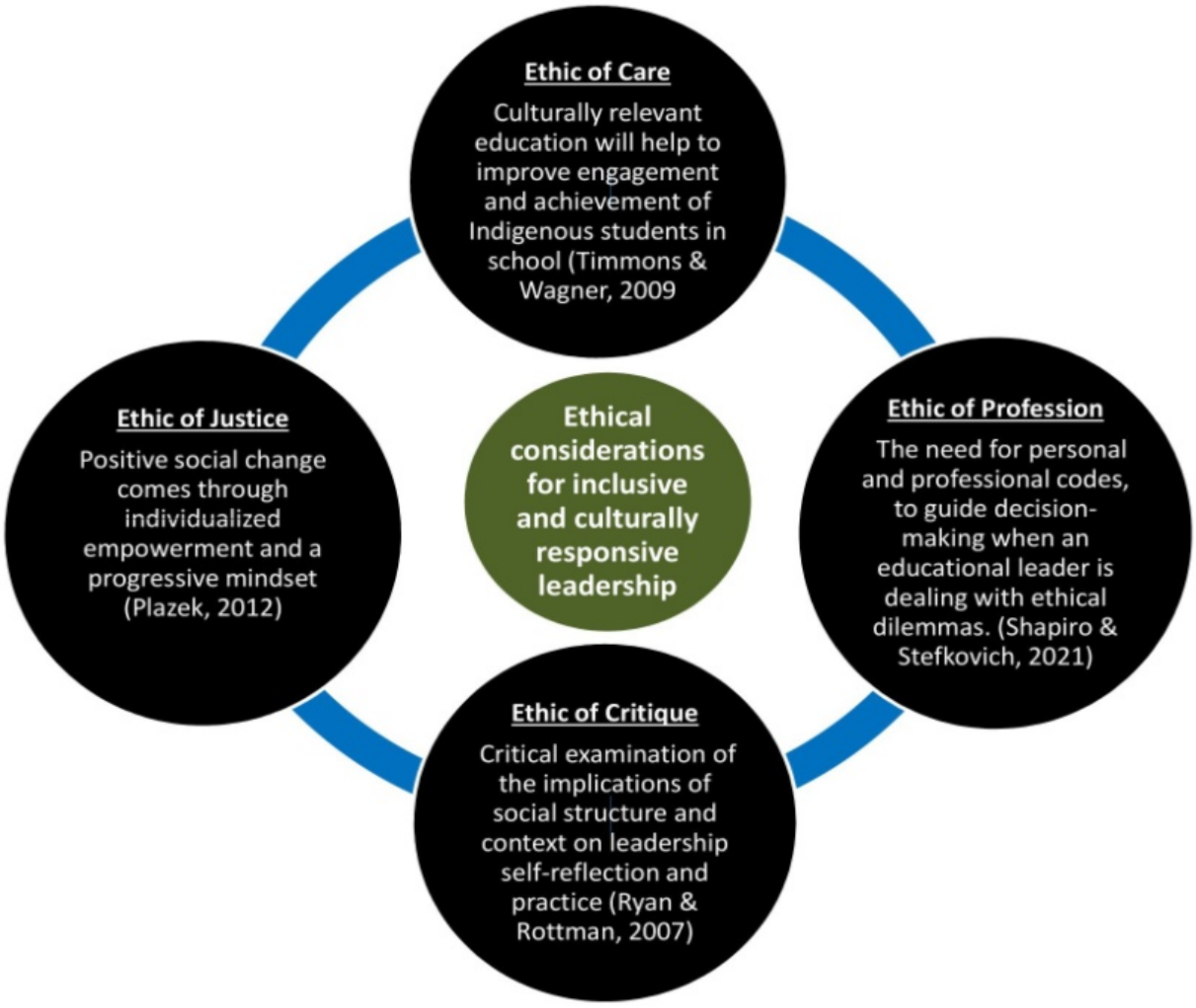
☐ Position: …… ☐ School Operation/division: ……..

Questions to Assess Change Readiness	Yes	Partial	No
Personal Valence - Do you understand…			
1. the problem inherent in the current principalship practice in TES			
2. the opportunities that are being missed if the change doesn't happen?			
3. what we are trying to achieve?			
4. how things will be better?			
5. how the change will impact your practice?			
6. the impact of the change on your role/practice, moving forward?			
Do you…			
1. feel hopeful about the future?			
2. feel your concerns, questions, and needs are being heard?			
3. see value in the change?			
4. believe a well thought out strategy is in place to achieve the change?			
Appropriateness – Do you…			
1. think TES is ready for the change?			
2. have the necessary information, knowledge, and skills to fulfill your role?			
3. think TES has a plan to achieve success?			
4. know what success looks like?			
5. know which behaviours will need to change?			
Management Support – Do you…			
1. know that if management is aligned with the change efforts?			
2. know where to go for additional information about the change?			
3. view management as a resource for eliminating/overcoming barriers?			
4. think TES has the mechanism to place to reinforce the required behavior?			
5. think TES has the means to assess the ongoing effectiveness of the change?			
Change-Specific Efficacy – Do you…			
1. believe TES has provided appropriate resource to support proposed change?			
2. know if TES has the necessary system to facilitate the change?			
3.think TES has the ability to execute new behavior required for the change?			
4. know how to perform the required leadership tasks?			
5. think TES can implement this change effectively given its current situation?			

Note. Adapted from Holt, D. T., Armenakis, A. A., Feild, H. S., & Harris, S. G. (2007). Readiness for organizational change: The systematic development of a scale. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *43*(2), 232-255.

Appendix C

Leadership Ethics Conceptual Framework



Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2023). *Ethics conceptual framework.*

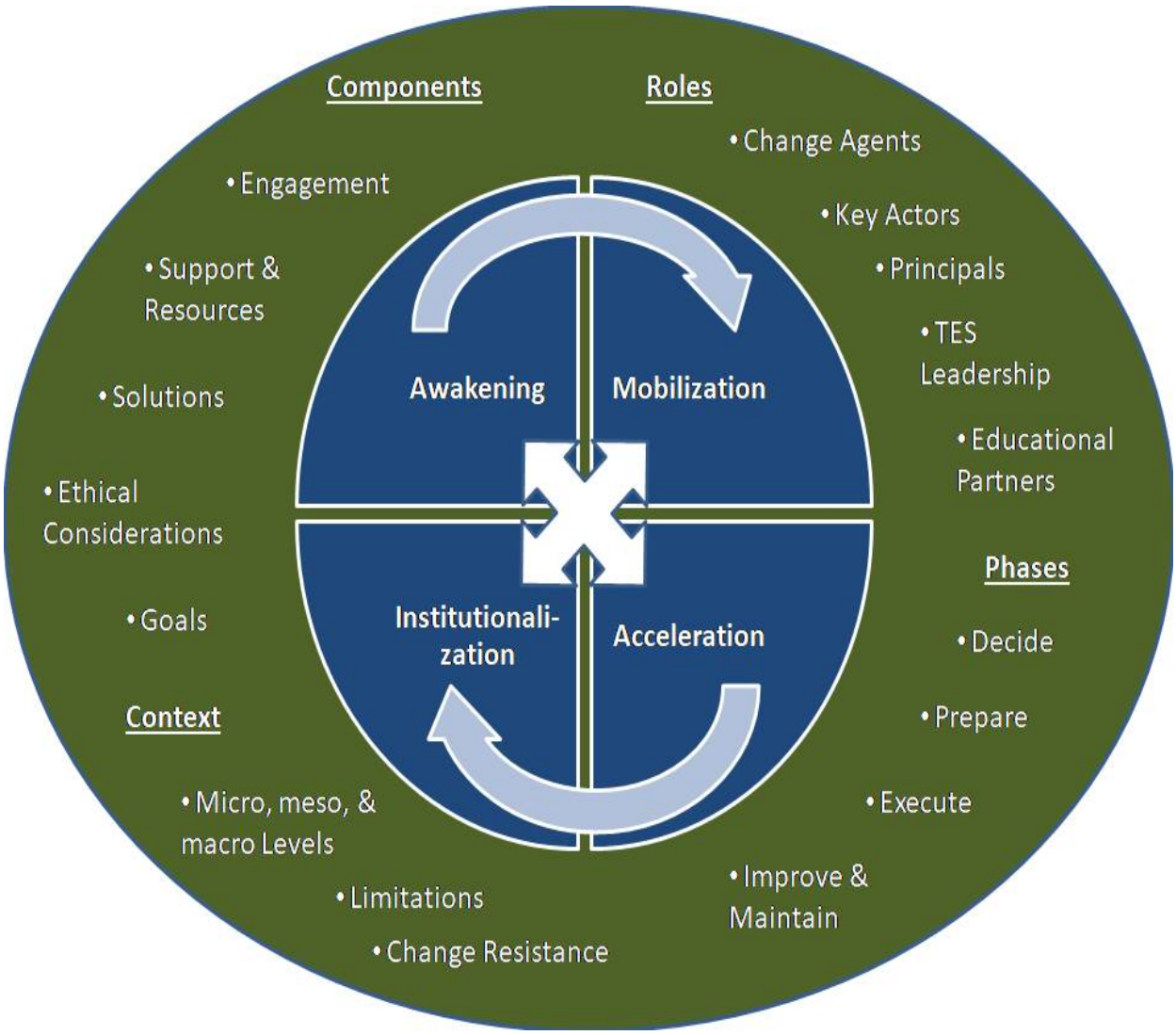
Appendix D

Comparison of the Three Possible Solutions

Criteria	Leadership Framework	Mentorship Program	Committee for Leadership Succession and Sustainability
Central Concept	A set of guiding principles for effective inclusive and culturally responsive leadership practice	A platform to address leadership succession and sustainability holistically at all levels of the organization	Gap analysis through the breakdown of the organizational system into manageable parts (Wyman, 2004) and recommends the alignments between the organizational components for the best fit (Nadler & Tushman, 1989)
Limitations	Not inclusive from an Indigenous perspective because Indigenous people learn better through hands-on and conversational engagement (Gordon Foundation, 2018)	Mentee excessive dependency on mentor but inclusive. Possible mismatch of mentor with mentee leading to tense relationship (Christos, 2022; Grow, 2005)	Staff challenges lead to the inability of staff to take up additional responsibility. Commitment by members is not guaranteed (Ferguson, 2013)
System approach	Leading yourself, leading people and leading the organization (The Leadership Framework, n.d.)	Inclusive and culturally responsive leadership practice (Banwo et al., 2021; Khalifa et al., 2019)	A collaborative approach and open system with a feedback loop to maintain congruence between organizational components to promote leadership succession and sustainability (Nadler & Tushman, 1989)
Interconnectedness (Constantinide, 2023)	People, task, formal and informal structures (Taylor & Brownell, 2017)	Organizational structures and systems, professional development, personal, social and professional relationships	Enhancing complex relationships between humans (Osmond-Johnson & Turner, 2020), especially non-Indigenous and Indigenous worldviews.
Ethical Considerations (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021)	Ethics of the profession and responsibility	Ethics of care and profession	Ethics of critique, justice, and profession
End goal: Leadership Succession and Sustainability	Through critical self-reflection and the application of a leadership framework (Khalifa et al., 2019; Lopez, 2020; Shaaban, 2020)	Through a well-structured mentorship program (Christos, 2022; Haggard et al., 2011)	Through detailed gap analysis, strategic planning and alignment of organizational components for desired outcomes (Nadler & Tushman, 1989; Deszca et al., 2020)

Appendix E

Change Implementation Plan Framework



Note. Tomoloju, O. A. (2024). *An integrated change implementation framework*. Adapted from Hirsch, W. (2019). *The implementer's starter kit: How to plan and execute organizational change like a master, even If you aren't one yet* (2nd ed.), Wendy Hirsch Consulting LLC; and Deszca, G., Ingols, C., & Cawsey, T. (2020). *Organizational change: An action-oriented toolkit* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Appendix F

Change Implementation Plan Chart

Four Elements of the CIP Phases (When)	Criteria Timelines	Awakening Decide Year 1 August – June	Mobilization Prepare Year 2 August – June	Acceleration Execute Year 3 August – June	Institutionalization Improve & Maintain Year 4 August – June
Components (Why, What & How)					
	Engagement	• Understanding the influence of external factors (PESTEL) and internal factors (human resources) on the change process **(**Schein & Schein, 2017) • Development of communication strategies and consultation with educational partners (Beatty, 2015) • Presenting PoP, possible solutions, and desired outcomes	• Further dialogue with participants on the "what", "why", and "how" of the change process (Shahid, 2011) • Exploring transformation and culturally responsive leadership approaches. • Questionnaires for mentors and mentees to facilitate the best match of mentor to mentee	• Hybrid solutions implementation • Addressing resistance to change through effective communication and feedback collection • M&E implementation using the PDSA model • Emergence of new knowledge (knowledge building) • Peering mentors with mentees	• Improving change implementation by integrating feedback • Realization of desired change through alignments of components (Deszca et al., 2020), and effective communication protocol (Beatty, 2015) • Training for mentors and mentees for effective mentorship program • Knowledge mobilization among participants for sustainable change
	Support and Resources	• Involvement of SMC & educational partners • Support from human resources, policy and planning divisions of TES	• In-person conversations with elders and key educational partners to clarify misconceptions while promoting the need for change	• Culturally-relevant training, support, and resources • (Banwo et al., 2021; Khalifa et al., 2016, 2019)	• Effective assessment and evaluation tools. • Continuous support and training from the SMC team

Four Elements of the CIP Phases (When)	Criteria	Awakening	Mobilization	Acceleration	Institutionalization
	Timelines	Decide Year 1 August – June	Prepare Year 2 August – June	Execute Year 3 August – June	Improve & Maintain Year 4 August – June
	Strategies/ Solutions	• Building relationships through dialogue and collaboration at the community and regional levels to promote the need for change. A shared understanding of possible solutions and feedback from participants	• Evaluation of the implications of the external and internal factors on possible solutions, and the alignment of people and tasks (Deszca et al., 2020)	• Implementation of the hybrid Solution, a leadership framework with a mentorship program component.	• Monitoring and evaluation of change process and KMbP against desired outcomes to ensure effectiveness and sustainability of the change, and knowledge mobilization.
	Ethical Considerations	• The primary ethical consideration at his stage is the ethic of care considering the residential school experiences of Indigenous people (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019).	• Ethic of care plays a vital role in moral decision-making through active listening, collaboration, and cultural responsiveness (Nishii & Leroy, 2022).	• Ethics of profession and critique will help promote expected leadership values, equity, and performance-related requirements.	• Ethic of critique will facilitate authentic engagement and the breaking down of barriers for an effective change process (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2021).
	Goals and Priorities	<u>Short Goals</u> • Active listening, discussion, collaboration, consultations, and buy-ins • Design of TES leadership framework	<u>Mid-Term Goals</u> • Effective communication strategies through multiple channels • Support from eighty percent of principals and educational partners	<u>Mid-Term Goals</u> • Alignment of people with desirable skill sets with specific tasks, to improve the change process • Ninety percent retention rate of principals	<u>Long-Term Goals</u> • Improved leadership succession and sustainability • Consistent implementation of inclusive and culturally relevant policies

Four Elements of the CIP Phases (When)	Criteria	Awakening Decide Year 1 August – June	Mobilization Prepare Year 2 August – June	Acceleration Execute Year 3 August – June	Institutionalization Improve & Maintain Year 4 August – June
	Limitations	• Navigating the complexity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews (Osmond-Johnson & Turner, 2020).	• Limited resources to reach broader educational partners. Uncertainty may lead to resistance (Sallaffie, 2022).	• Constant shifting of the external and internal components will directly impact the change process.	• Getting the right people with the needed skill sets for the tasks.
Roles (Who)					
	Change Agents Roles and Responsibilities	• Selection of change agents and piloting schools by SMC in consultation with the change initiator. • Micro Level: Change agents consult with the DEAs, principals, and educational partners to create awareness of the proposed change. • Meso & Macro levels: EDs provide operational support to change agents across the three regions.	• As a change initiator, I will work with other divisions within TES to assess the skills and abilities, of other change agents, needed to implement change. • Designated change agents will collaborate with principals and educational partners to clarify possible doubts/misconceptions	• I will support the key actors in developing new knowledge, skills, abilities, and ways of thinking that would foster the desired change relative to the solutions and the alignment of components for the best fit.	• Change agents will maintain the monitoring and evaluation plan and use feedback to improve the change process (Deszca et al., 2020). • I will conduct monthly meetings with all change agents to review the progress of change and knowledge mobilization. The report will be presented during quarterly joint senior management meeting.

Four Elements of the CIP Phases (When)	**Criteria** **Timelines**	**Awakening** Decide Year 1 August – June	**Mobilization** Prepare Year 2 August – June	**Acceleration** Execute Year 3 August – June	**Institutionalization** Improve & Maintain Year 4 August – June
	My agency in alliance with key change drivers	Step 1: Identification and confirmation of the problem (Wyman, 2004) Step 2: Gap analysis (Deszca et al., 2020) Step3: Development of change vision Step 4: The data collection	Step 1: Understanding the desired change through formal and informal structures Step 2: Evaluating culture and power relationality (Aylward, 2009) Step 3: Creating allyship (Steinman, 2020)	Step 1: Empowering and engaging participants by providing appropriate support and resources (Creswell, 2014) Step 2: Managing transition and monitoring the process for unfit/fit	Step 1: Making necessary changes as needed through monitoring and evaluation of the system regularly Step 2: Maintaining system equilibrium through the feedback mechanism (Deszca et al., 2020)
Context (Where)					
	Micro, meso, and macro levels	Year 1 – Micro, meso, and macro levels	Year 2 – Micro, meso, and macro levels	Year 3 – Pilot program at the meso level	Year 4 – Pilot program at the meso level.

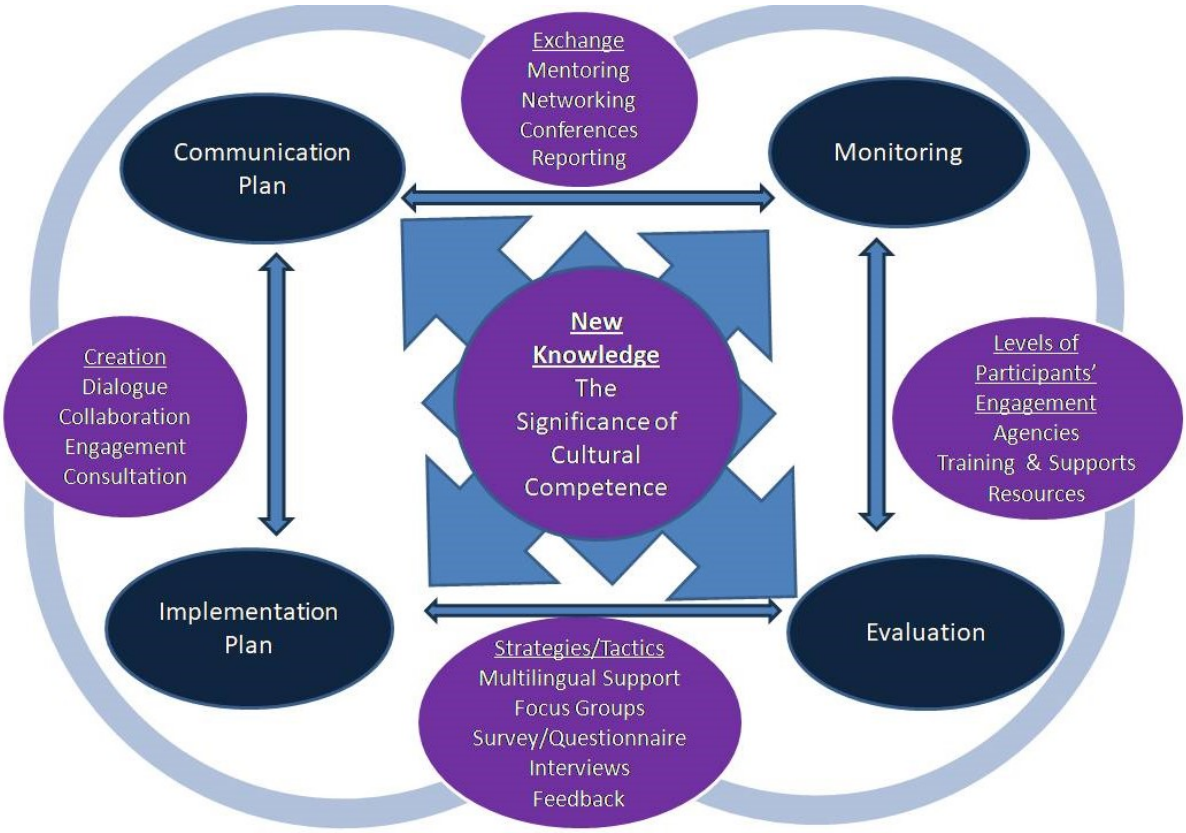
Appendix G

Change Communication Framework

Note. Adapted from Haiilo (2023). *Change communication strategies: Four stages of change communications*. Haiilo Masterclass.

Appendix H

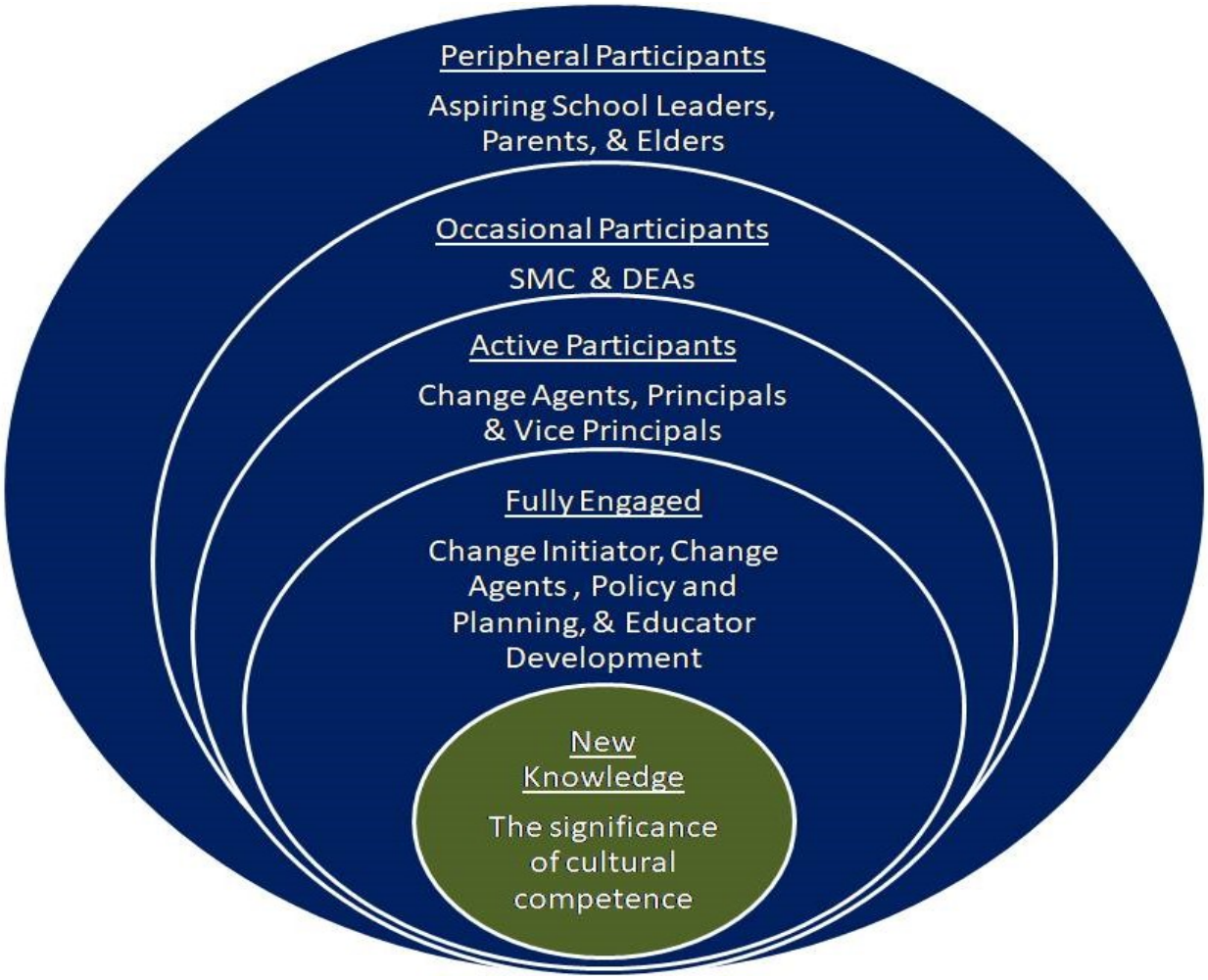
Knowledge Mobilization Framework



Note. Adapted from SSHRC (2023). *Knowledge mobilization framework*. https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/knowledge_mobilisation-mobilisation_des_connaissances-eng.aspx

Appendix I

Levels of Participation



Note. Adapted from Traynor, W. (n.d.). *Levels of participation*. https://www.wenger-trayner.com/slide-forms-of-participation/

Appendix J

Cultural Competence Self-Test

The following self-assessment can assist school leaders in identifying areas in which they might improve the quality of their leadership practice to culturally diverse populations.

Please rate each item listed below.

Physical Environment, Materials & Resources

1. I display pictures, posters, artwork and other decor that reflect the cultures and ethnic backgrounds of the students served.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

2. I ensure that magazines, brochures and other printed materials in the school are of interest to and reflect the different cultures of individuals and families served.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

3. When using videos, films or other media resources for school-related events, I ensure that they reflect the cultures and ethnic backgrounds of students and families served.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

4. I ensure that printed information disseminated by my school takes into account the average literacy levels of individuals and families receiving them.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

Communication Styles

5. I identify the primary language spoken by my students and their families.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

6. When interacting with individuals and families who have limited English proficiency, I keep in mind that:
   Their limited ability to speak the language of the dominant culture has no bearing on their ability to communicate effectively in their primary language.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

7. I use interpreters for interventions, meetings or other events for individuals and families who need or prefer this level of assistance.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

8. When possible, I ensure that all notices and communication to individuals and families are written in English and Inuktitut languages.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

9. I understand that it may be necessary to use alternatives to written communications for some individuals and families.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

Values & Attitudes

10. I avoid imposing values that may conflict or be inconsistent with those of cultures or ethnic groups other than my own.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

11. I intervene in an appropriate manner when I observe staff or students within my school engaging in behaviours that show cultural insentivity, racial biases, and prejudice.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

12. I understand that age, gender, and life-cycle factors must be considered in interactions with individuals and families (e.g., high value placed on the decision of elders, the role of eldest male or female in families, or roles and expectations of children within the family).

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

13. Even though my professional or moral viewpoints may differ, I accept individuals and families as the ultimate decision-makers for services and supports impacting their lives.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

14. I recognize that the meaning or value of education may vary greatly among cultures.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

15. I accept that religion and cultural beliefs may influence how individuals and families respond to school-related matters.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

16. I keep abreast of the major education concerns and issues for ethnically and racially diverse populations residing in the geographic locale served by my school.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

17. I am well versed in the most current and proven leadership practices, to address school-related problems among ethnically and racially diverse groups within the geographic locale served by my school.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

18. I avail myself of professional development and training to enhance my knowledge and skills in the provision of services and support to culturally, ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse groups.

☐ Frequently ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely/Never ☐ NA

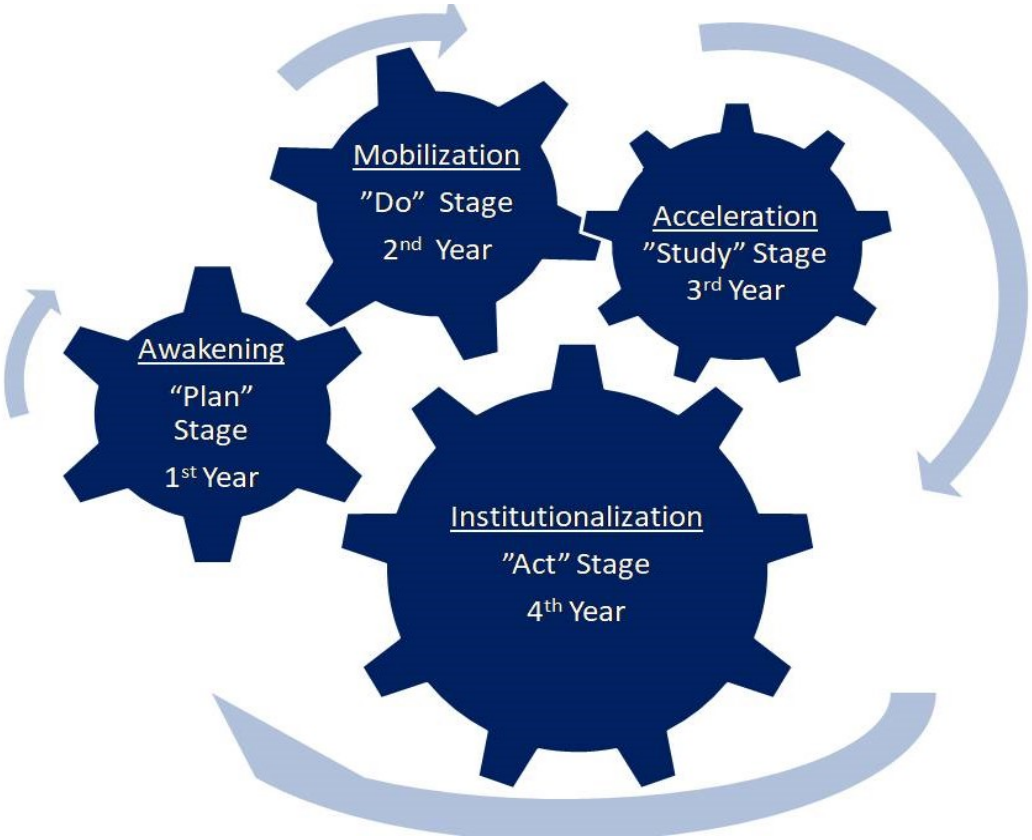
How to use this checklist

This checklist is intended to heighten the awareness and sensitivity of school leaders to the importance of cultural and linguistic competence in TES. It provides concrete examples of the kinds of beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices that foster cultural and linguistic competence at the leadership level. There is no answer key with correct responses. However, if you frequently responded "rarely/never," you may not necessarily demonstrate beliefs, attitudes, values and practices that promote cultural and linguistic competence. Based on the results of this assessment, if you could change two things in the coming year, what would they be?

Note. Adapted from UW-Green Bay (2023). *Cultural competence self-test*. https://www.uwgb.edu/UWGBCMS/media/bhtp/files/Cultural-Competence-Self-Test.pdf

Appendix K

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Framework



Note. Adapted from Deming, W.E. (2018). *The New Economics* (3rd ed.). MIT Press

Appendix L

Plan-Do-Study-Act Tool

CIP Stage: **Date:**

Plan				
The purpose of this cycle is to:				
What question do you want to answer?		**What are your predictions?**		
Plan to collect data to answer questions:				
What data will be collected?	**How?** (checklist, survey)	**Who?** (role, agency)	**When?** (time, date)	**Where?** (micro, meso, macro)
List tasks necessary to set up the test:				
What?	**How?** (checklist, survey)	**Who?** (role, agency)	**When?** (time, date)	**Where?** (micro, meso, macro)

DO
What did you observe during the change process? Were there any unexpected observations?
STUDY
Analyze your data and describe the results. How do the results compare with your predictions? What did you learn from this cycle?
ACT
Are you ready to move to the next stage? ❑ Yes (I am confident that there is measured improvement, changes have been assessed and questions answered.) ❑ No (I have more questions, need to make adjustments and assess again, or risks outweigh benefits – new idea required.) What is the plan for the next cycle?

Note. Adapted from Health Quality Ontario (2023). *PDSA: Plan-Do-Study-Act*.

https://www.hqontario.ca/portals/0/Documents/qi/rf-document-pdsa-cycles1-en.pdf