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INSIDE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NUNAVUT: FOUR WOMEN'S STORIES

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ABSTRACT

Educational administration is a discipline that invites a multiplicity of perspectives. This study explores the careers of Inuit women who have been educational leaders in Nunavut schools for a number of years. It examines what it is like for them to be school administrators in the Canadian Arctic. The questions investigated include: How do Inuit women principals understand their role? What forces have shaped the way Inuit women see themselves as leaders in educational settings? Are the perceptions of the participants consistent with the paradigm of administration in Nunavut schools expressed by the Nunavut Department of Education and the Educational Leadership Program that is required for principal certification? What changes are needed to make the principal's role more reflective of Inuit beliefs and ways of leading? What supports are needed to encourage more Inuit women to become school administrators? The dissertation employs a narrative inquiry methodology to explore the training programs, supports, satisfactions and challenges of Nunavut women principals. The results challenge the partiality of perspectives on school leadership in the dominant discourse and point to the need for greater cultural sensitivity when helping to establish school systems in unique cultural contexts. They show that community members need to become actively involved in schools on a regular basis to support a vision of education based on Inuit values. Inuit administrators need the time and opportunity to work collaboratively with elders, their co-principals, mentors and each other, in order to support and guide their staff, students and community with a more relevant model of school leadership.

Key Words: Aboriginal issues, Inuit culture, narrative inquiry, educational administration, gender, professional development, principal certification

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my grandson, Alex, to show him that

anything is possible

with the love and support of family, friends and great teachers

who believe in us and inspire us to achieve our dreams.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

> The Inuit of the Canadian Arctic have forsaken their sod houses and dog sleds for satellite television and snowmobiles in less than two generations. Assembling a smoothly functioning government and a solid educational system has been another matter entirely. (Krauss, 2006, p. 4)

The Nunavut Context

On April 1, 1999 the map of Canada in the Arctic was changed when the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was settled, legally giving the Inuit people control of roughly 356,000 square kilometres of land they had inhabited for centuries. Nunavut is now officially recognized as a Canadian territory. The Canadian Arctic, which stretches from the borders of Manitoba and northern Quebec in the south, to the North Pole in the north, and is sharing a boundary with Greenland in the east and the Northwest Territories in the west, is home to people who, until the twentieth century, enjoyed a nomadic life which revolved around hunting and fishing. It was contact with fur traders, who set up whaling stations and provided the Inuit with tools and guns, coupled with government controlled-settlements that made the Inuit dependent on the economy and institutions of southern Canada. In 1999 the Inuit were granted the autonomy and power to govern themselves and control their institutions.

> But two recent federal government reports tell a disheartening story of frustrated hopes and local failures that do not bode well for Nunavut's exceptionally young population (38 percent of its people are under 14), one still plagued by widespread drug abuse, alcoholism, suicide and family abuse. One report found that only 25

> percent of Inuit students graduate from high school. The lack of basic skills means that the territorial government has filled only 45 percent of its 3,200 public positions with Inuit, once known as Eskimos, although Inuit are 85 percent of the population. Meanwhile, unemployment for the territory is at 30 percent, with some communities suffering 70 percent unemployment. ... the Inuit diet of hunted game has largely been replaced by sugary and fatty packaged foods. Welfare has become a way of life, and 30-year-old grandparents are not uncommon. Housing is scarce, so overcrowding only exacerbates social ills. (Krauss, 2006, p. 4)

After extensive consultation in Aboriginal communities, education was identified by Canadian policy makers as "the single most important issue facing Aboriginal people" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1993, p. 19). In 1995 Thomas Berger was commissioned by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), an organization which represents Inuit interests, along with the federal and territorial governments to assist in the resolution of tensions surrounding the implementation of the land claims agreement: "A key issue is Canada's responsibility for future steps, if any, required to improve the representation of Inuit in Nunavut's public service" (Gallagher-Mackay, 2007, p. 1094).

Between 2000-2005 a working group of the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik struggled to create an Education Act which reflected Inuit "values and language and to prepare Nunavut students for the future" (Connell, 2000, p. 1). The president of NTI, Pauk Quassa claimed "For too long education in the North has been imported models from the South" (Connell, 2000, p. 2). Nunavut's premier, Paul Okalik

stated, "The improvements to the teacher education program aimed at preparing teachers to work in higher grades in Nunavut will help alleviate the problem of finding teachers to teach Inuktitut [the language of the Inuit] or in Inuktitut" (Connell, 2000, p. 2). In his report, Berger (1996) recommended that the solution for increasing Inuit representation in the workforce was to offer bilingual education at all grades in the school system, and to have Inuktitut become the language of communication in the workplace. A former territorial policy lawyer, Gallagher-Mackay (2007), supports Berger's recommendations, but cautions that:

> Berger overstates the significance of bilingual education as a solution for the current failures of elementary and secondary schooling in the territory. Diagnosing – and even more importantly, addressing – the causes of grave problems with the education system is more complex than Berger's recommendation suggests. To realize the full promise of bilingual education it is to tackle directly educational quality and the socio- economic situation of Inuit students. (p. 1095)

Gallagher-Mackay goes on to link the loss of Inuktitut to underachievement in school, and cites statistics showing that adult English language literacy rates in Nunavut are the lowest in Canada. Language and culture are inextricably connected. In a television address Premier Okalik expressed concern that as elders passed on more culture will be lost and that in order to stem the tide of cultural erosion it was necessary to create a school in Clyde River, Nunavut, dedicated to teaching students about the past, and a birthing centre in Rankin Inlet to apply traditional practices of childbirth. "We need to

return to our roots to strengthen our foundation as a people" (Okalik, CPAC TV, January 1, 2007).

Educational Research in Nunavut

Educators in Nunavut struggle to provide opportunities to fulfill the expectations of Inuit stakeholders. Currently too many students are being taught by inexperienced teachers from southern Canada, and occasionally have to begin the school year without qualified teachers. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract personnel from outside of the territory to staff schools due to the concurrent problems of rising costs for housing, food, fuel, airfare and other necessities coupled with the reduction of Nunavut's employee benefit package. These factors are also contributing to an exodus of experienced school staff. The burden of maintaining a southern Canadian education system in order to provide access to its perceived benefits in Nunavut is a confounding task. Bob Moodie, Nunavut's Deputy Minister of Education stated, "The long- term solution is to train our own and import less." (Cited by George, J., 2001)

Nunavut residents want to be independent in a global context. They are struggling with threats to their traditional core values of survival and self-sufficiency at a time when it is necessary for them to acquire the official credentials to be certified in trades and professions that could make contemporary survival and limited independence in a wage economy possible. Instead of learning academic prerequisites that could allow high school graduates entry into trade schools and postsecondary educational institutions, students are dropping out of school in record numbers. Inuit school administrators

have much to share about how they are coping with current challenges. While Inuit beliefs and values may have been displaced in a system of education developed in southern Canada that marginalized them in the past, they are now at a point where they may speak to the perspectives and aspirations of Inuit leaders in their schools.

This study examines the way Inuit women administrators understand the role of principal and the forces that shape the way they see themselves as leaders in educational settings. The focus of my exploration was:

What is it like to be an Inuit woman principal of a Nunavut school?

My understanding of the question was informed by my own experience as a principal in Nunavut working with Inuit school staff and students for several years, by personal and professional relationships I had developed while I lived and worked in Nunavut, and by educational administration theories I had acquired in principal preparation and in academic programs both inside and outside of Nunavut.

This is a study of Inuit women's voices — voices that inspired and challenged my appreciation of the underlying structures and dynamics of Inuit approaches to school leadership.

Personal Experiences with Inuit Education

Connelly and Clandinin define self-knowledge that is acquired through past experiences and applied in the present as we plan for the future as "personal practical knowledge" (1988, p. 25). How we recall and describe former events shapes our understanding of who we are and what sense we make in our present journey.

Assumptions are sometimes challenged by new experiences that cause us to include more plausible interpretations.

> A landscape metaphor is particularly well suited to our purpose. It allows us to the talk about place, space and time. Furthermore, it has a sense of expansiveness and possibility of being filled with diverse people, things, and events in different relationships. Understanding professional knowledge as comprising a landscape calls for a notion of professional knowledge as composed of a wide variety of components and influenced by a wide variety of people, places, and things. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 2)

My journey began in 1989 when I responded to a newspaper advertisement in the Toronto *Globe and Mail* to teach on Baffin Island. I was a doctoral student in educational psychology at the time, and was intrigued by the prospect of observing the interaction of education and psychology in a cross-cultural setting. The methodology in my *Social Forces* course had reduced all behaviours to numeric formulae, and I wondered how the Bs of O (behaviours of the observed) increased by $f(i/c \times C)_2$ (frequency of the individual's educational experience times the culture squared) might play out in Inuit culture.

I was interviewed in a Toronto hotel and I am still excited when I remember entering a room decorated with immense posters of igloos beneath an expanse of stars and northern lights, with photos of elders surrounded by children, with books written in Inuit characters I later understood as syllabics, and with representations of cultural artifacts. An Inuit woman took my hand and led me into an adjoining room to meet an interviewing

team. When asked what had attracted me to apply to teach in a northern environment, I was engulfed with emotion as I tried to explain the magnetic appeal of the Canadian North. I could feel the Arctic landscape within me, teaching me about a way of life I needed to know. On my way home, it occurred to me that the interview had been more of a conversation and that I had not been asked to demonstrate the lesson I had brought with me.

There are many ways to interpret the imprint of the Arctic on Canadian consciousness. Even our national anthem resonates with "the true North strong and free". In a conversation with Joseph Campbell about the power of mythology, journalist Bill Moyers commented, "...myths speak to me because they express what I know inside is true" (Campbell, J., 1988, p. 44). Carl Jung (1964) referred to mythic motifs as "archetypes of the collective unconscious" (p 4) and Lopez (1984) in discussing the relationship of place to psyche describes two kinds of landscapes: "one outside the self, the other within" (p. 64). My journey to Baffin Island and employment as a special needs program consultant, teacher and principal for twelve years gave me the opportunity to apply, reshape, and share my metaphorical understanding of education and life in the territory now known as Nunavut.

I was challenged in the beliefs that had sustained me. For example, my residence in Iqaluit was an apartment in a six-storey building called "the highrise" located in the Astro Mall, and my office was one of several in a two-storey green structure that looked as if it might have been transported straight from a Toronto medical complex. However,

I quickly incorporated such surprises into a vague discomfort with the educational mission of outsiders bringing changes in practice and lifestyle to the north.

Prior to the 1960s, no school buildings existed in Nunavut Territory. The family was the foundation of Inuit society and children were taught life skills by their parents, relatives and community members in informal settings. Extended families lived in sod huts in summer and igloos in winter. Children learned by observing and following the examples of adults. Once they had mastered skills, they were encouraged to try them on their own. Inuit placed great value on individual rights and a policy of non-interference in the lives of others. People assumed leadership positions in circumstances where they were naturally qualified to contribute (Qitsualik, 1999, p. 62).

As I travelled to each Baffin community as an educational program consultant and got to know the people, I came to appreciate the relationship of Inuit adaptability and resourcefulness to their survival in novel circumstances. Many of them became my friends, and after three years as an envoy for the Baffin Board of Education, I requested permission to remain in one community as a teacher. I wanted to know what it was like to work in the same school, with the same people on a daily basis. I enjoyed hearing their stories and sharing in their struggle to control their institutions in their own domain.

The condition of my transfer was that I would assume the principalship in a small community with complex needs. My superiors felt my academic background and professional experience might help address these needs. I was one of a series of administrators from outside Nunavut who were hired due to both the lack of Inuit personnel and continuous principal turnover. I was fortunate to have a colleague with

many years of experience as an educational administrator in Ontario, and subsequently in Nunavut schools, who encouraged me to accept my role and mentored me by phone on a regular basis. He even proposed the establishment of a program to pair new principals with experienced principals in a mentoring relationship. When this did not take place, he requested funding for us to visit each other's schools to provide on-the-job support, but was told the budget could not accommodate such an initiative.

I also registered to participate in the Principal Certification Program for northern administrators, which involved two ten-day courses during two summers, with follow-up activities to be completed at home schools. This program was designed and implemented by faculty from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in 1986.

My work as principal was supervised by a school board official in Iqaluit who visited my school twice a year. I was also able to request occasional consultant visits from resource personnel through the school board headquarters in Iqaluit.

Each year I had to submit a self-evaluation of my performance as principal, using a document called *School Leadership in the NWT: A Profile for the 90's* (Balanoff, Begley, Bissegger, Blesse, Brown & Fallow, et al, 1993) which served as the foundational text of the NWT Principal Certification program.

> The profile identifies four key dimensions through which NWT school principals meet the needs of individual students, improve the quality of teaching and learning, and support the aspirations of the community: advocacy, school culture management, instructional leadership, and organizational management. (Brown, 1998, p. 36)

> The ideal NWT principal is seen as one who can transcend the internal focus on the school, by gaining a first hand understanding of the community, and by empowering the parents, the local education authority, and the community to take more control of the education of their children. (Brown, 1998, p. v)

During my tenure as principal, I taught multi-grade classes in order to compensate for staff shortages and budget limitations. While I enjoyed my teaching duties, there were times when I was needed elsewhere, both inside and outside of school, to attend meetings and deal with school emergencies. The demands and challenges were enormous, but did not offset the satisfaction inherent in my work. I enjoyed learning from my Inuit colleagues and was continually inspired by their energetic devotion to their students and community. The majority of school staff were women, for whom story telling, sewing and art were an integral part of their teaching repertoire. I participated in a sewing circle that met in the school kitchen in the evening in order to get better acquainted with the teachers and parents who attended, and came to understand that this was where I learned what was most important for a principal of a Nunavut school. I learned that informal communication with women at the end of a day, sharing in an activity that was important to them provided a way for me to demonstrate that I was interested in their lives, respected their values, and was a person they could trust. I had been told by the colleague I was replacing when I was en route to the Arctic, that Inuit loved to gossip and would already know who I was before I arrived there.

> *GOSSIP*, [a book commemorating the strength of women in the North dealing with change] is a written translation of women's talk about new social, political,

> cultural, economic, and environmental crises which have had an impact on their lives.
>
> The word gossip has generally been used to discredit women's comments, but feminist literature has explored and developed alternative interpretations. The intent is to make the reader more aware of how a term like 'gossip', when used pejoratively to describe communication between women, has tended to isolate them from one another by trivializing their everyday experiences.
>
> *GOSSIP* does not aim to separate women from their cultural communities nor does it represent a Euro-Canadian feminist perspective on women in the North. Rather, it focuses on the varied perspectives among women coping with and initiating change. (Crnkovich, 1990, p. xx)

I learned through our sewing, conversations, laughter and making tea in the school kitchen about daily events that would impact the Inuit staff and students the following day, and how community members wanted them to be treated. Births, deaths, tragedies and achievements experienced by just one individual or family affected the entire community and everyone was expected to be involved. News from outside was communicated through visitors or radio. The radio station used a call-in format often only at noon when someone was available to open the station.

> Women are the holders of the culture, women are the talkers, women are the craft-makers, women are the story-tellers, women are the healers... There are

> some extremely powerful women, some incredible women in the smaller communities, who have worked so hard to put together women's support groups and be a resource in their community. (Brooks, 1990, p. 39)

The four key dimensions identified in *School Leadership in the NWT: A Profile for the 90's* (Balanoff et al, 1993) to guide Nunavut principals in meeting the needs of students, improving the quality of teaching and learning, and supporting community aspirations, were interpreted by community members as having a "student focus by caring for students, building their self-esteem, holding high expectations for students, inspiring them, and serving as a role model" (Brown, 1998, pp. 13-15).

Community involvement was understood as being non-judgemental, being involved in community life, understanding the culture and language, as well as Inuit history and issues of concern. Informing parents about the importance of education and facilitating their ownership of it related to the dimension of advocacy. Being approachable , being a good listener, and being a communicator were perceived as important attributes by community members (Brown, 1998, pp. 25-26). In reference to the documents *School Leadership in the NWT: A Profile for the 90's* (Balanoff, et al, 1993), *NWT Principal Certification Program* (Government of the Northwest Territories [GNWT], 1997), *People: Our Focus for the Future: A Strategy to 2010* (GNWT, 1994), and the *NWT Education Act* (GNWT, 1996), the director of the school board in which I was employed stated, "These documents and initiatives encourage principals to respond to community needs, engender teamwork among school partners, and use public

resources more effectively for the education of the students and the development of the community" (Brown, 1998, p. v). I found that my participation in the sewing circle, visiting homes, and enjoying social activities both during and outside of school hours permitted me to achieve the expectations of my employer as well as of the community.

As part of my principal certification program, I had to complete a school improvement project. The project I selected to satisfy this requirement was to involve the community in creating a model that depicted the lives of the two groups of Inuit who had been relocated to the community in the 1960s so that the federal government could claim sovereignty to the area. Dolls wearing clothing whose style and fabric identified them with their original community were engaged in daily activities beside traditional tents. The project produced an artifact that engendered pride and creative expression for both school staff and community members.

Eventually I transferred to other Nunavut communities where I served as principal in larger schools. I registered for summer courses in educational administration at the University of Victoria to collaborate on issues with other principals and learn additional skills. I had only one classmate from the Arctic in my program of studies, but I soon found common ground in my colleagues' discussions and applications of the perspectives of such theorists as Hodgkinson (1991), Greenfield and Ribbins (1993) and Sergiovanni (1992), who all advocated moral leadership. I soon realized two significant points: 1. that little research on school administration in the North had been conducted, and that 2. women's perspectives of administration appeared more congruent with my experience in northern schools than did men's perspectives. Attributes such as caring and cooperation

were prevalent in the literature about women administrators by such researchers and scholars as Hurty (1995), Munro (1998), Reynolds (1995) and Young (1992).

> Woman-centred leadership defines relationships from an ethic of caring. This ethic originates in the home for many women and expands to community associations (Stall, 1986). Traditional mothering roles are socially constructed activities involving caring for others (Glenn, Chang & Forcey, 1994). Women develop a collectivist orientation (Robnett, 1996) and learn 'a morality of responsibility connected to relationships' (Gilligan, 1977). Leadership within a caring community requires having good intentions. An ethic of caring guides us to ask, What effect will this have on the caring community we are trying to build? (Noddings, 1984). (Thompson, 2000, p.29)

Conceptions of Educational Leadership

When I arrived in Nunavut in 1989 to begin my work as an inclusive schooling program consultant, I looked forward to visiting the schools and sharing my knowledge about education that I had acquired in the United States and southern Canada. I had packed a box of learning theory and educational psychology textbooks that a faculty member at the university in which I was still enrolled had given me for my journey because, she said, "People up there love textbooks." I soon learned this was not the case after I discovered that Inuit people had a preference for oral communication and that their approaches to learning involved acquiring traditional knowledge. A question that perplexed me was, how could I understand the cultural values that were expressed in Inuit educational settings?

As I became immersed in the culture, I had the opportunity to observe teaching, learning, and leading conducted by Inuit using foreign organizational structures. I became increasingly uncomfortable with my role as a consultant. I had to meet with the principal and then with the staff in each school in order to in-service them on how to implement curricula that in some respects I considered colonizing. Although some of the materials had been created by Inuit or with Inuit input, and functioned as prototypes with the expectation that they be tailored to the needs in individual schools, the programs were primarily based on southern models.

Fortunately, conducting home visits and participating in inter-agency committees, which were part of my job description, allowed me direct contact with the Inuit people I was trying to help. I wondered why elders were not more involved in schools and often appeared reluctant to share their knowledge.

As noted above, my eventual permanent placement in one community as principal afforded me direct experience with some of the challenges that plagued Inuit and non-Inuit administrators alike. I learned what it was like to live in a community for an extended period of time and to appreciate some of the aspirations and goals that people wanted for their children. Through my personal relationships in the community, I learned valuable lessons about how to implement administrative procedures and satisfy the expectations of the regional school board that employed me. I met regularly with the local education council that governed the school and took direction from them.

Eventually the regional school boards were disbanded and replaced by the

Nunavut Department of Education, which had jurisdiction over the entire Territory of Nunavut. I realized early on that for many of the Inuit, institutions appeared to be an extension of their personae, beliefs, traditions and cultural values in much the same way that their surroundings, natural environment, and community seemed to be embodiments of themselves. As a result, I was able to appreciate the reality that although we shared common educational goals, we had different conceptions of school leadership. Although I understood that community members recommended individuals from their society to be school administrative agents on behalf of the communities, and that the communites were in favour of these agents acquiring management strategies and tools that might enable them to function in a Eurocentric milieu, I continued to believe that most Inuit teachers could become educational leaders through training and exposure to routines.

For this study, I located Inuit woman principals in one region of Nunavut and invited them to participate in conversational interviews. Through these conversational interviews, I believed I would be able to hear their interpretations of what it means for them to be educational leaders in their schools.

Leadership Practices

In order to include Inuit traditions and develop a leadership practice that accommodated Inuit values and procedures while also satisfying southern Canadian requirements for my position as principal, I began to pay closer attention to how other community organizations functioned and sought advice from Inuit colleagues, parents and elders. I volunteered to serve on committees that were Inuit based, attended more professional development workshops designed to bridge both cultures, took courses and

enrolled in a masters degree program in educational administration that provided me with access to a library and faculty who had experience in working in Aboriginal cultures. In my practice I emphasized more consensual decision-making, and consulted with Inuit and non-Inuit staff on changes in programs. I encouraged Inuit school staff to assume more of a leadership role, and invited people from the community and education council to become more visible in the school and to participate in educational activities. My goal was to promote more conversation and collaboration within the school. Social activities in which Inuit community members taught traditional skills to the students and staff were scheduled on a regular basis. Non-Inuit staff reciprocated by sharing their interests and crafts with the students and community. By showcasing cultural diversity in a positive manner, these efforts provided opportunities for greater understanding and respect but diminished power relationships by making everyone a potential teacher as well as a learner.

I soon realized that I needed to devote time and effort to welcoming new teachers from southern Canadian provinces when they arrived in Nunavut, and to orienting them to the school, community, educational practices and pedagogy, and Inuit life in general. I routinely interviewed and hired new staff on the telephone with at least one member of the education council. Many applicants had no teaching experience and, as a result, needed time to adjust to responsibilities in the classroom. For example, they were unprepared for the lack of materials and resources that could have assisted their effectiveness in teaching Inuit students. Berger and Epp (2005) have described the concerns of such *Qallunaat* [the Inuit term for non-Inuit] educators. Due to frequent

teacher turnover, sometimes even at the beginning of the school year, I quickly realized that making time in my work schedule to greet new staff at the airport, escort them to their homes, introduce them to community members, and invite them to dinner at my house on the day of their arrival was an important part of my job. I devoted many hours to assisting new staff with planning lessons, acquainting them with documents and procedures, and co-teaching in their classrooms. I routinely held informational staff meetings with activities designed to help Inuit and non-Inuit staff work collaboratively, a practice I found useful during my experience as a program consultant. I was concerned that living in a small, isolated community in which the language and customs were foreign, might cause *Qallunaat* teachers to retreat into planning, marking, and other school related duties in the evening. I became vigilant in maintaining close contact, friendship and support for these southern teachers in order to counter their discouragement and homesickness. I organized social activities for the entire staff in my home or the community, which allowed me to employ many nurturing and communication skills that I had acquired in my parenting and education career.

Entry and Preparation

One phenomenon that surprised me when I first began working in the Arctic was finding personnel employed in positions for which they had no formal training or prior experience. Many colleagues appeared to have been hired simply because they were willing to do the work--such was my own experience. As mentioned earlier, I participated in an interview which sounded more like a friendly chat than a formal job interview. I was shocked to be offered the position of special needs consultant instead of

teacher, because although I was studying for a doctorate in educational psychology, I had no experience in dealing with specific physical needs such as hearing impairment, for example. Feeling unqualified, I at first declined the offer of employment. When I changed my mind a week later and accepted the offer, I was told by the person I would be replacing that expertise was unnecessary. I discovered that one of my supervisors had no administrative training or experience, yet was supervising principals. I was expected, in my work as a special needs consultant, to offer stickers and other rewards as behaviour modification incentives to students. Reflecting on the many dilemmas I experienced causes me to realize that it was a long time before I was able to rationalize my approaches to the work I was doing.

The first Inuit principal I met had earned a teaching degree from a southern Canadian university and was fluently bilingual in English and Inuktitut. While the school staff appeared satisfied to have her function as their educational leader, I was surprised to find her often in the staff room colouring pictures and making crafts to be used as teaching materials instead of in her office. She would sometimes also spend time in a *quammaq* (sod hut) on the school property and told me it calmed her to be there. This principal possessed many personal skills and talents that she applied to make the school a vibrant and exciting place. The staff and students expressed pride in participating in the creation of such a stimulating environment. When that principal resigned her position and was replaced by a non-Inuit administrator, the appearance and tone of the educational environment changed. The students and staff were less visible in the common areas of the school such as the lobby, corridors and staff room; there was an atmosphere of control,

with everyone consigned to their classrooms. The school was far quieter without the sounds of Inuktitut and laughter, and less joyful with teachers and students no longer on the floor creating materials together for display and sharing with others. With the new principal, the relaxed atmosphere during class time was replaced by a sense of order, evident in the neatly aligned rows of shoes beneath the students' caps and jackets, and by the silence at dismissal time, evident in the lack of the singing by groups of children preparing to exit the school. The new silence was occasionally interrupted by outbursts when there were altercations between children pushing into line or when children alerted teachers to infractions of the rules.

In one community where I was principal, Arctic College was housed in the same educational complex as the school. The College offered a teacher education program of coursework and a nine-week practicum in the school. Consequently, I participated in planning meetings with the college instructor and assumed additional supervision and mentoring responsibilities for the practicum students. I was excited at the prospect of possibly increasing the number of Inuit staff through this initiative, but quickly appreciated the beneficial effects of these teacher trainees on my entire staff. Weber (1996) explains their contribution in the following manner:

> Within these strong Arctic communities three important conditions frequently emerge in Inuit teacher education programs. First, Inuit preservice teachers tend to use a variety of learning approaches; second, the novice teachers typically create collaborative activities; and third, the Northern teachers tend to emerge from the isolation of classrooms to include more natural learning environments.

(p. 23)

She goes on to explain that:

> Inuit people are typically interactive and yet independent. A community of learners must have both. The link between them is caring.... Inuit communities, with their sense of caring for one another, have cultivated a rich environment, ideal for Northern teachers to develop a plethora of cooperative teaching skills. (Weber, 1996, pp. 24 & 26)

The appreciation I acquired from Inuit staff for experiential learning and teamwork led me to seek out ways to expand the curriculum and pedagogy to include outdoor activities and promote Inuit based education.

Community-Administrator Relationship

A positive relationship between the principal and community members is essential to successful schooling in the North. It is important for school staff to interact socially and professionally with the community on a daily basis. Because roles are fluid and interchangeable in service to community needs, the education council regards the school as an extension of the entire community. School administrators are expected to function as community agents for the welfare of all. Just as every Inuit adult is responsible for the teaching and guidance of children in a community, school staff are expected to act *in loco parentis* in formal and informal educational settings. Weber (1996) asserts that "... Inuit pre-service teachers are already familiar with a language embedded in community values, values which are already deeply ingrained within Inuit culture" (p. 25). As a result, Inuit educators have an advantage over newcomers to the community who do not know the

culture or speak the Inuktitut language.

> The concept of community is a common focus in Inuit learning approaches. Building a rich community of learners, where each one's contribution is valued, somewhat like traditional Inuit communities, would help southern teachers and students to combat what Lieberman (1992) described as our increasingly fragmented school society. Most would agree that a typical Northern community in some ways resembles an ideal learning community. (Weber, 1996, p. 29)

In his research to identify the skills and characteristics of effective Northern principals, Brown (1998) cited involvement with the community as important to understanding Inuit culture, language, history and issues. His participants reported that educating parents and advocating on their behalf were also positive attributes (Brown, 1998). In my practice as a Nunavut administrator, I discovered that visiting Inuit homes was an important responsibility that engendered trust and access to understanding community concerns that affected the school. Listening to news about events that affected everyone in the group demonstrated care and understanding. Knowing the Inuit language made the communication more direct. Frequently *Qallunaat* staff expressed discomfort with entering Inuit homes without an invitation, and becoming accustomed to their casual lifestyle devoid of regular mealtimes in crowded settings. I was impressed by the enthusiastic welcome I received and the friendship that was absent in contact in large Southern cities where distance was preferred. What seemed most unique in contact with Northern parents was that the separation of roles between work and home life was blurred by personal contact. Education was not disconnected from the events in daily life.

Research Conducted

This doctoral dissertation presents what Inuit administrators shared with me about their lives and work in Nunavut schools. It is a record of their vision of education in terms of their cultural understanding of leadership. This work has been a journey of discovery for me to travel with them, and I acknowledge that my new understanding has been made possible through a state of collective consciousness. The voices of my co-researchers not only "allowed me into their world" (Haig-Brown, 1992, p. 97), but our interaction and discussions have enabled us to reach common ground with new understanding of the possibilities before us. This is a study of Inuit women's voices — voices that inspired and challenged my appreciation of the underlying structures and dynamics of Inuit approaches to school leadership.

Background to the Study

Although the Territory of Nunavut was created in 1999 giving Inuit the power to develop and control institutions that reflect their values and way of life, education in the far North continues to be shaped by documents written by *Qallunaat* who have attempted to formalize a northern education system within southern Canadian constructs, and dominated by southern personnel implementing southern models. In spite of efforts by *Qallunaat* policy makers to include Inuit educators and local residents in the planning and implementation of a system more representative of Inuit values, it is often hard to distinguish schools in Nunavut from those in any other part of Canada. Equally disconcerting is the fact that, although the Inuit government targeted the year 2006 as the goal for achieving a significant increase in the number of Inuit school employees

(Nunavut Implementation Commission, 1995), the majority of education personnel continues to be *Qallunaat.* In 2001, the Nunavut Department of Education reported that there were only four Inuit principals in 43 schools in Nunavut. This represented no increase in the number of Inuit principals since 1996. In 2003 there were only six Inuit principals and ten co-principals being mentored by more experienced non-Inuit principals who were usually male. The majority of Inuit school administrative personnel are women. Although the Minister of Education has called for new directions in education in which *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* [Inuit ways of knowing] form the basis of restructuring, the system continues to be dominated by models and pedagogy foreign to Inuit culture (Government of Nunavut, 2005, p.1).

Preparation for Leadership

The traditional ways of learning how to become an Inuit leader through observation and consultation with elders have been displaced in an education system that operates on foreign assumptions, expectations and demands. Inuit wanting to become principals are required to participate in a principal certification program during two of their summer vacations. Since Inuit people consider spending time on the land in the short summer months a priority and prefer camping with family members to attending summer courses, on-line courses have been suggested as an alternative format for learning. At first glance, such courses would seem to assist many Inuit women who are often the sole contributors to family income and are therefore unable to leave their families to attend courses in other communities. However, Poonwassie (2002) raises the concern that rather than equalizing accessibility to training and education, technological

development may achieve a reverse effect. He asserts "these modes cater to those who already have achieved a certain level of formal education and who have developed a propensity for self-directed learning" (p.39). Also, on-line courses, interactive video-conferencing and correspondence courses are expensive for Inuit, and the sense of community central to Inuit culture may not be there. I suspected, after working as a principal in Nunavut for a number of years, that the preferred approaches to leadership learning by Inuit principals were collaborative, non-competitive, and contributed directly to the general welfare of community members.

Pilot Study

During my employment as a principal in Nunavut, I tried to attract, educate and mentor Inuit staff to become principals in their home communities. I wondered why some were willing to become classroom assistants, teachers, and accept many other positions in Nunavut schools, but yet were often reluctant to become administrators. In 1999 as a master's student in educational administration at the University of Victoria, I conducted a study of Inuit women employed in schools throughout Nunavut to identify the factors which might motivate these women to become principals, and those factors which might be barriers (Thompson, 2000). The study was intended to provide understanding of the situation in order to assist policy makers and principal certification program organizers in their efforts to recruit, instruct and maintain a stable complement of administrators.

The size of Nunavut, the cost of airfare, the different dialects in each community, which would require the provision of many interpreters, and my own time limitations,

were considerations that led me to develop an anonymous survey written in both Inuktitut (the language of the Inuit), and English. The data I collected showed that women educators agreed that setting goals to assist staff, family members and community to create safe and inviting schools was important, but they preferred leaders who spent more time developing a collegial atmosphere by being emotionally responsive and nurturing, over those who spent time completing clerical duties within a hierarchical governance structure (Thompson, 2000). Shared decision-making was linked with being a good role model. Respondents claimed that other staff and elders were their greatest source of help. In applying Hurty's (1995) model of how women school administrators support each other by using emotional energy, pondered mutuality, reciprocal talk, and nurtured growth and collaborative change, reciprocal talk received the highest rating for most desirable characteristic of principals. Reciprocal talk is defined by Hurty (1995) as "talking with rather than at others, by listening to and learning from other points of view" (p. 400). Lack of nurtured growth, or not contributing to others' learning and professional development, was rated as the most undesirable quality in principals (Thompson, 2000). This suggests that establishing mentoring relationships for Inuit educators might be a means to encourage more Inuit to assume administrative roles. This concept fits with other research on women administrators. The results of my study supported the findings of such authorities as Blackmore (1989), Hurty (1995), Reynolds (1995), and Young (1992). This body of work suggests that most women prefer using a non-hierarchical, collaborative leadership style that allows them to nurture others.

Therefore, the Eurocentric educational model that was in place in Nunavut schools, might not support their preferred approach to administration.

> Women's leadership is associated with a more participatory, relational, and interpersonal style as well as different types of power and influence strategies that emphasize ferocity and collectivity...and de-emphasize hierarchical relationships... (Kezar, 2002, p. 2).

The Inuit term for shared leadership is *sivumuaqatigiinniq*, or leading together (Lee, 1996).

Findings

The findings from my master's study indicated that it was lack of support from school staff, community, and local education authorities that caused Inuit teachers and principals to resign.

> Respondents felt that insufficient education, lack of support from family, staff and their communities, needing to spend too much time away from students, and assuming too many work-related demands and responsibilities as principals, were factors which made school administration an unattractive career (Thompson, 2000, p. vi).

I recommended that education authorities, community members, and school personnel work collectively to develop a new conception of educational leadership that includes on-the-job training and mentoring, increased sharing of responsibilities, opportunities for more staff collaboration, more time for interacting with students, and consulting with elders.

Methodologies

Although the survey results helped me to understand the problems of Inuit principal scarcity and attrition, I believed that in-depth conversations with practising Inuit administrators might extend and elaborate on my findings. I wanted to use a methodology that lessened the boundaries between myself and my participants, and created an opening through which we could explore together what had led them to become school leaders, and what might be needed to help them and others confront the challenges that had driven people out of the profession in the past. Using narrative inquiry as my methodology, I wanted to enter into an exploratory dialogue with a small number of participants regarding what it is like for them to be Inuit educational leaders.

A narrative inquiry methodology held out the possibility of discovering new meaning for educational administration in Nunavut. Traditional approaches used by anthropologists to explore other cultures, such as ethnography, have often led to revising one's original questions and replacing them with another set of questions until there are no more surprises, and generalizing the results to other cultures (Rosaldo, 1989, p. 7). Yet, Geertz (1973) claims that "culture and meaning are accessed not through the universal and generalizable, but through exploration of fine detail" (p. 53). Andrews concurs that "this journey into the heart has most often taken the form of in-depth life history interviews" (2007, p. 491).

This led to my focus of inquiry of what it is like for Inuit women to be leaders in Nunavut schools.

Doctoral Research Questions

To understand the forces that shape the way Inuit women see themselves as leaders in Nunavut schools, I designed my doctoral study using face-to-face, in-depth interviews with women administrators in one geographical region of the territory. The focus of my inquiry had evolved into: How do Inuit women principals understand their role? What forces have shaped the way Inuit women see themselves as leaders in educational settings? Are the perceptions of the participants consistent with the paradigm of administration in Nunavut schools as expressed by the Nunavut Department of Education and the certification program that is required for principals? What Inuit values are reflected in what the participants regard as their greatest achievements in their work? What changes are needed to make the principal's role more reflective of Inuit beliefs and ways of leading? What supports are needed to encourage more Inuit women to become principals?

Significance of the Doctoral Investigation

In the present study, my intention was to acquire insight into the ways Inuit women understand their work as school administrators in a system founded on foreign constructs and what motivated them to persist in such a challenging role. I thought the results of the interviews might help me to understand why there continues to be so little increase in their numbers. Recent inquiries I made to the Executive Directors of School Operations in the three regions in Nunavut suggested that the number of Inuit school administrators in the coming year might be less than the current year. It also appeared that the co-principal model had been replaced by the former principal and assistant

principal structure. This suggested, and was confirmed through personal communications, that departmental officials were struggling to develop a framework which is congruent with the expressed goals of a largely Inuit workforce in Nunavut.

In this research, the participants' stories that emerged indicate that Inuit administrators are strong and resilient women who want to help children access every opportunity to succeed in a changing world. Like women in other cultures, they thrive in a participatory environment with colleagues who respond to students from a familial perspective.

This notion is similar to Blackmore's assertion that principal career paths and training intended to increase human capital might be regarded as secondary by women whose primary consideration is family (1992, p. 20). In my pilot study, I used a survey and quantified my data using the computer program, Excel, to distil a kernel of truth from the responses and my interpretations. I was pleased to locate a feminist theory of leadership into which to fit the results as I interpreted them. There was no feedback from participants regarding my analysis. The executive summary was distributed to each District Education Authority in every community. I did not know my participants personally or get confirmation on my interpretations. Responses were condensed and applied to the entire sample of respondents.

In the present study which uses narrative inquiry as a methodology, I consulted with my participants each step of the way and revised my interpretations through collaborative feedback. Using this qualitative methodology, I did not seek to control the

data nor reduce it to support or reject an existing hypothesis. I was and am open to hearing many voices in a dynamic and changing environment.

Delimitations

School leadership is a construct that operates within shifting discourses about gender scripts. Blackmore (1992), Reynolds (2002), Wallace (1999), and others have documented some of the ways gender and ethnicity influence the work of women principals. Because of research findings pertaining to these phenomena, and the fact that most Inuit school administrators are female, I interviewed only women. The high costs of airfare, accommodations, and interpreters, coupled with my limited financial resources, were factors in restricting the study to Nunavut communities in close geographical proximity to each other.

Limitations

An invitation to participate in the study was extended to all Inuit women who had been or were school administrators in the region I had selected for the investigation. Only one person, who was no longer a principal, declined, stating that she felt she lacked sufficient knowledge about administration. Although each participant was offered the opportunity to have an interpreter present at the time of the interviews, none chose this option. While this eliminated possible barriers a third person might present to direct communication in a dyad, and inhibit some of the responses, it also made it possible that meanings may have been misunderstood by the researcher. However, participants were subsequently given copies of the transcripts to correct any misinterpretations, and to clarify and confirm results on several occasions. One respondent, who agreed to

participate, although the travel arrangements did not include her community, was interviewed by telephone; there was some interference due to inclement weather.

While the Executive Directors of School Services in each Nunavut region was generous in providing statistics regarding numbers of Inuit administrators throughout the study and clarifying information when asked, their travel schedules and work responsibilities sometimes caused delays. Former colleagues employed in various capacities throughout Nunavut, Ministry officials, and a variety of official, as well as unofficial documents were consulted periodically for information, which allowed for diverse perspectives to illuminate the topic under investigation, but did not substitute for the preferred mode of communication in Nunavut, which is direct contact.

This dissertation does not claim to present a perspective of school administration which represents all Inuit women principals. There are cultural differences in each school, community and region of Nunavut due to history, mythology, experiences, expectations and individuals which separates them spiritually, emotionally, physically and geographically. This is not to deny that there are binding commonalities which earns Inuit a special place in Canadian society. The interviews conducted have been interpreted through the researcher's perspective, but every effort was made to confirm with the participants that the complete story is acceptable and valid.

Organization of the Dissertation

I selected the title, *Inside School Administration in Nunavut,* to convey the investigative nature of this study into what Inuit women leaders believe but seldom express to the education community outside of their culture. In Chapter 1, I presented

the beliefs and expectations that I held before I initiated this journey and describe how they were shaped to accommodate the realities confronted in my own personal and professional experience as an educator in Nunavut. An overview of the contemporary context contrasts the aspirations of Inuit government leaders with the challenges and frustrations of achieving those aspirations. I describe the common understandings, as an insider and outsider, that I discovered through social relationships with friends, neighbours and colleagues, which facilitated my awareness of inherent needs and potential. The paucity of research about education in Nunavut education and its urgency are discussed, along with two different methodologies that I employed to ask Inuit women to explain how they perceived the principal's role. The qualitative data collection and analysis in this study, which used narrative inquiry, made possible a deeper and richer understanding. The limitations and delimitations of each method were discussed. Throughout the thesis, the headings of Conceptions of Leadership, Leadership Practices, Entry and Preparation, and Community-Administrator Relationship serve as a recurring structure.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature pertaining to the historical, political, educational and social context of Nunavut and offers a conceptual framework for the study. How colonialism and assimilation might contribute to an understanding of why there are so few Inuit school administrators is explored. Chapter 3 focuses on the challenges of conducting research in Nunavut, and the steps that were taken to obtain permission for the study. The preparations and procedures used to collect and analyze the data are shared. Some of the literature that supports the narrative inquiry methodology, as well

as its advantages and limitations are reviewed. Chapter 4 presents the results obtained through the data and how they relate to research questions that were posed about the existing education system. Chapter 5 draws conclusions about the responses of the participants and comments on their implications for school administrators. To conclude, recommendations for future research into educational administration in Nunavut schools and community development initiatives that support conceptions of Inuit leadership preparation and practices are proposed.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter explores the educational context of Nunavut in relation to its history of colonization and resulting effects on school leadership and gender. Changing gender roles in Nunavut society are described in terms of assimilation and acculturation, alongside the traditional gender roles which have been maintained to preserve important cultural values. I begin with an overview of informal education in Nunavut, which existed before there was contact with people from other cultures, and discuss the changes that occurred after Inuit were confined to settlements constructed by the Canadian government. The ways that a formal education system based on southern Canadian models were imposed as education, along with other government institutions, such as health, economic and environmental institutions, for the purpose of cultural domination and economic gain are described. I attempt to show how the foreign educational leadership models, pedagogy and curricula, imported for the purpose of assimilation by well-meaning educators, have contributed to what is considered by many Inuit to be a dysfunctional system [Merkosak, J. (2007, August 10). Education and the prime minister's visit. *Nunatsiaq News*, Retrieved April 11, 2008, from http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives/nunavut]. The effects of attempting to create formal Inuit education in Nunavut communities by adding Inuit programs and staff into what is predominantly a foreign system has led to considerable dissatisfaction and frustration. I demonstrate through studies, reports from conferences, newspaper articles, and personal accounts, how Inuit leaders are struggling to develop an educational leadership paradigm that is more representative of who they are and the kind of education they want for their

children. Formal education, delivered institutionally by certified staff, is a relatively new phenomenon in Inuit culture.

History of Nunavut Education

A knowledge of the history of education in Nunavut is essential to understanding the context and tensions in the study. The history demonstrates fundamental beliefs held by Inuit who were, and continue to be, their children's teachers at home and in their communities, in both formal and informal educational settings, under both oppressive colonial rule as well as within the education system that currently exists. The administrative practices of current Inuit leaders cannot be fully understood without an appreciation of the roots of Inuit experience that have survived colonial experiences and now nourish contemporary school leadership. How and why Inuit educational values and beliefs have survived over the course of time is key to understanding their hopes for the future.

> The Inuit are traditionally a nomadic people who migrated about 1,000 years ago from western Alaska toward what is today Arctic Canada. Until very recently, they had no formal political organization. Nuclear families lived together and occasionally joined other families to compose small, fluid bands to share their hunt.
>
> Since World War II, the Inuit have been forced by the federal government to abandon their nomadic lives for remote settlements approachable only by airplane. The federal police killed their sled dogs, saying they were sickly. Young Inuit were required to leave their parents and sent to residential schools, where they

were routinely abused physically and sexually. (Krauss, C., 2006, p. 4)

Informal Education

Before the 1960s, there were no school buildings in what is now recognized as Nunavut Territory. The family was the foundation of Inuit society and extended family groups lived together in camps, with a profound connection and respect for their environment and natural surroundings. Children were taught by their parents and community members in informal settings. Parents shared equally in the education of their children, with men teaching gender-specific skills like hunting to boys and women teaching sewing to girls. Children learned through observing and listening to stories and legends with moral lessons.

> Children were encouraged to watch and observe adults at their tasks. Instruction started when the child was very young. Short, verbal instructions were used, with a calm, respectful, positive voice.... Children were encouraged to have fun while learning, and were praised for their progress.... Children were encouraged to practice and learn with all their senses. It made them aware that learning involves the whole body. With repetition, practice, and progression, the instruction built their confidence, giving them a sense of accomplishment and pride in their abilities. Eventually the child was able to do the whole task from beginning to end. Children learned tasks that were meaningful to the lifestyle of their camps or community and through play. (GNWT, 1996, p. 14)

The Concept of Non-interference

A sacred concept in Inuit culture is *isuma*, which is best understood as "the

innermost thoughts and feelings a person has – their mindset... another's mind was not to be intruded upon" (Qitsualik, 1999, p. 62). Because *isuma* was believed to be undeveloped in young children, they were not given responsibilities or punished for misbehaviour. It was considered unacceptable to ask children questions or restrict their behaviour due to the cultural value of "non-interference" in child care.

> Inuit place a high regard on the right of individuals to lead their lives free from interference of others. This belief strongly affects the way people interact with each other. Basically, this belief causes Inuit to often feel a certain degree of discomfort when exercising authority over other Inuit even if the position they hold warrants sufficient authority. Conversely, Inuit are unlikely to welcome someone trying to dictate their actions or speak for them without their consent. This emphasis on the non-interference in the affairs of others is taught early in life... The practice of non-interference influences the way leadership occurs... (Pauktuutit, 1992, p. 17)

Ross (1992) found the principle of non-interference to be a core value of Aboriginal people he worked with in southern Ontario. He discovered that confrontation, giving unsolicited advice, and commenting on another person's behaviour were considered rude and inappropriate behaviour. He asserted:

> This approach to human relations seems wholly foreign to the one I see in my own culture. We have built institutions to reflect our different cultural imperatives. For one, we have built courts dedicated to adversarial fact-finding, the public

> allocation of blame, and the imposition of consequences, including punishment. We have also built psychiatric hospitals premised on our belief that it is both right and productive to explore, express, define and direct our deepest feelings, especially those of a hostile nature.... The more that we insist that they use our approaches and institutions, the more they conclude that we are trying to intentionally destroy their rules and ethics, their culture, by imposing our own. Both groups slide into resentful puzzlement at the apparent intransigence of the other. (Ross, 1992, p. 15)

Ross expressed concerns similar to many *Qallunaat* educators in Nunavut regarding a hands-off approach to child rearing. He states: "In essence, traditional rules required parents to permit their children to make their own choices in virtually every aspect of life... children must learn on their own, by watching and by emulating what they see" (Ross, 1992, p. 16). Non-Inuit school staff frequently complained to each other that students were insufficiently regulated by their parents regarding mealtimes, bedtimes, completing homework assignments and attending school. Ross claimed that through listening to Aboriginals, he began to appreciate that parents cared deeply about their children and taught them through modelling appropriate behaviours.

Appreciation of the belief in non-interference might explain some of the conflict between Inuit children and their *Qallunaat* teachers when students were expected to ask questions and follow directions in school.

> For example, a teacher may ask two children to choose teams in order to play a game. The children will likely feel uncomfortable because they are placed in a

> position of power where they have to rank their classmates according to their abilities... In a situation like this, it would be more appropriate for the children to decide amongst themselves what the division will be. (Pauktuutit, 1992, p. 17)

Chambers (1989) applied the concept of non-interference to Aboriginals who might feel that connecting discussion topics might interfere with the interpretations and responses of their listeners. She claimed: "This particular manner of persuasive discourse stands in contrast to the rational argumentation non-aboriginal people expect in public contexts of the classroom, courtroom, or formal inquiry" (p. 269). The core value of respect for others makes Inuit reluctant to offer opinions or comment on what might be the opinions of others.

Ross (1992) explained, "For the Mohawk, lying has always been one of the most serious crimes, and lying for them apparently includes attempting to deny or minimize one's own behaviour" (p. 14). Disclosing wrongdoings was considered part of rehabilitation and reintegration with one's community. *Qallunaat* teachers expressed surprise when Inuit parents and members of Nunavut education councils did not exact punishments or demand that children apologize for breaking school rules, without acknowledging that they were responding by adhering to the ethic of non-interference.

Inuit Student Learning

In 2004, the Department of Education surveyed students regarding their experiences as learners in Nunavut schools. The results showed that students valued learning in "caring and mutually respectful relationships and as an activity that is guided

by a spirit of collaboration" (Tompkins, 2006, p. 80). They support the Nunavut-wide contributions of the writers of *Inuuqatigiit: The curriculum from the Inuit perspective* (GNWT, 1996), who stated that students learn best in a positive learning environment where they are treated with respect and acceptance. "Positive learning can happen whenever there is an educational partnership between the child's family, the community, educators, and the school system. Pedagogy should be student-centred, relevant, culture-based, and process-oriented in order for engaged learning to occur" (GNWT, 1996, pp. 15 & 24).

Inuit Values

Traditional Values

Inuit are admired for their "ingenuity, adaptability, and perseverance in one of the world's most unforgiving environments" (Qitsualik, 1999, p. 61). The cornerstone of Inuit society is the family, a kinship based on respect for self and others. The following recollection by Inuit elder, Simon Tookoome, of his nomadic childhood prior to living in a settlement build by non-Inuit in the 1960s, illustrates the values parents practiced and continue to live by.

> Inuit don't like to eat alone. We call people to our homes and we all eat together... This also happened when a child first caught something. The family would cut it into small pieces and call everyone to share it. This made the child very proud.... My parents were never angry with me. Anger and impatience were the worst things for Inuit.... The people had to live closely together for long periods of time. They needed to get along with each other.

> Inuit parents believed that if they acted with anger, the child would turn away and act with anger. If they spoke with respect, the child would learn respect.
>
> We did not ask questions. To ask a question was considered rude. We waited to find things out. We learned by being quiet and watching. This is still true even as adults.
>
> Sometimes someone might tell a person how to do something but no one gave an order unless it was very serious. When decisions had to be made, we would talk together until we all agreed. We did not boss each other around – we did not have bosses. We were all families living together. (Tookoome & Oberman, 1999, pp. 18-19)

Traditional values are fundamental to the way Inuit were expected to live and how they want their contemporary society to be governed. These traditional values are:

> ***connection*** (sharing, generosity, family, respect, love, listening, equality, significance and trust); ***work*** (volunteer, observe, practice, mastery, teamwork, cooperation, unity, consensus and conservation); and ***coping*** (patience, endurance, improvisation, strength, adaptability, resilience, resourcefulness, moving forward, take the long view, survival, interconnectedness and honesty). (Government of Nunavut [GN], Department of Human Resources, 2006, p. 1, emphases in original)

These values have been passed down by elders to each generation of Inuit at a young age

through songs, stories, legends and behaviour.

Maata Pudlat (1990) summarizes as follows:

> If you were brought up with love and understanding and courage, no matter how hard it is you'll strive and try to go on. You're not just going to give up if you were brought up in a family where nobody just gives in. There are strong and weak families everywhere in the world, but here in the North you have to be very strong. (p. 20)

Conceptions of Traditional Inuit Leadership

Traditional leadership was temporary and situational, expressed by Inuit when they lived in camps, as consulting the best hunter before a hunt, or the most experienced berry-picker prior to an outing to collect berries in the summer time. "Ultimate cultural authority rested with the elders. Not only were elders held in high regard, but they also represented a vast wealth of traditional –and vital- knowledge" (Qitsualik, 1999, p. 62). In spite of the seemingly spontaneous expression of leadership when situations called for it, every person was expected to demonstrate leadership by serving the common good.

As identified in *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ)*, the guiding principles of Inuit leadership were, and continue to be:

Pijitsirarniq*: Concept of Serving*

The concept of serving is central to the Inuit style of leadership as is the measure of the maturity and wisdom of an Inuk. Key here is the understanding that each person has a contribution to make and is a valued contributor to his/her

community. Students will be expected to demonstrate this kind of leadership and commitment to serving the common good.

***Aajiiqatigiingniq*: Consensus Decision-Making**

The concept of consensus decision-making relies on strong communication skills and a strong belief in shared goals. All students are expected to become contributing members of their community and to participate actively in building the strength of Inuit in Nunavut. Being able to think and act collaboratively, to assist with the development of shared understandings, to resolve personal conflict in consensus-building ways, and to consult respecting various perspectives and worldviews, are expectations that cross all curriculum areas.

***Pilimmaksarniq*: Concept of Skills and Knowledge Acquisition**

The concept of skills and knowledge acquisition and capacity building is central to the success of Inuit in a harsh environment. Building personal capacity in Inuit ways of knowing and doing are key expectations for students. Demonstrating empowerment to lead a successful and productive life, that is respectful of all, is a powerful end goal of our education system.

Qanuqtuurungnarniq: Concept of Being Resourceful to Solve Problems

The concept of being resourceful to solve problems through innovative and creative use of resources and demonstrating adaptability and flexibility in response to a rapidly changing world, are strengths all our students should

develop, Resourcefulness should be demonstrated in all learning and also thinking that seeks to improve the context in which Inuit live.

***Piliriqatigiingniq*: Concept of Collaborative Relationship or Working Together for a Common Purpose**

The concept of developing collaborative relationships and working together for a common purpose is an essential Inuit belief that stresses the importance of the group over the individual should pervade all our teaching. Expectations for students will reflect working for the common good, collaboration, shared leadership and volunteerism. *Piliriqatigiingniq* also sets expectations for supportive behaviour development, strong relationship-building and consensus-building.

***Avatimik Kamattiarniq*: Concept of Environmental Stewardship**

The concept of environmental stewardship stresses the key relationship Inuit have with their environment and with the world in which they live. Students will be expected to articulate respect for this mutually interdependent relationship and to demonstrate responsible behaviours that seek to improve and protect the relationship in ways that meet global challenges to environmental wellness. (GN, Department of Human Resources, 2006, pp. 2-3, bolding in original, italics added)

Ross' (1992) opinion of consensus decision-making in Mohawk culture was that it was not so much reaching agreement, as permitting everyone to have their say; it was

more a process of "joint thinking" (p. 23). Inuit people also prefer that decisions reflect a respectful sharing of ideas, in a non-competitive, non-argumentative way.

Oral History

Inuit culture was preserved through stories and artistic expression. Inuit were excellent storytellers and used their skill to both entertain and teach their children. Oral communication was the preferred way to share experiences and instruct others. No written history by Inuit people existed prior to the arrival of missionaries around 1850 who created a symbol system—syllabics—to enable Inuit to read the Bible.

The anecdotes of July Papatsie, a contemporary Inuit artist and historian, documented the challenges that contact with whalers posed for Inuit. His recollections of their struggle and resilience in coping with cultural changes brought on by contact with whalers and traders served as a poignant record of cultural assimilation (Von Finckenstein, 2002). Papatsie revealed how sewing was an important skill of Inuit women that was crucial to survival on the land. Their ability to sew protective, waterproof clothing and tents from animal skills, and later, from fabric discarded by the whalers, was crucial for their survival. Accounts revealed how Inuit participated in their own colonization by exchanging furs, whale blubber, and other indigenous materials for rifles, ammunition, stoves, flour, tea and tobacco, which contributed to an entrapment that deprived them of their liberty and traditional nomadic lifestyle. The disappearance of dog teams that contracted disease, or that were shot by non-Inuit to prevent them from leaving the whaling stations built by the Hudson's Bay Company , documented the

beginning of an altered lifestyle in the eastern Arctic.

After Inuit settled in communities and children attended school on a regular basis, storytelling, which had been a tradition in families, became less common. Previously, when they lived in small groups on the land, there was often an elder who was skilled at retelling legends, myths, and stories about historical events designed to teach the listeners Inuit values and strategies pertaining to such skills as hunting GNWT, 1996, p. 19). Storytelling has resumed prominence as a teaching tool in *Inuuqatigiit: The curriculum from an Inuit perspective* (GNWT, 1996). This curriculum was designed to create "an educational link between the past and the present; a link that has been lost in some places in the North" (p. 3). Its focus is on restoring pride in Inuit language and culture for both Inuit and *Qallunaat* students.

Colonization

The Commodification of Land

In the 1950s the United States installed an air defence system from Alaska to the northern Canadian border and to Labrador, called the Distant Early Warning Line, or DEW Line, to safeguard against the threat of a Soviet invasion. In order to declare sovereign rights over the North, the Canadian government moved groups of Inuit into settlements. Even today, most Inuit communities in Nunavut are fairly isolated from each other by the vast geographical distance between them. Only a few are connected by roads and telephone and television communication are maintained via satellite. The isolation and geographical remoteness affect the high financial cost of transporting supplies and equipment by ship in the summer months, and by airlines throughout the year. It is

necessary for the Canadian government to support Nunavut by a Territorial Formula Financing program, to compensate for high unemployment and low family incomes (Barr, n.d.,untitled document. Retrieved March 8, 2004 from http://princetonindependent.com/issue 11.02/item5b.html).

Knotsch's (2002) interpretation of the relationship of land-use changes to sociological and economic development on Baffin Island sheds further light on the devastating effects of the creation of a wage economy. She explained how the influence of weather conditions on traditional Inuit activities, housing, travel and leadership was displaced by the transfer of power to outside institutions and also showed how art and stories comprise a poignant record of the suffering and sacrifices of Inuit people. Their connection to the land—conceptualized as a mother who gave birth to not only themselves, but also to every animal, plant, and lichen that was attached to rocks on the tundra, and nourished them—was eroded by the traders' understanding of land as an object to be dominated, harvested and owned for economic gain. The umbilical relationship of the Inuit to their natural surroundings was severed by what postcolonial theorist, Robert Young (2001) described as the process of deterritorialization: "the breakdown of existing physical, psychical, and conceptual boundaries and limits – in order to advance a theory of 'desiring machines' which articulate and regulate power and discourse" (p. 73). Bhabba (1988) has revealed the ambivalence at the heart of colonialism generated by greed on the part of explorers and complicity on the part of the colonized who willingly shared their indigenous knowledge.

The Displacement of Women

Spivak (1987) asserted that women became victims of a "double colonization" in their private and public lives when dominated by both patriarchy and colonization. She described the forcing of women into a position of marginality as "epistemic violence". Young (2001) asserted that the records of colonizers who attempted to legitimize their efforts merely documented "their own greed and excesses" (p. 77). The appropriation of land and "seizure of cultural (in all senses of the word) space... show how colonialism was impelled by a global desire which fuelled its ever increasing spatial expansion" (p. 84). Young recommended there be a critique of the western assumptions that underlie the colonized social infrastructure, institutions and representations of knowledge they supported. According to his theory, what was needed was the dissolution and re-inscription of "the apparatus of the occupying power" (Young, 2001, p. 82).

Battiste (2005) claims that decolonization narratives tend to limit Aboriginal people in educational environments. Infused with gender and racial stereotypes, such discourses marginalize native educators who have been hired to communicate with students and create a "less exclusive" curriculum through innate knowledge and tools. She regards the addition of courses with Aboriginal content and perspectives as additives that further separate Aboriginal and non-aboriginal staff. O'Donoghue's (1998) research revealed that many Inuit educators felt marginalized in their schools by *Qallunaat* colleagues who rejected their values. For a variety of reasons, which will be addressed in the study, Inuit women have assumed an activist role in committee and organizational work to benefit themselves, their families, their communities, and their society. *Qulliit* is the name of the Status of Women's Council, a government organization that helps women

provide input into the work of Nunavut's Legislative Assembly dealing with matters that relate to women.

At the international level, Past President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, is renowned for her establishment of an advocacy group which brought awareness of the effects of global warming in the Arctic to the world. She describes herself as "a citizen advocate on Arctic climate change" and shuns "an institutional base" and political office to inform the global community about the threat to the survival of Arctic communities, as well as the physical Arctic environment (Watt-Cloutier, 2002). Watt-Cloutier filed a petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in 2005 regarding "the infringement of polluters on the environmental, subsistence, and other human rights of Inuit" (George, 2007, p. 1). In November 2007, as a member of the Women Leaders Global Security Summit, she participated in a discussion of "how women can provide more leadership on global security issues. Watt-Cloutier was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007. Although a concern of global proportions propelled the discourse on human rights from one Nunavut community to a national and, ultimately, international forum, Watt-Cloutier has kept her focus grounded on the local level.

Another Nunavut celebrity, Susan Aglukark, has used her fame as a musician to bring awareness of the effects of child sexual abuse to the international community. I was principal of a school on one of her speaking tours designed to help Nunavut students cope with family problems. Her message and music demonstrated her commitment to helping

youth in her home and adjacent communities, as well as youth in Canada and other countries.

The perspectives of many women leaders in contemporary Nunavut society who struggle to navigate the past, present and future as caregivers, providers , gatekeepers and agents resounded in portions of Campbell's (2003) research on non-Inuit women administrators in the Northwest Territories:

> Educational work in the Northwest Territories, especially, has a strong ethical requirement as it involves working with a population which is struggling against colonial histories, is characterized by high unemployment and illiteracy rates, and, for the most part, is shut out of the highest paying occupations and their concomitant privileged social status. (p. 44)
>
> To subvert the agenda of organizational strategies requires a meta-awareness of how it is we are participating in the discourse and to see the 'truth effects' the ways in which the discourse both poses and answers its own questions... Subversion involves tactics of trying to reposition oneself within a discourse and to look for the spaces that repositioning creates... I believe that the rules of discourse operate as such a powerful organizing and constraining tool for women because of the notion of compliance and, as the politics of the office go, the opportunity to exchange good behaviour (thought to be gender appropriate behaviour for women at any rate) for the opportunities and resources an organization can offer. (p. 113)

When I lived in Nunavut, Inuit women greatly outnumbered men as education

employees. They were often the sole wage earners in their families but continue to perform traditional roles as mothers, nurturers, artisans and nurses in large households of multiple generations. They said they felt a moral obligation to interact with community members and serve on committees outside of working hours. In addition, they took courses and participated in professional development activities whenever they were available. Inuit women administrators were mentored by *Qallunaat* women, such as myself, and were often paired with male co-principals in training situations. They were compliant in relationships with their male trainers, but confident that their professional knowledge and education could benefit youth and future generations of Inuit in Nunavut. By learning all they could in order to eventually administer independently, they could be considered "subversive" as they repositioned themselves within the educational discourse. I frequently consulted with them on professional and cultural matters, and deferred to their wisdom and generosity. Their sensitivity to the needs and abilities of students, parents, and community members permitted me a deeper understanding of the ways in which each individual was contributing to their collective future. The more I learned about Inuit approaches, pedagogy and interpersonal relationships, the more I was able to re-position myself, with clarity, within the educational discourse on cultural identity.

> Only when there is an Other can you know who you are... And there is no identity without the dialogic relationship to the Other. The Other is not outside, but also inside the Self, the identity (Hall, 1992, pp. 15-16).

Homi Bhabha rightfully argues that the issues of hybridity and cultural translation

> open up a 'third space' where it becomes possible to challenge the modernist construction of history, progress, the myth of the unified nation, and ethnocentrism which lies at the heart of Western civil societies.... Bhabha's third space provides a new theoretical marker which enables other positions to emerge. The third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom... Bhabha's notions of hybridity and cultural translation do more than authenticate different histories; they offer the promise of exposing and interrogating the colonial face of modernity. (Giroux, 1994, p. 60)

I realized that my allegiance had shifted from my employer, who had hired me to facilitate the understanding of school staff, through in-service workshops and direct teaching the philosophy, educational theory and pedagogical approaches to mainstreaming students with special needs into regular classrooms. My work as special needs consultant required me to conduct home visits to observe students in their natural environment and ascertain from parents what their needs and expectations were for their children prior to drafting an Individual Education Program [IEP]. After meeting with school staff who would be implementing the IEP, and agreeing on what programs might be feasible and who would be responsible for delivering the program, I would return to the students' homes to have their parents sign a consent form. There were subsequent contacts to assess progress and make program revisions. I felt my allegiance shift to the families, community members and students in my advocacy role, and away from the imported theoretical perspectives in the southern educational discourse, even though I

sensed that the Inuit. were hoping to position themselves at the intersection of both cultures to offer their children the benefits of both for a better future. The following words of Giroux resonated for me:

> The intersection of difference and identity is a marker not only for one's sense of location, a shifting narrative of identifications that provides a conception of individuality, but also a dialogic process in which the issue of self-representation is constituted in our relationship with the other. (Giroux, 1994, p. 59)

I began to explore on a deeper level the concerns Inuit might have with educational changes and their impact on their *inuusiq* (way of life).

Language Issues

Anglocentrism

Doige (2001) brought attention to "the longstanding neglect of Aboriginal literacy in Euro-Canadian schools, which do not acknowledge the uniqueness of Aboriginal people" (p. 117). She claimed the purpose of formal education for Aboriginals was to indoctrinate students with beliefs and values of the colonizers through the use of English. Lather (1991) asserts that the language use reflects societal power structures. Inuit students in residential schools were removed from their families for long periods of time, and punished when they used their native language. They were forced to wear school uniforms which identified them with the colonizing culture. A friend confided to me that by remembering her Inuit name, which represented her true identity as a member of her home community, she was able to survive the abuses she was subjected to in residential

school. Cherryholmes (1988) claims that the language used in school "determines what counts as true, important, or relevant, what gets spoken, what remains unsaid (1988, p. 35). Literacy for Inuit people represents who they are and the meaning they attach to their expression. Kublu and Mallon (1999) explained:

> For an Inuk like Kublu, language and culture are inextricably entwined in the perception of who she is, to herself and to others. In the eyes of older people in the community, she is a child who has tapped into the mysterious powers of the qallunaat (white people), but who still depends on her elders for so many answers about daily life in the past. (p. 2)

The preservation of Inuktitut is a pressing concern for many Inuit who are aware of the prevalence of English spoken in their schools and communities. There was also a concern expressed at the Inuit Circumpolar Conference in Alaska in 2006 that Inuit in the Arctic standardize their oral and written language to preserve it. Kusugak, leader of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, suggested that perhaps one language comprised of similar sounds in several dialects might enable representatives from different countries to communicate with each other for common understanding (CBC News, July, 12, 2006, Retrieved July 16, 2006 from http://www.cbc.ca/canada/north/story/2006/07/12/icc-language.html).

Kublu and Mallon asserted:

> People who have pride in their language feel very strongly about their dialect... Inuit across Nunavut can readily communicate with each other... They make automatic minor adaptations to adjust to each other's patterns. Where standardization is necessary is in the development of technical terms, and that is

usually not such an emotional issue. Survival is a far more serious issue than standardization. (1999, pp. 4-5)

When Inuktitut was declared the "working language" of the Government of Nunavut, it was a challenge to define what "working language" meant, and what language training courses and proficiency tests for employees should be put in place out of respect for the individual identity and rights of each community.

Menzes deSousa (2002) found that when he was teaching a group of Aboriginal students in Brazil, foreign teachers did not understand tattoos on the bodies of Brazilian Aboriginals were an expression of their language. The tattoos required reading and writing. I was reminded of my surprise to discover the language of visual design and expression in Inuit traditional clothing, motifs and artistic representations when I first visited Northern communities. I was unaware I had access to a record of their history and cultural beliefs in visual text until I had lived in Nunavut for an extended period of time. Because each community had distinct motifs, artifacts, and dialects, it was a challenge for the readers of Inuktitut books—books that were published at the regional Teaching and Learning Centres for use in schools—to be accepted in every Nunavut community. I suggested that staff in the schools where I worked translate the texts into their own dialects, but this was a laborious process that required many hours per book.

At a Nunavut Traditional Language Conference in 1998, participants expressed the following concerns about the loss of their language and culture:

An area of special concern relates to the Inuktitut language. Inuktitut is

> inextricably tied to the culture as a whole; as the language weakens, so does the culture. There is concern, for instance, that many Inuktitut specialized terms (e.g. those describing certain ice conditions, or sewing and skin preparation techniques, or emotional states) are falling out of use and being lost. While Elders want the youth to be fluent in both Inuktitut and English, they are extremely concerned about the continuing decline of Inuktitut fluency and comprehension among Nunavut's younger generations. (Nunavut Social Development Council, 1998, p. 17)

When Elders were employed on a regular basis in schools where I worked, everyone was appreciative of their contributions and respectful of their knowledge of survival skills. Sometimes special events were organized to provide an opportunity for students and non-Inuit staff to participate in traditional games and activities led by invited Elders. Occasionally the students required interpreters to help them understand what the Elders were saying, and to converse with them.

> ... Inuit culture, values and language are not being properly passed on to the younger generations. As a result, the youth of Nunavut are rapidly being deprived of their cultural heritage, identity, and important life-skills. This erosion, which began over thirty years ago with the move of Inuit from the land to the settlements, continues today at an alarming pace. Well-intentioned government programs aimed at cultural revitalization have clearly been inadequate. Strong and consistent action, involving all levels of Nunavut society and government, is required to reverse the flow of cultural decline. (Nunavut Social Development

Council, 1998, p. 19)

Learning from Elders was considered a privilege that was celebrated on an ongoing basis.

Qallunaat Efforts to Accommodate Inuit Values

Education experts have tried to redress the wrongs that occurred by attempting to make course content and pedagogical approaches more congruent with Aboriginal culture. In 1980 the Legislative Assembly of the Government of the Northwest Territories appointed a Special Committee on Education to investigate how schools could become more responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people. Its report, *Learning, Tradition and Change* (GNWT, 1982) called for more local control over education through culturally relevant programming and materials, through community-based high schools, and through the expansion of an Aboriginal teacher education program intended to increase the number of Aboriginal staff. Although small numbers of Inuit had been employed in the school system as classroom assistants, interpreters, and custodians, they were considered subservient to the certified non-Inuit teachers and principals. The report recommended an education system based on Inuit knowledge instead of one based on beliefs and values of the Christian missionaries or government agents. It was hoped that the effects of assimilation could by stemmed through community empowerment and that the roots of traditional education could flourish and overtake the colonial stranglehold that had Inuit under its control.

Preservation of Inuit Knowledge

To prepare for the creation of the Government of Nunavut April 1, 1999, several conferences were held to discuss ways that Inuit values could be used to both revitalize

Inuit institutions and be preserved for the benefit of future generations. In 1996 the Nunavut Social Development Council (NSDC), an organization dedicated to help Inuit set social and cultural goals according to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, hosted the Path Towards Healing: Medical and Traditional Knowledge Retreat.

On March 20-23, 1998 NSDC held a Workshop on Traditional Knowledge to develop strategies to ensure that Inuit values and knowledge were reflected in government policies and services. At this conference the following concerns were raised when discussing the topic of health and education:

> There are many concerns regarding the health of individuals, families and communities today in Nunavut. Suicide among young people is a great concern. Early pregnancy was also mentioned. Many Inuit Elders feel that their traditional role in teaching and guiding their children and future generations continues to be greatly diminished. They are concerned about the negative effects of the present educational system on Inuit youth and society, resulting in loss of cultural traditions and self-esteem and they would like to help change this. Traditional methods for educating children and adults exist in our communities, which can contribute positively to the growth and development of Nunavut. (Nunavut Social Development Council, 1998, p. 13)
>
> Recommendations included:
>
> 1. Traditional Inuit methods of teaching and learning should be respected and used.

2. There are many Inuit specialists and gifted teachers in Inuktitut culture and language who are not formally trained and certified as educators. Education authorities should recognize and employ these individuals for their expertise.
3. Inuktitut use, development, and training need to be a priority for the people and Government of Nunavut. Requirements and opportunities should be expanded for learning to speak, read, and write Inuktitut, for both Inuit and Qallunaat. Moreover, Inuit Elders should give Inuit youth positive support, assistance, and encouragement to speak and use Inuktitut properly. (Nunavut Social Development Council, 1998, p. 13 & 15)

Suggestions for how to bridge the gap between the Elders and youth; to promote traditional games and other forms of Inuit recreation; and to record and document traditional knowledge included providing the necessary funding, transportation, space and equipment for Elders to teach traditional land skills. It was suggested that school administrators should organize and locate funds for these activities.

> The skills mentioned most frequently included igloo-building, knowledge about weather, working with skins, sewing traditional clothing and pattern-making, travel, and place names. Training of youth in these areas must be treated as a priority. Current land-skills programs run through the schools are insufficient. Short land-skills training programs offered during summer and spring must be expanded throughout the year and include winter survival skills. (Nunavut Social Development Council, 1998, p. 17)

On September 29-30, 1999 an Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit workshop was hosted by the Government of Nunavut for government employees at all levels and Nunavut elders to

discuss how Inuit traditions might be incorporated in the workplace. According to the participants, Inuit Qaujimatatuqangit (IQ) represents:

> Inuit knowledge in all areas of life
>
> A philosophy and a way of living and thinking...The knowledge of wildlife, hunting techniques and an understanding of animal life, biology and migratory patterns.
>
> A knowledge of survival skills without the use of modern technology such as but not limited to making clothing appropriate for the climate, how to make and use traditional tools and weapons, weather forecasting and navigation skills.
>
> The long-practiced tradition of passing Inuit knowledge, values and teachings from the Elders down to the younger generations. (Nunavut Social Development. Council,Working Group presentations, 1999, p. 14)

It was reaffirmed that Inuktitut must become the working language of Nunavut. Although English had dominated at meetings to accommodate non-Inuit workers, it was recommended that in the future, they be conducted in Inuktitut, with translation for non-Inuktitut speakers. Inuktitut courses were to be mandated for Anglophones. It was suggested that senior management personnel should encourage staff to write in Inuit syllabics. Mandatory orientation workshops and language training were to be provided for new Inuit and non-Inuit employees, and it was thought that elders should develop and facilitate orientation sessions about Inuit customs, kinship patterns, history, beliefs and values. The initiatives were to be collaborative with all staff, not just one individual,

responsible for the orientation.

> Sensitivity to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit should be incorporated into staff hiring and promotion policies. Some Inuit staff have a lifetime of experience to offer, but lack the "southern style" qualifications required to meet the job description and requirements. Qallunaat are sometimes promoted based on 'southern-style' work practices, without a clear understanding or respect of Inuit traditional values. (Working Group Presentation, 1999, p. 51)
>
> Each government department should invite at least one Elder to consult on all policy, strategic planning, business planning meetings and development sessions to ensure Inuit traditions and beliefs are respected during program delivery. When Elders visit the departments, all efforts should be made to welcome and accommodate them, regardless of how 'busy' (in the Qallunaatitut sense) staff believe they are. (Working Group Presentation, 1999, p. 52)
>
> Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit does not box things in; it tries to keep everything interconnected and related. Because it's all for the sole purpose of *Inuusiqattiarniq*, ... to be healthy, to be independent so we can work well with others. To be contributing to our community... (Government of Nunavut Employee, 1999, p. 43)

It was recommended by participants attending the workshop that a monitoring committee be struck to examine the work of agencies such as the Government of Nunavut Cabinet, Legislative Assembly, RCMP and Department of Justice to ensure that all programs, services and initiatives of these groups respect Inuit beliefs, values and

traditions They suggested that the conference proceedings be widely distributed and referred to by policy makers for decision-making, and by schools for teaching and research.

It was hoped that educators would focus on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in schools and honour its significance for Inuit.

> Our youth are our future. We have to educate them and encourage them to take ownership of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit so they can pass it down to their future generations. We can't do this alone, but our Helper, whom we cannot see will help guide the younger generations as well. (Mariano Aupilardjuk, Invited Elder, 1999, p. 25)

The Workshop participants wholeheartedly agreed that a stronger Inuit-based curriculum at all levels of the education system would encourage children in Nunavut to take ownership and pride in their language and culture.

> During presentations from the Working Groups, the participants urged parents to speak to their children in proper Inuktitut instead of 'baby-talk' or *Qallunaatitut*(English). The participants believe that hearing and speaking Inuktitut at home will validate the language for their children, whose society is dominated by English television, music and Qallunaat pop culture. In order to accomplish this, the participants have requested that more Inuktitut teaching material be produced for all grades. Classroom decorations should also be more culturally sensitive using syllabics alongside the Qallunaat alphabet and a more

prominent display of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit-related material.

... The first thing I noticed got the best reaction from was when I put the (Inuit) values up on the walls... the first thing these children said was 'how come we don't see these up in our regular classrooms above our blackboards? We have A-B-C's, the 1-2-3's, but we do not ever see these on our walls... (Government of Nunavut Employee, 1999, p. 53)

The Workshop Participants agreed that Elders should be invited and encouraged to spend more time with students. These Elders should be given the same status as the schoolteachers because their teachings are just as important.

Government working hours should be more conducive to Inuit lifestyles. Much of the Inuit way of life is based on a knowledge and understanding of the land. These ways of life are dependent on climate and seasonal conditions, not on Qallunaat-government work schedules.

Traditional leave should be a consideration to allow people to practice certain traditions and necessary tasks such as: Caribou hunting, dependent on migratory patterns; Goose hunting, dependent on seasonal migration; Whale hunting, also seasonal, dependent on sightings; Clam digging, dependent on tides, weather and season; Berry picking, can only be done at a certain time of the year.

The above-mentioned traditional events are not only necessary to supplement the Inuit diet, but they are also traditional social gatherings and learning experiences. Many Government of Nunavut employees expressed certain levels of frustration that the time in their offices prevents some employees from enjoying such

activities. Some feel that the work required could be completed outside standard government working hours and that by allowing these hours to be more flexible, the staff would be more productive, creative and enthusiastic.

The participants expressed a common belief that a stronger commitment to recognizing Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, particularly from the new Government of Nunavut will help alleviate and perhaps even eliminate some of the social problems currently crippling community life.

The Working Groups believe that confirming the value of IQ will restore Inuit pride and increase individual self-esteem. By increasing young Inuit self-esteem, some of today's social problems such as substance and alcohol abuse and even suicide will be eliminated. (Working Group presentation, 1999, pp.15-16)

We have to give more in-depth teaching of Inuit knowledge. My children and my grandchildren should be learning more of the Inuit ways of life... some are more interested in the Qallunaat ways of life. They are completely lost in that world. Some of them drop out of school after trying to learn Qallunaatitut (English), and confusing or mixing it with Inuktitut. There are many who are lost and confused in my home community. These young people aren't bad; they are just confused... many who commit crimes are really searching for their identity. We have to stand up and not keep our abilities to help a secret. (Elisapee Ootoovak, Invited Elder, 1999, p. 33)

Many of the participants also made it clear that their wholehearted support of the

> promotion of IQ in the workplace is not intended to phase out the Qallunaat of Nunavut or to exclude them from the process. Rather it was the hope of most of the Participants that by incorporating IQ in the workplace, and by raising their understanding of Inuit philosophy and culture, that the new government will become a more productive and harmonious working environment, beneficial to all residents of the new territory. (Workshop presentation, 1999)

I had been granted a leave of absence by my employer in Nunavut to complete my Master's of Education program at the University of Victoria in 1999-2000, so I did not know that the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* Workshop had taken place until the beginning of of the 2000 school year when I returned from leave. I received an electronic message sent to principals by the Department of Education asking me what I thought of IQ. In my ignorance, I thought *IQ* meant intelligence quotient. Because I was preoccupied with many tasks and meetings to start the school year, responding to the message was not a priority. About a week later I received a follow-up telephone call asking me to contribute my perspective regarding the significance of *IQ* for my school. Not having received any information from my supervisor or the acting-principal who had replaced me during my absence on such an important topic surprised me. I requested information from the caller, and was sent a report of the proceedings of the September 1999 workshop from which I have quoted. By reading the quotations in the transcripts, I learned what Inuit values and beliefs were important in the government's vision for the future.

Students were struggling between two worlds, and the school was a refuge for

many. I had secured funding for a breakfast program, because often students arrived at school hungry. The local Co-op store assisted by ordering food and providing it at a discount. In one school, I also ran a lunch program so students would not have to go home when there was a lot of drinking in the community. The education council was not receptive to my concerns that some students were afraid to leave the school during such occasions. I was fortunate to have learned how to organize activity programming in my Master's program in child development years earlier, and planned several programs, such as family-group instruction that enabled students to rotate to learning stations in multi-age groups. This program was enjoyed by the students, but not my all of the *Qallunnat* staff, who found it chaotic and a distraction from the regular curriculum. I offered a Saturday computer program for students and parents, hoping that families might be able to benefit from the many computers that were available in the school, but parents usually preferred to send an older sibling with the student than participate. I tried to involve elders in program delivery, after securing funds to hire one of them as a part-time counsellor. For some students this was helpful, but others told me they felt uncomfortable talking to the elder. Some parents were uncomfortable permitting their children to be with an elder because they worried their children might not be safe. I developed a carving program which was popular with students and had a positive effect on their self-esteem.

The education council was enthusiastic that the program was available, and ensured that a student's first carving be given to his or her mother. All of the students enjoyed learning from an experienced carver and were proud to take their carvings home.

In spite of the staff's awareness of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* throughout the school year it was always possible to know immediately after walking into a classroom whether the teacher was Inuit or *Qallunaat*, from the activities, display of materials, and atmosphere. Inuit classrooms were calm, with students actively engaged in informal groupings, and syllabics as well as photographs and other artifacts displayed in an appealing manner. *Qallunaat* classrooms were more structured, with students in orderly rows of desks, often working diligently on paperwork or reading. There was usually a book caroussel and charts to show the number of books read or progress attained. When the staff met for a planning session in a *Qallunaat* classroom after the students went home, an Inuit participant told me that we were in a "real" classroom that she wished she could have been in as a student. The classrooms for the higher grades were sometimes sparsely decorated if the school was large enough for a subject specialist teacher to have his or her own classroom. It was more common, however, to have subject specialists rotate to students' homerooms, the library, outer administrative office, or to rooms in other government buildings that the school rented because of shortage of space.

Curricular Changes

Although the Minister of Education had called for new directions in education in which Inuit ways of knowing (*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*) form the basis of restructuring, the system continued to be dominated by models and pedagogy foreign to Inuit culture. In the year 2000 the government issued the following directive: "Begin the re-writing of the K-12 school curriculum, to emphasize cultural relevance and academic excellence, to

be completed over the next 10 years" (Government of Nunavut, 2000, p. 7).

Agbo (2002) has demonstrated the importance of considering cultural context and standards for students when setting educational goals. He claimed that traditions and community bonds shape the way school codes and academic content are understood, and advised administrators to become actively involved in the communities where they are employed in order to comprehend the impact of culture. His research in The Mohawk Education Project to work with administrators, school staff and community members to develop a culturally relevant curriculum and Aboriginal standards to reduce the drop-out rate and increase student achievement, revealed that non-native educators lacked sufficient understanding of the Mohawk culture to relate to the students' lives. Agbo (2002) recommended that "potent ethnic concepts" (p. 13) that place emphasis on traditional Mohawk core ideals be included in curricula. By ensuring that the curriculum be built around Mohawk core ideals of unity and harmony, there could be a greater chance of success through a cross-fertilization of Aboriginal and Euro-American cultures. He recommended that non-native staff, which constituted the majority of teachers and administrators, learn about the Aboriginal way of life, traditions, and values, to show students that their culture is worthy of respect. The cultural standards for school administrators and staff should also be interpreted as "how the roles of administrators and teachers fit into the patterns of communication, personal interaction and other relationships within the community" (Agbo, 2001, p. 35).

The curriculum in Nunavut schools had been imported from the province of

Alberta and projected a Eurocentric world view. Grade 4 is typically the transitional year for students who have completed the first three grades of schooling in *Inuktitut* into English instruction. The majority of their teachers were *Qallunaat* and were guided in their instruction to have their students pass southern standardized tests. At the high school level, passing Alberta exit exams were a requirement for graduation. Consequently, the policy makers and trainers were operating at cross purposes with the Inuit by imposing the barriers of a foreign system. Stairs (1988) asserted that "formal education is not only alien to Inuit culture but, being initially transposed from the south, it is in direct conflict with Indigenous modes of transmitting knowledge across generations" (p. 315).

Nunavut Territory was created in 1999 to "create a society and government that reflect Inuit reality and are responsive to Inuit needs" (Nunavut Social Development Council, 1998, p. 1).

> Many of our elders look back on the days before the establishment of Nunavut's settlements with a sense of loss. In spite of the hardships, it was a time when we still had control of our lives, a time when we lived and thrived largely by our own knowledge and skills, a time of self-sufficiency when our culture and language thrived and were under no immediate threat. Indeed, for many of us, life in these days has come to define what we mean by traditional Inuit culture. Subsequent cultural change and loss are usually measured against the life-styles and values of this period. (Nunavut Social Development Council, 1998, p. 1)

On March 20-24, 1998 a Nunavut Traditional Knowledge Conference was hosted

in Igloolik by the Nunavut Social Development Council. The purpose of the conference was to develop a strategy to promote Inuit traditional knowledge and practices in Nunavut to deal with a wide range of issues relating to family, childcare, wildlife management and conflict resolution. Recommendations included: increasing communication between elders and youth and expanding opportunities for traditional activities on the land; teaching survival skills, such as igloo-building, predicting weather conditions, and sewing traditional clothing; respecting traditional methods of teaching and learning; recognizing and employing Inuit teachers without formal training and certification; employing Inuit approaches to maintain social order and address problems; and restoring traditional discipline, endurance and self-reliance. Pulpan (2006) reported that a school in one Nunavut community was implementing traditional knowledge approaches to cope with attendance and drop-out problems and insufficient parent involvement through a land skills program. Teachers provided instruction to students on the land, with the school as a "central hub from which these programs and activities are run" (p. 16). He noted that one of the co-principals credited the efforts of both Inuit and non-Inuit teachers for the existence of the program and acknowledged:

> The school is now responsible for much of the cultural teaching that would have been done by parents and elders in the past... The families are giving up and they're not doing the amount of stuff at home that they would normally do in the past... when there weren't any schools.
>
> There is also a trend for students to listen to elders within school activities.

> There is a 'leap frog' effect whereby most of the Traditional Inuit Knowledge is 'skipping' over the parental generation to the youth. The flow of cultural knowledge is being regenerated through youth contact with Elders... the *people* involved with the school have become a driving force for the learning of cultural knowledge... Qallunaat (Southerners) can facilitate the teaching of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit through the help of elders, Inuit staff, and curriculum resources, but it is much easier for an Inuk to accomplish this task. (Pulpan, 2006, pp.16-18, italics in original)

In my practice I devoted considerable time, effort and attention to securing funds, materials, equipment, instructors and permission to provide what was known as cultural inclusion or land skills programs in each of the schools where I was principal. While I considered each program as important, I felt uncomfortable offering it as an appendage to the Alberta curriculum. Culture was integral to who Inuit were and how they participated in their world. Yet, as an administrator responsible for delivering a curriculum within a system, it was necessary for me to compartmentalize and allocate each activity.

The Community Education Council, which later came to be known as the District Education Authority, was always pleased to hear that I had applied for and acquired funding, but occasionally there was a difference of opinion about which person should be hired as instructor due to community relationships and family affiliations. One time I was able to designate funding in the school budget to employ more than one instructor throughout the school year. One elder was hired to teach cooking, and another sewing, but due to limited space, it was necessary for them to occasionally teach in the same room

which led to interpersonal conflict. Whenever there was cause to reprimand a cultural instructor for failure to abide by school rules and other reasons, I was not always supported by the Education Council Chairperson due to a conflict of interest. I also had reservations about permitting male instructors to take a group of students out of the school on overnight hunting and fishing excursions when I could not guarantee the students' safety or locate parents to accompany them. Often students brought what they had caught back to the school to share with the student body or community, as was expected, but there were times when I did not know the results of the expedition, or whether the gasoline and equipment had been used solely for school purposes. In spite of these concerns, I was gratified to know that the school was able to offer learning experiences that many students might not otherwise have had access to. I concur with Pulpan's findings that some parents were unable to teach their children traditional skills, and learned them alongside their children with their children acting as intermediaries between themselves and elders. I was surprised to discover that occasionally there was a language barrier between the students and elders, due to neither being sufficiently fluent in the others' predominant language in order to converse with the other. As a result, the students sometimes needed encouragement to benefit from all the elders could contribute to their education.

I organized community events and activities which were led by community members at the school on a regular basis, and they were always well attended and enjoyed. I also scheduled fun activities outside, such as sliding downhill on sealskins,

I also scheduled fun activities outside, such as sliding downhill on seal skins, igloo building, and physical education activities during the school day. The staff who had experience in outdoor education during their teacher training at southern colleges were excellent instructors and participants. One university established an internship program in Nunavut schools, which was beneficial to everyone concerned.

Concerns Expressed by Principals

At a meeting of principals and regional school board members that I attended in 1997, principals in the region where I was employed claimed that there was insufficient communication between school personnel and parents due to a language barrier. School decision-making was removed from the communities, and there were conflicting approaches to community development. Lack of understanding led to feelings of disempowerment and conflict regarding ownership at the community level. Social problems resulting from high unemployment, poverty, and a high birth rate contributed to a break-down in families, causing identity issues and low self-esteem. Parents were delegating responsibility for their children to others, and low expectations in both the home and school led to attendance and motivation problems. Discipline at home was different from at school. Parents did not understand the role of the school, and there was little communication between students and their parents. Limited school resources for Inuktitut instruction at all grade levels made bilingual education programs weak. There was weak transition from elementary to the secondary levels. Elders were insufficiently involved at school and felt excluded as counsellors. High school graduates were needed as role models for younger students. Technological support was lacking at school and

there was no funding designated for technology in homes. These problems caused me to turn to articles written by scholars I had collected while I was a student in my educational administration Master's program. I considered questions posed by Capper (1998) to principals coping with change:

1. Am I allowing the nature of change to be messy, unpredictable? Am I trying to control the process of change too much to reach my predetermined endpoint?
2. Do I recognize that power is everywhere and that it can emanate from many different points?
3. How is the space of the school set up to organize and control people?
4. Do I recognize that there is not one solution to a so-called problem, but multiple possibilities for a given situation?
5. Do I recognize that a problem is open to many interpretations, and for some, it would not be a problem at all, but an opportunity? Challenge/ Lesson?
6. Am I conscious of the ways that consensus, dialogue, and democratic decision making can serve to mask power inequities? (p.367)

Re-reading Capper's questions helped me to realize that I could not control the dynamics of the problems in Nunavut's education system. I did not have the power or the authority to predetermine an endpoint. It was not my role as a leader to control people; rather, I was in a position to facilitate what Inuit stakeholders wanted and needed from their

schools. This was an opportunity for me to discover what I could offer potential Inuit administrators to implement their conceptions of school leadership.

I attended a Leadership Conference hosted by the Nunavut Department of Education on January 23-25, 2001. The Minister of Education explained that there was a new vision for education to create a new system of schooling to meet student needs from the perspective of Inuit language, culture, heritage and identity. Although the participants expressed the needs to employ more elders as cultural instructors in the schools, to produce more Inuktitut curriculum materials, and to involve more community members in decision-making, the Minister claimed there were insufficient funds available until new partnerships with the federal government could be forged, or Inuit organizations could locate new funding sources.

A paper entitled *Building Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Schools in Nunavut* (2000) was presented by Darlene DeMerchant, Nunavut's Elementary Programs Coordinator, and Shirley Tagalik, Manager of Early Childhood and School Services. They discussed the need to train local teachers with roots in their community, and to "examine leadership practices, meaningful community involvement and trust" between educators and stakeholders by integrating "Inuit knowledge and Western schooling" (DeMerchant & Tagalik, 2000, p. 5). They emphasized the importance of team leadership with the community and staff involved in shared decision-making. They suggested using the Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) model (Forest, Pearpoint & Snow, 1992) for setting long-term goals with parents, Elders, community members, students and staff. Participatory management leadership in small communities was regarded as

conducive to building trusting personal relationships. Understanding the local context was viewed as an important prerequisite to reform.

Students should be encouraged to share their talents and be guided in assisting their peers. They need to be competent in "both Western and Inuit ways of knowing and learning" as demonstrated in science camps where they have an opportunity "to learn not only their Native language and cultural practices, but also western scientific concepts and practices" (DeMerchant & Tagalik, 2000, p. 7). Multi-age family groupings that permit students to be taught by the same teacher in two or three-year cycles (Grant, Johnson, & Richardson, 1996) might involve less student-teacher transitions, and more authentic assessment of student progress. A flexible school day and calendar that is consistent with community and seasonal activities could support a curriculum based on school-wide themes. Parents could be acknowledged as the primary teachers of IQ, with community members recognized as important school partners for creating quality Inuit education. If staff were to develop closer contact with parents and build a family atmosphere in schools, the result might be a community of learners. Career planning to help students explore their interests could begin when they are 11 or 12 years old. The authors acknowledged that "a number of curriculum resources, program supports, and technical supports will be needed to implement the kinds of learning experiences expected in an IQ school" (DeMerchant & Tagalik, 2000, p. 11). Learing environments which instil "strong Inuit identity and pride in their heritage" (Nunavut Department of Education, 2000, p. 12) could contribute to learning opportunities outside of their local communities and Nunavut.

Nunavut Goals for Education

When the Territory of Nunavut was formed in 1999, government officials outlined guiding principles and priorities for Nunavut education in a document entitled *The Bathurst Mandate: That which we've set out to do. Pinasuaqtavut: Our hopes and plans for Nunavut* (Government of Nunavut, 1999). Nunavut's premier, Paul Okalik, articulated goals such as: "healthy communities, simplicity and unity, self-reliance and continuing learning" (1999, p.2). He asserted, "Our education system needs to be built within the context of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit" (p. 6). and listed long-range educational objectives to be achieved as follows:

In 2020, Nunavut is a place where:

- Our population is adaptable to change and welcomes new skills, while preserving its culture, values and language of origin;
- We are a fully functional bilingual society, in Inuktitut and English, respectful and committed to the needs and rights of French speakers, with a growing ability to participate in French;
- We have a representative workforce in all sectors;
- Educational programs are offered on a strategic basis, based on community by community needs;
- There is a full range of interlocking educational programs allowing individuals continued access throughout spectrum;
- Inuit professionals of all kinds have been supported in their training and have taken leadership roles in our communities;

- Our history and accomplishments have been preserved and recognized in books and artworks, in recorded stories, in places of learning, and in common knowledge of our people. We are a source of pride to all Canadians;
- In our areas of strength, we have assumed a leadership role in Canada and have looked beyond Nunavut to give and receive inspiration and support, and to lead an active exchange of ideas and information. (Government of Nunavut, 1999, pp. 6-7)

Structural Changes

In 1996 the Nunavut Implementation Commission proposed changing the bureaucratic educational structure to give communities more control over their schools at the local level. Between 1985 and 2000, regional school boards had been established in each of the three geographical regions in Nunavut: the Kitikmeot (Central Arctic), the Kivalliq (Keewatin), and the Qikiqtani (Baffin).They were controlled by Divisional Educational Councils comprised of representatives from each of the communities in their jurisdictions. The three school boards and community education councils were governed by the Department of Education in Yellowknife, far away from the Eastern Arctic in which there were small and isolated communities, with populations of less than 1500. School principals and staffs were usually non-Inuit and had received their training in southern Canada, although administrators were required to participate in a 10-day principal certification program created by faculty at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and delivered during two summers in northern communities. Many Inuit teachers graduated from a northern teacher education program

developed by McGill University for delivery through Nunavut's Arctic College. In a move to offer increased local control over education to communities in what would become Nunavut Territory, and to combine administrative and financial functions in response to a decrease in federal funding coupled with an escalating birth rate, the Department of Education in Yellowknife was replaced by a smaller Nunavut Ministry of Education. The three regional school boards were disbanded and also replaced by the Nunavut Department of Education which was made responsible for legislation, regulation, education standards, and professional certification.

In 1999 representatives of the three Divisional Education Councils and Nunavut Arctic College had proposed that a three-year teacher education program be offered in home communities when there were at least twelve applicants who had passed academic placement exams in mathematics, science, English and Inuktitut,. The program was based on ten courses offered over fall, winter and summer terms and included guaranteed financial assistance available to pay for candidates' salaries during their absence from work. The program was intended to offset the increasing difficulty of attracting educators from southern Canada as well as to promote cultural programming in Nunavut schools. A one-year Aboriginal Language Certificate program was also created; it was intended to train unilinguals, such as Elders, in order to prepare them for employment as Aboriginal Language Specialists in local schools.

Dissatisfaction with Nunavut's education system has caused several groups to express regret over the dissolution of the regional boards. The most recent annual report

of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.(NTI) on the condition of Inuit society recommends that the Government of Nunavut return control of schools to boards of education in order to restore responsibility for education to parents and community members. NTI does not trust government bureaucracies to do what is best for schools. A critique responded to NTI's recommendations in *Nunatsiaq News*, Nunavut's Inuktitut-English weekly newspaper, stating that:

> The divisional boards did do some useful things, such as publish Inuit-language readers and other learning materials.
>
> But there's no evidence that in those years the divisional board bureaucracies ever achieved what NTI (Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.) claims they could achieve should they be reinstated. Between 1985 and 2000, graduation rates were lower than they are now, while school attendance was about the same. Public dissatisfaction with the school system was as great then as it is now.
>
> Besides, it ought to be obvious that governance is only one of many factors that influence school attendance and graduation rates. Most teachers will tell you that social conditions at home – family violence, substance abuse, overcrowding, parental neglect, malnutrition – hurt students far more than any system of governance. [JB.(2008, March, 7. pp. 4-5). *Nunatsiaq News*, Retrieved on March 28, 2008 from http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives/nunavut]

In a *Nunatsiaq News* editorial opinion piece on August 10, 2007, Jeeteeta Merkosak, Chairperson of the Coalition of Nunavut Ideas, submitted the following:

> As representatives of parents in Nunavut, and the 75 percent or more of our

children who will not graduate from Grade 12, we hope that discussions between our premier and the prime minister on devolution quickly turn to the need to transform our education system. There is not a single province or territory in Canada who have developed their natural resources without ensuring that their school system is working and graduating the future work force.

And herein lies one of the issues that parents feel needs serious re-examination in the life of our young government. In 2000 our Government eliminated regional boards of education, and with this decision abolished local governance of the schools. In a stroke, what had been working as an Inuit way of governance of our schools, with decisions made by a council of parents, disappeared for a system where most decisions on schools are made by bureaucrats working outside of our communities.

Parents don't want just an advisory role in running our schools. Local governance and regional boards matter because it enables and motivates parents and communities to care about the results in their schools. It encourages parents to ensure that instruction will be in the Inuit language and that the schools reflect our Inuit culture. Parents, through elected boards, employ and hold accountable the superintendents, teachers and principals and hold boards accountable for their results.

Transforming our school system will involve targeted investments – in teacher and principal training, in language development, in specialized programs for our

at-risk children, in research, and in governance. [Merkosak, J. 2007, August 10). Education and the prime minister's visit. *Nunatsiaq News*. Retrieved April 11, 2008 from http://www.nunatsiaq.com/archives]

Nunavut's premier expressed the following concerns about education and society in a televised address to the people of Canada:

Devolution is one of the areas we've been focusing on - transferring authority from the federal government to our government so we can create opportunities for young people... however, funding has not kept up with growth. We are still struggling to provide adequate housing... fuel prices have hit us hard. We have the highest fuel prices in the country. We have a vast pool of resources. The government has questioned ownership of our waters. We're very concerned about the environment being unregulated in our homeland. We need to learn how to adapt to global warming. Glaciers are melting. We can't do much about cultural erosion, but we should focus on education; we are opening our own trade school. We are promoting mineral activity. We want young people to learn the skills of the trade. We are trying to continue without family support. The education system is not really bilingual. The first three years, there is a choice of studies in Inuktitut, English and French. Those who begin in Inuktitut have a difficult time continuing in English.. We want bilingual graduates. We need to see more in post secondary education. Elders are passing on; we're losing our language. We are introducing a special school to teach about our past, the Nunavut Cultural School. We're losing part of our culture as elders pass on. We need to return to our roots

to strengthen our foundation as a people. (Okalik, P., January 1, 2007, CPAC Television).

Thomas Berger's (2006) federal report on the results of devolution of power to local government states: "Nunavut does not have the capacity to take on more responsibility, for obvious reasons related to the poor performance of Nunavut's education system and Nunavut's poor quality of governance." (Retrieved June 30, 2007, from http://www.nunatsiaq.com/opinionEditorial/editorial.html)

Conceptions of Educational Leadership

The Dominant Discourse

There appeared to be a disconnect between educational goals established for Nunavut schools and how to achieve them. The language in which the curriculum and achievement benchmarks that had been established for the Alberta curriculum seemed more appropriate for southern Canadian students than for Inuit students in Nunavut. The "indicators such as high drop-out rates, low high school graduation rates, low school attendance, high teacher turnover, and parental alienation were evidence that the system of schooling was not working for Dene or Inuit students" (Tompkins, 2006, p. 51). There was also evidence of a growing accountability system tied to student achievement, usually measured by improvement or decline in standardized test scores (Ladd & Zelli, 2002). The accountability movement simply compounds the problems, as another idea borrowed from the South which will cost money and time and result in even less learning.

Smith (2001) has shown how history can be manipulated to conform to a "totalizing master discourse" for the purpose of controlling "the other" (p. 67). She claimed that the deliberate distortion of cultural experience by outsiders could perpetuate a colonial presence. Global corporate influences, expressed through the languages of management and accountability, seemed to be impacting the school culture in Nunavut. For example, Nunavut educational policy makers and administrators began discussing site-based management and budget constraints and started referring to principals as Chief Executive Officers (Brown, 1998). This managerial lens challenged my understanding of the principal as an educational leader.

In my studies at the University of Victoria, I had understood school leadership as bridging the gap between administration and management. According to Hodgkinson (1983), administration involved applying one's philosophy to action with consideration for its impact on the school and community, whereas management dealt with monitoring the processes used to realize a leader's vision. Some examples of the managerial tasks included: providing funding and resources, anticipating problems, resolving conflict, and dealing with political requirements regarding school operations (Murphy & Louis, 1999).

Blackmore (1989) has stated that when principals were regarded as "corporate managers" hierarchy was considered a "given" and that the correspondingly appropriate characteristics and behaviours of leaders were "associated with masculinity" (pp. 53-54). She asserted that this perspective tended to "displace women in educational thought, and therefore rendered women invisible in administrative practice". The feminist

conception of leadership that Blackmore supported was regarded by her as "multi-dimensional, multi-directional," and practised in different contexts by different people and not merely equated to formal roles" (1989, p. 94). I felt uncomfortable being referred to as a CEO by my education director because the Inuit conception of leadership was non-hierarchical and more compatible with the view that Blackmore presented.

In my Master's program in Educational Leadership, I had been attracted to theories of moral leadership. After serving as principal in three small Nunavut communities where anyone could assume leadership, the idea of being part of a community of leaders was appealing. Greenleaf (1996) identified the concept of servant leadership as serving personnel and the community by listening empathically to others and being committed to their development. Murphy and Louis concur. They explain that: "Such administrators must posses strength, courage and wisdom to honor the values that support communities which honor and support the comprehensive development of persons as individuals and as social human beings" (1999, pp. 352-353) Looking back, I believe this philosophy supported the passion with which I approached my administrative duties. Theorists such as Senge (1990), who advocated developing a common vision to "create our own future" (p.14), and Wheatley (1994), who advised leaders to become engaged with employees at the margins of the organization and draw them towards the centre, represented what Covey (2005) termed Cultural and Wholistic Leadership. This perspective resonated with the way I understood my role as a principal.

> Leadership is the ability to step outside the culture to start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive. Leadership is the ability to include impor

> stakeholders, evoke followership, and empower others. Wheatley's wholistic approach assumes that leadership is contextual and systematic. Leaders create synergistic relationships between individuals, organizations, and the environment (Covey, 2005, p. 358).

I was excited find myself in what Hodgkinson (1991) called a state of "ethical excitement" (p.164) by articulating values in myself that distanced me from some colleagues who could be framed within his typology as "instrumental" and "mechanistic". Hodgkinson offered a conceptual model of the political character of organizations, and related the moral climate of a school to the attributes of the administrator, thus externalizing the morality of the leader.

Fullan (2003) lamented that much of the principal's work may have no moral purpose. "Being a competent manager, engaging in good public relations, and even getting higher test scores do not constitute moral purpose" (Fullan, 2003, p. 30). Yet, it was when I returned to school in the evening to check attendance registers, compile statistical reports, fill out purchase orders, and other managerial tasks that frequently kept me in my office until the early morning hours, that I felt most heroic. According to Fullan "Moral purpose becomes more prominent when we shift our focus to encompass the whole school" (2003, p. 31), but this did not represent my experience. I did feel validated when my school-wide goals were achieved, but my interpretation of moral leadership at the time was connected with sacrifice and dedication to individuals. I related more to Sergiovanni's (1994) view of the administrator's role in establishing a

collegial and collaborative school culture through maintaining commitment to staff and cultural patterns through shared leadership.

I agreed with Barth (1990) that a leader needed to have a clear vision of education and a knowledge of the strategies necessary to implement it. However, I was impressed by Greenfield's (1973) assertion that "What many people seem to want from schools is that schools reflect the values that are central and meaningful in their lives. If this view is correct, schools are cultural artifacts that people struggle to shape in their own image" (p. 560). It is important to consider the nature of the vision being promoted and the accommodations that might be required to make it acceptable in different cultural settings.

> Leadership activities associated with the cultural view include articulating school purposes and mission, socializing new members to the school, telling stories and maintaining or reinforcing myths, traditions, and beliefs, explaining 'the way things operate around here,' developing and displaying such a system of symbols, and rewarding those who reflect the school's culture... School culture includes values, symbols, beliefs, and shared meanings of parents, students, teachers, and others conceived as a group or community. Culture governs what is of worth for this group and how members should think, feel, and behave. The 'stuff' of culture includes a school's customs and traditions, historical accounts and unstated understandings, habits, norms and expectations, and common meanings and shared assumptions. The more understood, accepted, and cohesive the culture of the school, the better able it is to move in concert toward ideals it holds, and

> objectives it wishes to pursue. It is in this sense, the argument goes, that culture serves as a compass setting to steer people in a common direction, provides a set of norms that defines what people should accomplish and how, and provides a source of meaning and significance for teachers, students, administrators, and others as they work.
>
> Once shaped and established in the school, this strong culture acts as a powerful socializer of thought and programmer of behavior. But the shaping and establishment of culture doesn't just happen. It is instead a negotiated product of the shared sentiments of school participants. Often competing views and competing ideologies exist in schools, and deciding which ones will count requires some struggling. Administrators are in an advantageous position to strongly influence the outcome of the struggle. (Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coombs and Thurston, 1980, pp. 159-160)

Effects of Globalization on Cross-cultural Research

Since 1990 globalization has stimulated an interest in investigating a convergence of values that have highlighted cultural differences in school leadership and resistance to educational policy changes that conflict with social norms (Hallinger, 2005, p. ix). Dimmock and Walker (2005), who have been actively investigating leadership models in cross-cultural settings, have urged scholars to study what Heck and Hallinger refer to as blind spots: "The unseen issues and assumptions that underpin our models and limit the potential of inquiry in educational leadership and management" (Hallinger,

2005, p. xi). Schools are culturally constructed around the interrelationship of educational leadership and culture.

> Educational leadership is a socially bounded process. It is subject to the cultural traditions and values of the society in which it is exercised... It thus manifests itself in different ways in different settings. In this sense it is remarkable that many current debates in educational leadership continue to be couched in general or universal terms without taking into account the particularities of the local cultural context that influences and shapes. (Dimmock and Walker, 2005, p. 1)

My assertion supports Dimmock and Walker's (2005) premise that the southern Canadian conceptions of leadership were misapplied in Nunavut schools and that the assumption of *Qallunaat* that they should be dominant in the Nunavut education system have created unresolved tensions throughout the education system. Co-existence of the Inuit and *Qallunaat* models of education represent a power imbalance that favours the dominant southern Canadian paradigm. Administrative theorists have attempted to develop a comprehensive knowledge base by compiling empirical cross-cultural research without questioning embedded Western assumptions which overshadow the results. It is necessary to question whether the leadership practices adopted from the dominant paradigm are consistent with indigenous beliefs and approaches. The final category in Covey's (2005) chart of the evolution of leadership theories is Spiritual Leadership, which he defines as "influencing people's souls rather than controlling action... connecting with others" in caring for the whole person (p.358). "A leader's influence stems from his or her knowledge of the organizational culture, customs, values and

traditions"(Covey, 2005, p. 358). Proponents of this paradigm are concerned with the spiritual dimension of leadership in the work of practitioners. Houston (2008) cautions such leaders to be aware that "One of the paradoxes of true spiritual leaders is that they are lofty, but lowly at the same time" (p. 9). They must be practitioners as well as thinkers in creating a sense of community. Langer stressed the importance of remaining actively connected to colleagues as "the essence of leadership" (Cited in Houston, 2008, p. 9).

Leadership Practices

My first experience with educational leadership practice was as an elementary school student. I do not recall ever seeing my principal, but his influence was always present. He was rumoured to be a stern administrator who controlled the school with an iron fist. I cannot describe him as a dispenser of rewards and punishments, because I have no memory of him presenting rewards. Everyone seemed to fear him, and just the threat of being sent to the office was enough to bring classmates to tears.

When I arrived in Nunavut, I was surprised to observe the joy, affection and acceptance of children that Inuit parents demonstrated when they were noisy during social gatherings. Frequently *Qallunaat* adults expressed disapproval that children were permitted to talk, run around, and play unsupervised at meetings and in church services. For example, in one community I worried that on rooftops might be dangerous for students to ride their bicycles in the dark, but the parents I discussed this with appeared unconcerned. I observed older children taking care of younger ones on many occasions.

I learned what was essential for my practice from Inuit friends. They told me that what people most cared about was if I treated the students and elders with respect and acceptance. They explained Inuit traditions and values with respect to childrearing (see above). Their approach to discipline, that has been included in earlier sections of this chapter, was non-punitive and brief, ensuring that students were respected, not humiliated, when corrected. They assured me that I would be a successful principal because of the way I interacted with people.

When I arrived at my first administrative post, I visited families in the community and attempted to respond to the demands of the school board to submit statistics, inventories, plans, and to ensure that equipment and supplies that had arrived on the sealift barge were delivered to the school, unpacked and inventoried. In addition to unpacking supplies and setting up my home in the community, it was also important for me to introduce myself to personnel from other government agencies, such as the government liaison officer, mayor, nurse, public works employees, wildlife officer, and police. A representative of the RCMP visited me at the school before I had an opportunity to contact him, as he was investigating a former principal who was accused of sexual abuse. The officer asked me if I had found any photographs of children in the school. That inquiry sensitized me to the concerns of Inuit parents that their children had been photographed without their knowledge. It was common for *Qallunnat* staff to want to display students' pictures in their classrooms and send videotapes of themselves and residents of such a remote location to their relatives in southern Canada At the first staff meeting, I informed teachers that it was necessary for them to obtain permission before

photographing or videotaping students, and provided a consent form that I had created. I soon also learned that I would need to appoint an acting principal from my novice teaching staff to replace me while I attended a week-long principals' conference in Iqaluit. I was reluctant to leave the community when the school year was just beginning, but anxious to meet with other principals to hear how they were coping with their responsibilities and duties.

In my role as principal, I wanted to collaborate with all of the school partners to develop a school vision, plan curricular themes, establish learning centres, group students, individualize instruction, institute school teams, organize school-community events, and create an open and welcoming atmosphere. It was challenging to find the time for everything I wanted to do

Bennis and Nanus (1985), maintain that a school principal might be a key change agent. Based on my personal reflections of the ways my own school principals and teachers had dealt with discipline, a priority for myself was working with a team to create a school code of conduct that staff, parents, community members, students, and the school board could all support. After this was accomplished, developing codes of conduct became an expectation for all Nunavut schools. The challenges of adapting to the demands of isolation, life and work in a different culture, and stress created by insufficient time to satisfy requirements and high expectations, sometimes caused *Qallunnat* staff—typically young and inexperienced—to revert to what they had perceived as effective behaviour management and control in their own educational

experiences. For example, in one school where I replaced a principal who retired, she had left me a note warning me that I might have difficulty with one of the teenage students. I could see from school records that he had been suspended and punished several times for rudeness and being noncompliant with school rules. I found this student to be cooperative and helpful to staff. His mother told me that she was relieved that I was able to see his good qualities, as the previous year when she came to the school to take him home after he was suspended, there was an abrasion on his face from being dragged across the carpet when he refused to leave the school on his own.

Sergiovanni (1992) argued that most teachers are intrinsically motivated by morality. Hodgkinson claimed that, "Consciousness is the highest form of morality" (Cited in Wallace, 1998, p. 13). Wallace (2004) discovered that the participants in her study of women administrators in the Canadian provinces of Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario, described themselves as "passionate" in "their work as protectors of the interests of students" (p. 7). It is important for administrators to ensure that ethical standards are maintained when students are being disciplined. They must model a respectful attitude towards both students and staff at all times. According to Greenfield (1991), leaders need to help teachers explore the moral implications of their practices. I found that most teachers were generally motivated to help students improve their lives and sacrificed their own comfort and self-interests to contribute to the welfare of the school and community. During my tenure as principal, I continued to teach classes and share supervision duties with teachers primarily to save funds in the school budget that I

could then allocate to other areas. However, by team teaching with the teachers, I was also able to support their commitment to an ethic of caring.

Entry and Preparation

I was offered my first principalship before I had participated in any training or administrative preparation for the job. My supervisor at the school board office told me that he would provide assistance based on his experience as a Northern principal whenever I needed it. I had also registered to take part in the Northwest Territories Principal Certification Program.

NWT Principal Certification Program

For several years prior to the creation of Nunavut Territory, the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment made it a requirement for principals in the Canadian Arctic to complete a Principal Certification Program. The two-part course consisted of an intensive ten-day program during the summer vacation, followed by tasks and a school improvement project to be completed in the participants' home communities. Each day of the course began with a plenary session presented by the course principal and personnel from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). The course materials were huge binders of articles from academic journals and readings such as the NWT Principal Profile (1992). Participants were divided into large and small groups to critique the readings and lead presentations. It was exhausting for those of us with university experience to devote each evening to complete the readings and prepare for assigned presentations and tasks the following day. It might

have been challenging for participants without postsecondary education to understand the jargon used to describe administration in southern Canada and the United States. I did not find it at all surprising to see Inuit educators wandering in the corridors of the residence where we were housed, looking for colleagues to socialize with, rather than labouring over dense readings alone in their rooms. In retrospect, I realized that the conversations I had with colleagues taught me more about being principal of a Nunavut school than any of the readings, and making acquaintances with colleagues I could contact for advice later on was most helpful to me.

The Nunavut Leadership Project

In 1996 funding was provided by the federal government to allow the Nunavut Education Councils to create a leadership program that would enable Inuit to assume leadership positions in education. A committee involving participants from all three Nunavut regions was formed that examined shared leadership in other cultures, interviewed Nunavut principals to ascertain how staff might be encouraged and supported in leadership roles, provided funds to elders to learn more about traditional Inuit leadership and decision-making, and collected data from research on leadership in the North. A participatory model of transformational leadership was developed to stimulate a community of learners. Dimensions of leadership in the new model included self/family care, communication, facilitation, community advocacy, relationship building, language and culture promotion, strategic planning and visioning, instructional assessment, organizational management, and staff growth and development. The Nunavut Leadership Program recognized informal leadership experiences as fundamental to formal training.

Principals were asked to identify additional pre-requisites for the program. Course work included three five-day modules on topics of communication and facilitation for potential candidates. Course work for accepted registrants was intended to teach such topics as oral expression, strategic planning, cooperative learning, decision-making, values clarification, team building and consensus building. This was followed by a practicum project.

Some Inuit women who have participated in the Nunavut Principal Certification Program reported that their greatest satisfactions came from working together on projects and assignments. They were also appreciative of being able to include cultural traditions in planning work, and of being able to express themselves in their own language. They seemed to advocate what they referred to as *sivumuaqatigiinniq* or shared leadership. Negative feedback pertained to issues of being expected to read and comment on education documents and journal articles and of having to conform to the *Qallunaat* way of doing things.

Community-Administrator Relationship

Compartmentalization of Disciplines

Inuit people have strong ties to their communities which not only give them their individual identities, but also their institutional structures. As a result, their participation in the development of an education system which is mandated to teach children cultural values and practices, must function more as an extended family; family is the basic Inuit social unit. My personal experience in Nunavut taught me that Inuit do not

compartmentalize education as a discipline separate from childcare and economic development the way that mainstream Canadian culture does. This understanding was crystallized for me as I observed Inuit children participating with adults in the skinning and butchering of freshly killed caribou and loading the meat onto *qamutiks* (sleds), skidoos, and cargo planes for distribution to each household and neighbouring community. As a teaching principal, I took photographs of the caribou to send to a school in southern Canada, for use in a science or social studies lesson, and was surprised to hear that seeing a slaughtered animal might be too graphic and disturbing for southern students. I realized that living in an Arctic community had acculturated me into an appreciation of Northern realities. I was grateful when meat was given to me; no one in the community was excluded because sharing and hospitality are fundamental Inuit values.

Making Connections

Inuit staff relationships, in the Nunavut schools I visited as a program consultant, were cooperative and complementary. Their facility in creating conceptual maps in thematic lesson planning was greater than that of their non-Inuit colleagues, who demonstrated less ease at making connections that linked topical strands. The goals they set for students could be achieved through collaborative group work, whereas, non-Inuit staff relied more on competition and individual progress. Community members I visited explained that Inuit education is community-based, and that in their homes and families, students learned to work harmoniously on tasks for the welfare of the group.

Community-based Economic Development

Reimer (1993), conducted a "community-based pilot project... to direct tourism development in a way that was more appropriate to the cultural and geographical distinctiveness" of Northern communities, and participated in training programs which had been developed to "help build local people's capacity to participate in, and to ultimately control the industry" (p. 68). He found the following:

> Our evaluation demonstrates a tendency among high-school students to be less willing than their parents and elders to welcome rich white tourists with open arms. Part of the problem is a growing resentment and apathy nurtured by an education system that has, to date, failed to prepare Inuit young people to live in two worlds. Based on a southern education model imported from Alberta, Inuit students in the Eastern Arctic are not adequately prepared to make a choice between the modern industrial lifestyle, the traditional Inuit way or a balance between the two (Dickerson, 1992). Taught to strive for a career-oriented lifestyle, based on formal education, most Inuit graduates discover that their lessons are not grounded in an economic system that can support such aspirations.
>
> In the meantime, Inuit graduates must either leave their home community, or the North, to pursue career interests; or they can stay within the community and forfeit these goals. Our tourism evaluation indicates that young people found it extremely difficult to live and study in the south. As I mentioned earlier, Native people maintain a strong commitment to community. A cultural 'sense of locality'

> influences Inuit youth, many of whom continue to identify with their kin network in the community, and with the land that surrounds it (Nuttal, 1992, p. 180). (Reimer, 1993, p. 71)

Inuit have understood community-based development as leading to self-sufficiency through self-government. The creation of industries, such as tourism, have increased economic opportunities for Inuit in their home communities. "However, GNWT has maintained that 'community-based' involves local involvement and not local control" (Reimer, 1993, p. 71) because public funding had maintained such industries in spite of low Inuit participation. Consequently, when Inuit organizations and educators advocate devolution in the name of community empowerment, they must be ready to assume political, financial, and human resources responsibility.

> In the Nunavut region, the call for devolution is supported by cultural evidence that speaks for the strong sense of locality and family that ties all generations of Inuit to their home communities and to their land (Wenzel, 1991; Nuttal, 1992). Development policy makers – Native and non-Native – must recognize that Inuit sense of locality as an important cultural factor that speaks for the promotion of community-based economic strategies. Hence, appropriate development policies must address the general issue of building human resource capabilities, especially among Inuit young people. This means long-term and consistent training, and apprenticeship programs that are accessible to Inuit in their home region (Reimer, 1993, pp. 71-72).

The Nunavut Land Claim Agreement proposed training programs for formal industries, but neglected to target local subsistence economic development. As a result, Nuttal asserted that "Nunavut leaders will find themselves party to planning economic development that has been described as a form of 'slow cultural genocide' for hunting communities" (Cited in Reimer, 1993, p. 73). Reimer recommended that researchers become personally involved with local people to understand how development might impact their lifestyle and learn to use culturally appropriate research methodologies in the field.

Maata Pudlat (1990) stated:

> It would have been far better when white people came up North, a long time ago, if they had listened to us in the first place – learned from us, did things the way we did, and then listened to us and just accepted our culture. If they had learned from us, worked with us, instead of walking all over us, I think everything would have worked out better today. I think we would have more traditional ways today. But that wasn't to be, so we have to make the best of things... They let us learn, they let us get educated, but they have no jobs to offer us in our towns. So what's the use of education? I am a kindergarten teacher, but a lot of times I think most Inuit people never really want to get away from home. But they get us educated, they let us go to school, but there's no jobs offered. All the good jobs are down South. What jobs you see here today are all taken, and there's not very many.
>
> We were never given the right direction, the right co-ordination. We were never taught what to do if you're caught in between, but we have managed to cope with

> it... We have to act together in most communities. .. We're getting tired of people running our lives from down there. It's time to yell out and shout, 'We've had it!' It's been too long. We've been letting things run ignorantly, when *we* know what all the problems are. (p. 20, italics in original)

The Northwest Territories' Department of Education, Culture and Employment stated in its strategic plan *People: Our Focus for the Future: A Strategy to 2010*: "Government must also recognize the local way of getting things done and of the need to encourage greater community self-sufficiency with strong community governments making their own decisions on behalf of the people who elect them" (author, 1994, p.97).

Brown (1998) investigated the perceptions of community members regarding the ideal qualities of school principals, and found that administrators who had direct contact with the community and empowered local authorities to be more involved in the education of students were most appreciated. There was agreement with the skills and attributes identified in *School Leadership in the NWT: A Profile for the 90's* under the dimensions of Advocacy and School Culture Management.

> Instructional Leadership and Organizational Leadership dimensions were of less concern to the community leaders, and were seen as elements that the principal could delegate to other school staff or to the DEA (District Education Authority). The community leaders' comments go beyond the particulars of the profile in asserting that principals must get involved in the community in order to gain a truer understanding, which is critical to maximizing their effectiveness as

principals. (Brown, 1998, p. 43)

Based on the initiatives undertaken, and research results, there is evidence that principals could benefit from interacting with the community on a regular basis to engender trust and develop a team approach with school partners. Tompkins (1998) claimed "Community involvement is a two-way street – getting the community more into the school and getting the school and teachers more out into the community" (p. 74). Some of the strategies she employed in her practice as principal were to deliver positive comments about students to parents on a weekly basis, and to require teachers to conduct home visits at least twice annually. She invited parents to assemblies and special events such as talent shows and science fairs. Students shared their school work with the community on the local radio, and Elders were invited to the school to tell stories and share their perspectives on curricular themes. Meetings with parents to discuss childcare issues were organized. All of these efforts were designed to present the school as a caring environment for students.

Beck (1999) cautions that although administrators are able to articulate values that support communities, and develop an ethic of care within the school through funding and implementing caring programs, they must work diligently to maintain them and confront obstacles when they arise. Principals must reform institutional structures to allow transformations to occur. Hargreaves (1997) argued that creating community meant "inner transformations of school sites must be accompanied by conscious and constructive connections with the wider world" (p.3). Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) termed such attention to both positive and negative dimensions in relationships as

"reculturing".

Sergiovanni (1993) suggested that the metaphor of community could replace the term organization. He called for a commitment by educators to "make the school a learning and inquiring community"(Sergiovanni, 1994, p.143) and to move beyond teaching as an occupation to a calling. "The heart of the professional ideal in teaching may well be the third dimension, a commitment to the ethic of caring", beyond the second dimension, which is service, or stewardship (Sergiovanni,1994, p.145). Implications of organizing administration around a dialectic of care between the school and external community should, according to Sergiovanni (1995), reflect cooperation, empowerment responsibility, accountability, meaningfulness, and ability-authority. Such a linking of authority between school and community might enhance a joint commitment to education.

Greenfield (1975) argued that "educational institutions are... mental constructs that reflect the perceptions and interpretations of the members" (p. 3). Although procedures might be reified in the understanding of some educators (Wenger, 1998), any paradigm of educational administration can be challenged through the individual's experience and reflection of its application. Macmillan's (2003) example of a monastic novitiate "placed in an alien environment that causes'jolts and disorientation' (Greenfield and Ribbens, cited in Macmillan) and, in the process develops a better understanding of self and of the embedded values and assumptions that influence decision making" (Macmillan, 2003, p. 13), illustrates my personal experience. Before I went to

Nunavut, I held reified beliefs about education, and then in an alien environment my assumptions were challenged through the realization that the theory and practices I was bringing to Inuit parents, educators, elders and community members did not apply in their culture. For example, I was mystified to discover soon after I had arrived in Nunavut, that Piaget's developmental learning framework in the new curriculum entitled *Piniaqtavut: Integrated Program* (1988), was rejected by the Inuit participants. They saw Piaget's theory as "upside down". Instead of beginning life at the Sensorimotor Stage, and progressing through the Concrete Operations Stage in elementary school, to Formal Operations characterized by abstract thought, generalization, and social relationships, beginning at adolescence and persisting into adulthood, Inuit educators preferred a more social orientation theory, with the infant born into a kinship group, and progressing towards individuation through adult responsibilities. The Inuit emphasized collectivity/individuality, rather than cognitive stages of development. The Inuuqatigiit Developmental Framework: The family, the community and the self, contained in *Inuuqatigiit: The curriculum from an Inuit perspective* (GNWT, 1996), reflected adjustments made by the Inuit Subject Advisory Committee and authors. As I learned more about Inuit culture, I continued to become more flexible in my beliefs and appreciative of educational practices that fit within Inuit reality, as I understood it.

The Need for Research

There have been few studies conducted about Inuit school administrators in Nunavut. In 1994 *Pauqatigiit,* an initiative which investigated professional aspirations of

Nunavut educators revealed that only eight per cent of Inuit wanted to be school administrators (Nunavut Boards of Education, 1994). My Masters research findings showed that there were fewer Inuit principals in 1999 than in 1996, which motivated me to continue investigating the perceptions of Inuit women administrators about their role. In 2003 there was no increase in the number of Inuit women principals, but there were 11 Inuit women co-principals, where there had been only one in 1999. These results contributed to my interest in exploring the relationship of a mentorship model to attracting more Inuit to school administration. Lee (1996) traced career paths of three education leaders who were considered trailblazers in the Qikiqtaaluk region of Nunavut. I was inspired by her findings of the leadership and courage the participants of her study demonstrated. I wanted to compare the risk-taking and other personal attributes of my study, to determine their relationship to leadership. Brown (1998) reported the perceptions of desired skills and attributes in school principals from a community perspective. The respondents in my Masters research had reported that support from family, colleagues, supervisors and community was a factor in their retention as administrators. O'Donoghue (1998) reported that many Inuit educators experienced negativity and marginalization from Qallunaat co-workers. This might be a barrier for them to consider applying for administrative positions. I wanted to continue exploring the incentives and barriers in hiring Inuit principals. Tompkins (2006) studied Inuit conceptions of shared educational leadership using a narrative inquiry methodology, and I was interested in investigating if her findings were generally applicable in Nunavut culture. It is hoped that by presenting the visions and realities of the four Inuit women in

the current research, more will be known about Canadian educational leaders in a relatively unexplored part of Canada.

Summary

This chapter described the ways Inuit leaders learned and presented themselves on the Nunavut landscape. I have traced the historical roots of an education system developed through colonization within Canada and how these have spawned the mythology and working conditions under which Inuit educators labour. Cracks within hegemonic surfaces suggest that these strong women are on the verge of breaking through with their students to lead them into a climate that will inform the next generation of Inuit leaders. It is hoped that this research will encourage them in this process and contribute to the narrative studies that currently exist about educational administration in the Canadian North.

Battiste (2004) asserts that "Education helps us understand ourselves in the world and in relation to others" (p. 6). Examining the efforts of educators from southern Canada to create a hybrid system based on their own praxis demonstrates a naivety and false consciousness, to say the least, regarding their own cultural racism. Rather than question why the Nunavut government has been unable to attract more Inuit to serve as administrators of an education system based on a foreign practices, pedagogy and curriculum, it might be preferable to consider, *Why would it*?

Giroux (1994) claims:

Ethnicity as a representational politics pushes against the boundaries of cultural

> containment and becomes a site of pedagogical struggle in which the legacies of dominant histories, codes and relations become unsettled and thus open to being challenged and rewritten. This suggests at the most general level that a representational pedagogy must be a pedagogy of place, that is, it must address the specificities of the experiences, problems, languages, and histories that students and communities rely upon to construct a narrative of collective identity and possible transformation... a representational pedagogy must... fully engage the social and political realities that shape the larger society..... and interrogate the politics of their own locations, voices and actions... Finally, any attempt to connect the issues of agency, ethical responsibility, and representational pedagogy must work self-consciously within the often overlooked tension between being politically committed and pedagogically wrong. (pp. 51-52)

The next chapter will present the methodological constructs and procedures used to locate Inuit leaders striving to accommodate competing demands and challenges in their own families, communities, and schools. My journey back to Nunavut to meet with Inuit women and explore their perceptions of their roles in education offered me an opportunity to learn about my own life as a researcher, principal and woman in another culture in a way that was refreshing and liberating.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I first present the rationale for my methodology. I then go on to highlight some of the ethical issues to be considered when an outsider conducts research with a group that is culturally and linguistically different from the researcher. Finally, I specifically note what I did to find the themes presented in a later chapter, introduce the study participants, and discuss the manner in which I collected and analyzed data.

Narrative Inquiry

The focus of my inquiry in this study was: How do Inuit women principals understand their role? I chose narrative inquiry as my methodology because it is particularly well suited for conducting research in a place where oral communication and storytelling predominate; as such, it offered the best way to explore the research question. At the same time, narrative inquiry can provide a record of how both researcher and participants might reshape their own self-awarenesses and understandings through empathic listening and communication. As noted above, narrative inquiry methodology seemed appropriate in a culture with an oral tradition, and thus is more consistent with Inuit communication patterns than other qualitative research approaches.

Bruner (1990) maintained that narrative construction and narrative understanding locate an individual in a particular culture. In telling stories of a society with plots and characters in a specific context, it is possible to acquire new understanding about oneself (p. 113). Collecting stories and retelling them requires an empathic but not biased stance on the part of the researcher, since meaning is constructed through social discourse which shapes the researcher's understanding. Narratives are not merely representations of facts, but

constitute a record of how the listener's self-awareness evolves through participating in a dialogue with oneself. Although the survey I conducted in 1999 enabled me to collect data from educators employed at all levels in every Nunavut community, I wanted to access a deeper understanding of Inuit women administrators' own perspectives in this research project. As a narrative researcher I engaged in an open and exploratory dialogue that allowed the respondents' stories to emerge. As I listened to the transcripts of the conversational interviews, I recognized that my relationship with the respondents was contributing to a deeper understanding of my own educational administrative practice.

I concur with Conle (2000), who envisions narrative inquiry as a quest that unfolds while the researcher is collecting data and is engaged in self-reflection. Conle contends that the essence of narrative inquiry develops as understanding emerges within the researcher when she strives to make sense of the histories of others through the writing process. Conle claims it is emotion which drives the research after the purpose becomes explicit, and she envisions the data collection as somewhat of a quest to assemble a puzzle without having a picture to follow. She attributes her insight in analyzing her data to being able to reconsider issues within the "concrete contexts" of her writing. Even after the writing of her study was concluded, she continued to revisit it from different perspectives. Hence, in narrative inquiry, the methodology is not so much a vehicle for collecting findings, as an integral part of the outcome itself.

Narrative inquiry can raise consciousness as stories are collected and shared, not only because this process can help individuals in their struggle for empowerment, but because it gives them some control over the discourse. Bruner (1985) claims that the

power of narrative affects the listener in surprising ways, bringing new insight and self-awareness. The role of discourse is to transform activity, communicate meaning, and project voices from multiple perspectives. Narrative inquiry offers a theoretical orientation as well as a method for creating a context for change.

Dillard (1995) has recommended the use of narrative inquiry to collect the personal stories and cultural values of principals. Clandinin and Connelly (1994) regard it as a "vehicle for growth" for the researcher, participants, and readers of the study as they reflect upon the results.

As I collected the stories of Inuit women about their understanding of what shaped their experiences in school administration, I wanted the research relationship to be collaborative and reciprocal. I was an outsider in Nunavut culture, but shared common ground with Inuit women that transcended racial, linguistic and cultural barriers. Their joy as educators and tenacity when meeting challenges made me strong and helped me to conduct the research.

Practical and Ethical Issues

Once my proposal had been approved by the Ethics Review Board at The University of Western Ontario, I applied for a research licence from the Nunavut Research Institute, an organization that was established in 1995 to protect Inuit from exploitation, by requiring researchers to abide by the principles contained in the document, *Ethical principles for the conduct of research in the North* (1998). The mission of the Nunavut Research Institute is to promote the cultural values of *Inuit Qaujimanituqangit* which foster a partnership between Inuit and researchers dependent on

active involvement in projects that will benefit Nunavut communities. In order to satisfy requirements of the Nunavut licensing agency, my information letter to participants invited them to express themselves in either Inuktitut or in English, and the consent form had to be presented in both languages. None of the participants chose to speak in Inuktitut, which eliminated the need to have an interpreter present. This was beneficial to the research process because the presence of an interpreter might have inhibited some of the conversations, or may have even inadvertently altered some of the participants' meanings through translation because there are several dialects of Inuktitut spoken in Nunavut communities.

My licence application had requested permission to interview three women living in two communities. However, when I contacted the Executive Directors of the School Operations Offices in each of the three geographical regions of Nunavut to solicit their support for my work, I was informed that there was a fourth Inuit administrator that I could contact. Each of the Executive Directors was cooperative and expressed interest in my research and the results it might yield. I wrote to the Nunavut Research Institute to ask if my licence might permit me to interview an additional participant, and was informed that I had been granted permission to conduct a telephone interview, but would need to apply for an additional licence if I were to travel to an additional community to interview in person. To save the time in re-applying and the expense of including another community on my travel itinerary, I contacted the fourth participant in my study by telephone. We agreed on a time and place for the interview, but were unable to keep the appointment because of a blizzard in the Northern community, which caused many

buildings to be closed. The interview was rescheduled, but soon after our conversation had begun, the phone line in Nunavut went dead. Fortunately, we were able to get re-connected later.

I was fortunate that the Nunavut Research Institute provided me with a list of translators from which I could select someone to translate my introductory research documents including information letters to the Executive Directors of the School Operations Offices, information letters and consent forms for each of the four participants, and a summary report to the Nunavut Research Institute in a dialect that would be acceptable to everyone concerned. The award of a travel grant from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and two Graduate Thesis Research Awards from my university were helpful in offsetting some of my expenses in the field.

In my information letter to participants, I had promised that their names would not be used, but I could not guarantee them anonymity because Nunavut communities are small and people can be identified by their employment affiliations. Each participant selected a pseudonym to help me properly locate them in my study while I listened to the audiotapes. One of the women preferred using her own name, but accommodated my request that she select a pseudonym to comply with my stated plans in my ethical review and Nunavut licensing applications. The other three participants considered using pseudonyms to conceal their identity a good idea.

One of my major concerns in entering the research was the fact that I was an

outsider. Spivak (1985) has suggested that there are potential risks in using a narrative methodology to represent the attitudes and belief systems of marginalized or oppressed people in a context other than their own. She claims their stories might be incomplete due to possible reluctance to disclose information or repression of painful memories. Hones (1998), for example, revealed that one of his informants opted to delete what "might reflect badly on members of his family" (p. 231). Hones also discussed the way unequal power relationships between researcher and participant need to be acknowledged. I believed my informants might defer to the academic knowledge that I acquired in my studies and work experience, but, in my research, I found myself deferring to their knowledge of values and practices in Inuit education.

Dillard, Abdur-Rashid, & Tyson (2000) propose that we cannot embody what is referred to as "pedagogies of the spirit" until our worldview is transformed. By reporting stories outside hegemonic norms I was seeking to create what Murphy (2002) termed break-out points for a new understanding of how leadership is expressed in an indigenous culture. Hunter (1996) reported that both Freud and Lacan called the repression of painful and humiliating memories as amnesia; Lyotard (1984), on the other hand, presented ways the past can be elaborated upon so individuals can envision themselves as triumphant over an abusive past. There is a possibility that a respondent, discussing the effects of colonization with a researcher who is perceived as from the colonial culture, might experience negative feelings and be reluctant to disclose.

Respondents

My sample of four women was comprised of 100 percent of the Inuit school

administrators in one geographical region. In order to protect their identities, I discuss them in general terms rather then providing specific details about each person. In order to protect the identity of each of the participants and locate them in this study, they are identified by pseudonyms of their own choosing. The names of the places where they live and work have been withheld since Nunavut consists of small communities where people might be identified by their occupations. The names and contact information of three of the four participants in the study were provided by the Director of School Operations for the region in which this study was conducted. The fourth participant had been a principal when I was employed as a school administrator in the region, but was no longer working in that capacity at the time of the study. All of the participants had each been administrators of different schools in one of the Nunavut regions between the years of 1997 and 2004.

Each of the four participants was a long-time employee in the school system, with 10-31 years of service. This indicated to me that they were strong women, dedicated to persevering in challenging careers. They were also all mothers who were active on committees and held positions of authority in their churches and community agencies. Each of the women appeared enthusiastic about the opportunity to share her experiences of preparing for and serving as a school administrator.

Method

As a backdrop to the study and to better understand the context of the women with whom I spoke, I read a large volume of documents. These included: documents developed by the governments of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories; documents

prepared by education officials; books, articles and research studies about Nunavut education written by a variety of authors; and media reports of both current events and challenging social and educational issues. I also availed myself of telephone and electronic communications with Nunavut residents and educators. My main sources of information, however, were a structured interview schedule that I used to collect demographic information and semi-structured conversational interviews utilized to record what Geertz (1988) has termed thick description. By this, he is referring to an account of the social and cultural context that shapes the way an informant might explain who she is. Structured questions included length of service in the institutionalized education system, education degrees and certificates earned, and formal preparation for positions as school administrators. Informal questions centred around challenges and recommendations for training Inuit principals, entry into the profession of administration, the effect of mentorship and support systems, the influence of gender and tradition on role perception, the effect of elders on curriculum, and goal orientation and aspirations of Inuit leaders. Using conversational interviews to collect the data, there was no fixed sequence for questions other than the demographic ones in the initial structured section, making it possible for some topics to be addressed at different times in different conversations and with different degrees of detail in the responses. Chambers cites Gadamer's explanation of what transpires during unstructured communication:

> By grounding interpretation of texts in the holistic space of communicative praxis, numerous windows for interpretation presented themselves as ways for the "opening up, and keeping open, of possibilities" in the text (Gadamer, 1985, p.

> 266). Each window reveals slightly different questions, and to shut oneself off prematurely from the possibility that the text might answer one of these questions is detrimental to the project of seeking an interpretation of the multi-layered nature of the lifeworld and of the discourse patterns through which that lifeworld is disclosed and constituted. (1989, p. 9)

Emergent Themes

As a narrative researcher I listened to the experiences and perceptions of the participants and entered into an open and exploratory dialogue with them. As I listened to the audiotapes of our conversations, and read the transcripts, commonalities in their stories emerged. By reading and re-reading, listening and listening again, I found the following emergent themes:

1. Dedication to caring for children was found to be a driving force in the work of Inuit school administrators in this study.
2. All of the participants were ambitious to increase their skills, but were limited by lack of opportunity and access.
3. The curriculum, format and timeframe of the Nunavut Education Leadership Program was found to be inadequate for the needs of Inuit school administrators in this study.
4. There was insufficient sharing of time and expertise between Inuit co-principals and non-Inuit co-principal mentors.
5. The Inuit conceptions of school leadership articulated by participants in this study originate from and are integrally linked to home communities and

Inuit interaction patterns.

Chambers (1989) claims:

> Themes are powerful when they enable researchers to disclose the essential elements of the conversation between themselves and the text. Neither a theme, nor the thematic phrase used to bring the theme into view, is able to capture fully what has been disclosed through the researcher's interpretation of the text. (p. 9)

Each reading, contributed to a deeper understanding of my own educational administrative practice and experience with Inuit culture, and helped me sort through the experiences of these women. What resulted was a deeper understanding through empathic listening, communication and critical analysis.

I invited respondent feedback after sending electronic copies of the transcripts of our conversations. This feedback, as well as drafts I have written using the data, were important components in my effort to accurately represent what respondents had expressed as their experience and aspirations for Nunavut education in the future.

In order to maintain the integrity of expressions and repetitions that enabled the speakers to collect the words that channelled their feelings and reflections, I present the data and my interpretations of what was said with as little editing for grammatical correctness as possible. As I began selecting the topics to be reported in the next chapter, my interpretation of the research questions evolved as super-ordinate categories. These were: conceptions of leadership; leadership practices; preparation and entry; and, community-administrator relationship. Consequently, portions of our conversations have

been grouped to reveal each participant's responses and reflections on themes I have identified.

In keeping with the Inuit belief that it is the responsibility of the listener to form his or her own interpretations of what has been said, the analysis is from my own understanding, without any attempt to force it on others. The negotiation of my memories of past experiences in Nunavut, personal insight triggered by the words of the participants in this study, and comments made by them after I shared the results of the investigation together illustrate Gadamer's (1975) level's of consciousness as a continuum through revisiting echoes provoked by the data. Wallace (1998) explains that Gadamer's typology of consciousness of "I/Thou" offers "narrative frames for shaping individual and collective constructions of "truth" about that which is "not I" or "Other" (p. 14). The Inuit women administrators discussing their organizational practices, helped me to understand myself as "the Other" within those narrative frames. The discursive spaces between "I" and "Thou," characterized as past memories, personal insight, and revised understandings after I read the comments from participants about my understanding of their words, permitted a new level of consciousness to emerge. Gadamer (1991) described "the discursive pattern at this level as "dialectical ethics" (p. 15) in which "I's" prejudgment is open to transformation." Wallace (1998) terms this level "Historically Operative Consciousness" in which "I" knows "Other" through authentic openness which lets something be said, wills to hear rather than to master, and is willing to be modified by "Other" (p. 15). She explains: "Gadamer's philosophical perspective provides a 'different understanding' of the ways in which cultural groups come to understand one another and

live together within a social order of mutual respect and –if necessary… mutual duality" (p. 23).

Reflexivity involves self-consciousness. I recognized that my research involved a series of interactions and an interrelationship with the respondents that contributed to a deeper understanding of my own educational administrative practice as well as a richer picture of Inuit culture. In analyzing multiple perspectives on the structures and dynamics in Inuit schools, I questioned my own assumptions about administration as well.

Agee (2002) describes a setting as "a bounded environment in which particular situations, interactions, and behaviors accrue to it as normal by virtue of history, cultural values, and beliefs" (p. 570). Even physical locations "are distinguished by the symbolic meanings associated with them" (p. 570). Through listening, coding, deconstructing interpretations, and analysis, a new awareness of the participants' vision of education emerged. The words shared show a movement toward healing from the effects of postcolonial silencing revealed through a spirit of trust and hope for a better future and in the common themes that emerged collectively in the stories of the four women who participated in the study.

Summary

In this chapter I have provided an overview of the research methodology and suggested some of the issues that are raised in narrative inquiry. In the next chapter I present the stories of the women and suggest ways in which they understand what it is to be a school leader.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter I present the results of my investigation to examine what it is like to be an Inuit woman principal of a Nunavut school. After extensive analysis of the data of each participant grouping and re-grouping responses into categories from my interpretation of the meanings I applied to them, I integrated the responses of each of the four participants through colour-coding into sub-topics of: Employment History, Formal Education, Current Position, Influences, Reasons for Delay in Accepting Administrative Position, Training, Conceptions of Leadership, Leadership Practices, Preparation for Administration, Entry into the Profession, and Community-Administrator Relationship.

Conceptions of Leadership

Personal Characteristics

The four participants stated that the belief of others in her ability to become a school leader increased her interest in school administration. Although each delayed applying for administrative positions because she initially believed she lacked the skills, knowledge and experience that the work would require, the confidence of colleagues, supervisors and community members that she possessed the right personal qualities was a determining factor in her pursuit of the position. Treating others equally and respectfully, being helpful to staff, working well with principals, and enjoying challenges were attributes they cited. Two participants said they were reluctant to give up their role as teachers because they enjoyed working with students in the classroom. They were also concerned about the prospect of being responsible for the discipline of additional students

and having to deal with parents, teachers, janitorial staff, and education council members within a small community where many people are related.

These women were passionate had the courage to persevere in challenges. Perseverance, being able to "do many different things", working hard, and learning new skills have been expected of Inuit females since traditional times (Government of Nunavut, 1996, p. 59).

Liz: When I took my training, I was the only Inuk. I received a certificate that says I had concluded the training program. It wasn't a real certificate; it was more like a training program certificate.

It is unfortunate that in spite of having participated in an on-the-job training program in which she served as vice principal and eventually principal, Liz was awarded with what she considered not "a real certificate."

The participants had the courage to make changes they believed were warranted.

Emily: If I have something to say, I just say it.... If whatever you're doing is not working, if it takes a change, I'm not that type of a person who just sits down and just lets things pass by. I say things only if I think it's going to make a better difference.

Support of Others

Two of the participants claimed their relationships with a teacher or principal gave them strength and had a profound effect on their decision to become vice principals. One of them asserted that her principal's encouragement of her teaching in Inuktitut as well as the principal's use of her Inuit name continues to sustain her. In Inuit culture names represent a bond with the past and the relatives of the namesake. Addressing someone by her Inuktitut name honours her and signifies appreciation of the family

member and tradition she represents. Names indicate a respect for one's cultural teachings and heritage.

Another participant stated that her principal was a role model who helped her "become a strong person" by demanding the best from her when she was still a student. She claimed that the principal's continuing support when she became a teacher made her the person she is today. One participant felt inspired by the belief of her students' parents and her community that she could be a leader.

Self Concept

One of the participants also indicated that her ethnicity and gender initially prevented her from even considering becoming a school administrator.

Emily: Being Inuk, and especially a female Inuk, I never thought about it.

This comment surprised me because the *Bathurst Mandate* (Government of Nunavut, 1999), discussed in Chapter Two, recommended there be an increase in the number of Inuit employed in schools, and most school staff are women. It may reflect Emily's sensitivity to gender discrimination in contemporary Inuit society.

In spite of holding a position of leadership in their schools, only one of the participants said she felt like a leader. For example, Liz claimed that although everyone seemed to look to her for advice, she did not feel she could lead them. Ellie stated that she viewed herself not as a leader, but as a person "taking a group of people along with me to meet a goal... like any other committee would." This description of her role typifies the meaning of *sivumuaqatigiinniq* (This is an Inuktitut word for participatory

leadership). Participants in Lee's (1996) study explained it as "leading forward together or shared leadership" (p. 93). This further explains Rose's response when she was asked about her leadership role. She asserted that she does not like to be regarded as a leader because she's just a "regular" person. She went on to explain that her parents taught her not to be proud and to remember when she is helping people that she is just a "regular human being like everyone out there".

Rose: So when I leave the school, I'm just myself. But a lot of children see me; even the young ones say, "That's our principal!" And it's good to know that they respect that, but I'd rather not be seen like that outside of the school. Like, I was brought up not to be so proud of who I am, as a principal, and like, I'm not the big shot, and I don't think like that.

Rose explained that it was more important to have an Inuit administrator from the community who could converse with parents in Inuktitut about their concerns than to have a hierarchical power structure in schools which might intimidate them. She and Liz cited being able to talk to community members and school staff on an equitable level as more in keeping with the collaborative communication format in Inuit culture. Liz elaborated that communication patterns between a principal and others varied "...depending on the person [because] sometimes you come across a principal who'd rather dictate, than collaborate with other people." Liz described a good principal as someone who is willing to listen, but is firm when it is necessary to discipline students and teachers. For her negative qualities of principals included "telling others to do exactly what they want", and not listening to teachers' opinions about students, because the teacher knows the students best after spending more time with them. These

statements are indicative that the traditional value of non-interference in the lives of others persists in Inuit perceptions of school administration.

> Basically, this belief causes Inuit to often feel a certain degree of discomfort when exercising authority over other Inuit even if the position they hold warrants sufficient authority. Conversely, Inuit are unlikely to welcome someone trying to dictate their actions or speak for them without their consent.... People who stress their views too strongly or who attempt to direct the actions of other people are considered 'bossy' or 'pushy' and may be the subject of gossip or social ostracism. (Pauktuutit, 1992, p. 17)

Personal and Professional Life

The basic family unit in Inuit society consists of a mother, father and children, but there are frequently grandparents and other relatives living in the household. It is common for some of the extended family members to have extended visits with other families because in each Nunavut community many of the residents are related. Fundamental traditional marital values are equality and cooperation.

> There was a strict division of labour between men and women. The husband had primary authority outside the home and had responsibility for obtaining food, making tools and shelter, tending to the dogs and looking after the safety of the family... The husband took an active role in childrearing but was overshadowed by the influence of his wife.... The wife had authority within the home where she enjoyed considerable autonomy. She was the primary child rearer... She was also responsible for virtually all domestic duties

> including the preparation of food, drinking water, cleaning and the making of clothes and boots. (Pauktuutit, 1992, p. 12)

Now that there is a health centre, school, co-op store, and wage employment in every community, the roles of parents have changed considerably, but there remains a strong family orientation. There is limited and seasonal employment available for men, but women continue to be responsible for the home and childcare, while also adding income-earning jobs in the community to these responsibilities. Many Inuit women are also actively serving on committees in organizations that sometimes extend beyond the local level. They also contribute to their family's income by sewing and making crafts at home, as well as by hunting and fishing.

Each of the participants was a parent who struggled with time constraints in meeting responsibilities at home and at school. Liz stated that she is busy as a single parent, but she became involved in such a demanding career because she knew there was a need for good administrators. She said that "... even though it did take a lot of [her] time, it was worth it" to put in long hours after school and catch up on paper work on weekends. She believes the amount of time one devotes to principal's work after school hours depends on how involved they are in the community and in talking and listening to parents, by which time the job is "likely 24/7."

Ellie described her work as a principal as "a huge commitment", but maintains she would not have become involved in it if her children might have suffered. Emily stated that her daughter was too young to be left alone if she were to attend weeklong meetings for administrators in another community; but might consider it when her

daughter became 16 years old. Once she began her work as an administrator, Emily found that it was necessary to return to work after school hours to make sure all she had to do was done. After two years, however, she had learned strategies such as talking to staff before they left the building at the end of the day, and taking calls at home from staff who would be absent from work.

Leadership Practices

Responsibilities

The participants stated that helping students was the focus of their work.

Rose I'm here for the kids. That's all I could say, cause they have problems in the classroom. They could come and see me, and even if it's outside of school they know they could talk to me.

However, before they became administrators Rose and Emily had reservations about reducing the time they would be able to spend with students. Because Rose and Ellie were employed as co-principals--which Ellie explained is "shared leadership" with "seasoned administrators" from southern Canadian provinces mentoring and training Inuit educators--they functioned as administrators only half of the time and continued as teachers for the other half of their time. Liz was a principal trainee "that acted as well as a vice principal, not a co-principal." Her main responsibilities were discipline of students, monitoring attendance, and overseeing school committees, but what she enjoyed most was "dealing with all the students and not just concentrating on one class." Emily was hired as a vice principal, but devoted half her time to assisting students in the primary division of the school with guided reading and teaching social studies. Her administrative duties included ensuring there were substitutes for absent teachers, helping teaching staff

with year plans, teaching Inuktitut, contacting parents when necessary, problem solving, and assisting the principal in disciplining students.

Ellie claimed that the Educational Leadership Program she took did not allow enough time for her to spend with colleagues who were working toward becoming co-principals like herself.

> Ellie: I think it would have benefited me to meet with others that are in this position. I would have loved to have a discussion with them. I would have loved to share challenges. I would have loved to share achievements, like best practices...

Liz said she was comfortable writing reports and giving presentations after attending many workshops. As a principal trainee she gave reports on curriculum documents and the Education Act. She indicated that attending meetings for principals was useful because it enabled the principals to find out what was happening in schools in other communities and to understand what needed to be worked on. She also found participating in conference calls with other administrators useful. Emily reiterated that her teaching and family responsibilities prevented her from attending out-of-town meetings, but she was able to receive information from her principal after meetings about issues and solutions that might concern her. She did not regard participation in conference calls for administrators as necessary unless the discussion was of a general nature, rather than relative to particular schools. Because her assignment was in the primary division, she said she would be interested in discussions relating to primary principals and teachers as well as language issues. Ellie sounded disappointed that she

had been led to expect regular conference calls for co-principals, as well as an electronic mailbox, but they had not been established by the School Operations personnel.

Ellie: The co-principals were told last year that we were going to have monthly conference calls. That never happened. We've got a co-principal folder in our First Class. It's empty. So really, right now we don't have a place, or a way to connect.

Emily, on the other hand, was a frequent user of the principal's and vice principal's web site asking questions and contributing answers. She admitted, however, that she did not see the names of other Inuit administrators on that site and offered the explanation that "maybe they're computer illiterate" and did not ask for assistance from their principals. She finds the technology useful for tracking records of students after they have transferred from one school to another.

Liz mentioned that the Regional Teaching and Learning Centre in Nunavut that used to send curriculum documents, visual aids and other teaching resources to schools is no longer doing so because its mandate has now been limited to supporting Inuktitut-only language arts materials. As a result, school staffs are depending on catalogues for materials, but because textbooks are "outdated", she finds locally distributed newspapers more useful. She took it upon herself to update a parent handbook from the 1980s to reflect the current discipline policies in school. Liz states that she relies on the internet and telephone for communication, and sometimes does presentations on the radio. Emily also used the telephone and radio to discuss attendance issues, but felt it was the parents' responsibility to send their children to school on a regular basis.

Co-principal Relationship

Cooperation is a basic Inuit value that historically meant the difference between life and death. Prior to living in settlements, people in small camps depended on each other for their survival. Disagreement or competition was unacceptable because it could pose a threat to welfare of the group. "Inuit society was largely egalitarian with no hierarchy or formal authority" (Pauktuutit, 1992, p. 15). These values remain strong, in spite of the influence of a modern Anglocentric culture in contemporary education. The ethos of cooperation was evident in the accounts of the participants who explained that teamwork and sharing continue to be paramount in Inuit interpersonal relations in the work place. In spite of the emphasis on individual achievement in modern schools, affiliations with colleagues, students, or community and participating in their accomplishments was a source of satisfaction for the participants.

Leadership in Inuit society continues to be situational, depending on individuals "taking the initiative rather than delegating people to certain tasks" (Pauktuutit, 1992, p. 17). According to Ellie, co-principals have an equitable relationship with each other because each brings different expertise to their administrative role. Being bilingual, she is able to converse in Inuktitut with students, staff, parents and people coming into the school.. She stated, "My colleague sees strengths in me that I've never seen before, and I see strengths in him... We're equal."

Ellie: We all enjoy working with people coming into the school. We kind of avoid all the administrative work, like budgeting and hiring, things like that. There's some things I could learn more about.

Rose expressed appreciation for having the opportunity to learn more about budgets from her co-principal: "... he'll break it down and explain it to me...". In return she provides background on students' families. It is characteristic of Inuit to be respectful of people from whom they learn.

Each of the participants expressed regret that there was not more time for them to spend with their trainers while they were learning to be administrators.

Rose: I wish we had more time working together. But because of the funding formula, my co-principal teaches in the mornings and then he's in the office in the afternoons, and then I'm in the class in the afternoon. So I wish there was more time for us to do the job together. If the cutbacks didn't happen we could have more time in the office. The co-principal was to be mentoring a local person... As the days go by I learn different things, but I wish I had more time with my co-principal.

Liz: The first year it was really hard cause I was left all to myself and acted more like a vice principal than a trainee. So I just learned along the way... The principal was my trainer but he had a lot of his own work to do, so he left me alone most of the time... Then the next year another principal came in, so I studied under him, and then in the third year I was Acting Principal.

Liz states that it is the principal's responsibility to write letters and consult with the regional director and superintendent of schools. As a principal trainee she also contacted the Divisional Board of Education for advice when the principal was out of town or unavailable. She wrote a funding application to an Inuit Association to employ elders in the classroom and was successful in securing the funds for her school. According to Emily, the principal looked after "everything in the school", but teachers experiencing problems approached her for help first. If she could not resolve the concern on her own, she consulted with the other vice principal, and as a last resort, sought advice from the principal.

Liz believes that a good school atmosphere depends on mutual respect and being "willing to work together to find solutions rather than fighting over issues". She feels these are universal, not just Inuit values. As a principal she reminded students and teachers that they should treat others as they want to be treated.

Entry and Preparation

Three of the participants had entered the work force as Special Needs Assistants, a common entry point for Inuit staff. Student Support Assistant and Classroom Assistant were other terms used interchangeably to describe this designation. They also served as an Aboriginal Language Specialist, Student Support Teacher and Classroom Teacher. All of them expressed dedication to improving the lives of students.

Professional certificates were earned by all of the participants and they all welcomed the opportunity to learn additional skills. Concern was expressed that courses offered through McGill University's Arctic College and other professional development experiences are seldom available in their home community. These women have home, childcare, and community responsibilities which make it difficult for them to be out of town for extended periods of time. One of them was unable to complete her training program because it was necessary for her to care for a parent who was ill. Liz said she had not been allowed to attend high school but had earned her Graduate Equivalent Diploma (GED) over several years while working as a classroom assistant. She went on to earn her standard teaching certificate, and was hoping to enter a Bachelor of Education program through Arctic College if the Nunavut Teacher Education Program were offered

in her community. The other participants completed the Nunavut Teacher Education Program, and one of them completed a Special Education Program at a southern university through distance education.

Orientation

Liz recommends that the principal trainer take the time to review the program and go over the novice's responsibilities with her, prior to giving her "simple jobs at the beginning so she can get slowly introduced" to other aspects of school administration. "Otherwise they'd be overwhelmed with so much information."

Rose felt that the Principal Certification Program did not offer sufficient preparation for the work to be done.

> Rose: ...if it were to involve more things what the principal should do, because my contract is for co-principal. So I share the administration in the school. But if we had...like...two weeks is not long enough for a course, and two weeks the next summer, and that's it. So, if there was more courses offered... in regarding principals.

She continued by explaining that summer was not the best time to offer the program, but that individuals must select their priorities. Because summer is relatively short, compared to the long winter months, and schools are closed, it is a special time for Inuit families to enjoy camping and fishing. Many of them return to the same places on the land year after year where they take great pleasure being together with their relatives and teaching their children their traditional way of life. Having to attend courses at that time denied parents the opportunity to participate in these traditional, seasonal activities and separated them from their families. With these considerations in mind, Rose thought that "If they would have it during another time, maybe winter time... it would probably be

better."

What Rose claimed was most useful to her in the Principal Certification Program was learning from elders. She was most impressed by hearing that "even if they are not qualified teachers with a certificate, they are qualified in their knowledge."

It was challenging for Rose to begin her administrative career in the same school where she had been a teacher. She felt that she did not have support from the staff until she spoke to them on an individual basis. She did not feel welcome in their classrooms until she explained that her job was to support them and she said she needed their support, too. Rose thought that it might be a universal problem "in every culture if a person moves up one step, they're treated differently."

Emily described her experience at the Educational Leadership Program in the Northwest Territories as appealing to teachers who were interested in learning about what leaders did and how they might "improve" themselves to become school leaders. However, the program that was designed for Nunavut and recently offered in Iqaluit had a more relevant focus on Inuit values and experience. Instead of using a culturally inclusive approach that taught the Dene way of hunting and preparing food as in Emily's first program, the latter included survival skills with which people in Nunavut were familiar. Liz claimed the Nunavut program, however, was similar in many ways to the former one offered in the Northwest Territories. Rose found that there was "nothing new" in the Nunavut leadership program.

Emily found it encouraging that more than half of the participants at the most recent Educational Leadership Program were Inuit, but maintains that Inuit and non-Inuit

people share the same values regarding respecting the land and surrounding environment. Rose enjoyed the contact with elders in the course. She was taught, as a child, to respect elders, regardless of which community they are from and appreciated their support. Liz said she learned a lot from her preparation program about planning school operations for the entire year, such as class scheduling, and that it was a worthwhile learning experience.

For her practicum, Emily selected working with the Department of Education as a means to be able to inform the Inuit and non-Inuit staff at her school about Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit*, known as *IQ*, or the Inuit way of knowing. She sees the school curriculum which has been imported from the province of Alberta as the greatest challenge.

> Emily: Inuit have always taught orally. Nothing was written until just recently, about in the 60s, and education was introduced to different settlements across the north recently when the Department of Education was created.... Sometimes it's hard to teach [the] Inuit way in the school using curriculum that are based on Alberta or from the south and being Inuk sometimes it's hard too, but it's especially hard for southerners that have come up north for the first time, and they're not sure what to do. They don't understand Inuit way of doing things. Of course the values and really the values of life are almost similar, but the way we do things is different from a person that's non-Inuk.

Community - Administrator Relationship

Inuit believe in a circle of belonging that originates in the family and connects the people, animals, land and institutions through spiritual and physical ties. "Inuit see life as an unbroken circle in which everyone and everything has a role" (GNWT, 1996, p. 31). Spirits link the present with the past and elders have the responsibility to ensure that

the wisdom and knowledge of ancestors is transmitted to future generations. This section shows how Inuit administrators understand their role through familial and community connections, and the support family and community members provide.

Kinship Bonds

Liz agreed with the general consensus that there were too few Inuit principals employed in her region. She admitted that she did not know how many Inuit administrators there might be in schools throughout Nunavut because she did not "work closely with other regions." The tendency to maintain close ties within family groups is more pronounced in Nunavut society than in most other geographical locations in Canada. Emily shared that she aspires to become a principal some day, but not if it would require her to move away from her home community.

Emily: If there's a job outside of my community, I would never leave— leave my town because I feel comfortable where I'm at... I am from my home community. I know everybody. I grew up here. I know everybody and everybody knows me.

Emily's assertion illustrates the importance of community to her understanding of who she is. "Family and kinship link a person's identity to a certain group of people. This group of people belong to the land, often naming their family after the area in which they live" (GNWT, 1996, p. 31). Each community cares for its families in distinct ways. Emily's allegiance to her community represents the responsibility she feels to contribute to the education of youth on its behalf.

Community Support

Ellie revealed that it was community members who first identified her as a leader and asked the regional superintendent to recruit her into an administrative position. She explained that they had wanted to have a local person as principal of their school and approached their District Education Authority with their request. She believes community support has been important in her work as a co-principal.

Liz expressed gratitude for all the support she has received from her community for her administrative work. She described community expectations for school principals in the following manner:

Liz: People, when they see that the principal is caring and understands what the parents are going through, then they understand more about what school is all about. So I think that the principal's role is to make sure that the parents understand why education is important.

Emily felt she was respected in her work as a community member because she spoke Inuktitut. Once she was hired as vice principal, community members held the same expectations for her as the principal and male vice principal who comprised the administrative team at her school.

Emily: Clearly, they're very supportive. They respect me. I respect them cause they know me. I'm part of the community and it does help if you're from the same community I guess. They see me as a community member, because I'm Inuk. I can understand their body language, their facial expressions. Even if they say a small word, I can understand it. And I know; I've been there. If a student is not behaving good, and I know who the family is. Because of that, a teacher from the south, you wouldn't understand why the student all of a sudden is behaving this way or that way. But because I'm from town and I know... something's happening in town. You hear it right away.

Community Involvement

Elders continue to be revered for their experience and knowledge about the past. Rose explained that elders were hired to participate in teaching Inuit traditions on an occasional basis. She wished they could have become part of the regular school staff, but admitted it has not been easy to locate elders willing to go into schools.

Rose: I don't know, cause sometimes we have that problem still. And you have to keep asking for elders to come. And sometimes they think they don't fit in what we want them to do...But we always tell them if they come here to tell stories, they could tell it in their own words. We're not going to say "That's wrong" or we're not going to say anything like that.

When asked if the school building itself might appear too foreign for traditional teaching and inhibit elders from wanting to be there, the participants responded as follows:

Rose: I don't know what it is. To tell you the truth, I don't know.

Liz: Well, um...I didn't grow up in the traditional way, so the kind of learning I'm used to is being in the school like the way schools are built today. So I really don't know any other way. So to me, as long as the school is clean and tidy, and the atmosphere is... good for students, then it's a good school, no matter whether how old it is or how new it is. It would all depend on the staff and the students and the way they work.

Emily: Mmm. I don't know because a lot of the parents and a lot of the teachers, like the elders that did actually live in igloos, are not alive.

The gap between staff wanting elders to be present in schools and them not being there is not only due to the unavailability of elders to teach students because so few remain, but also because of language barriers between young and old. Children are still expected to respect elders for their knowledge and survival skills, but are sometimes unable to benefit from their wisdom due to their lack of proficiency in Inuktitut.

> It is unfortunate that many young people have not retained enough of their language skills to be able to speak freely with the elders. The problem exists because many children prefer to speak English that they have learned in school. While most Inuit children can speak Inuktitut, the language has changed over time to the point where elders use terms and phrases that many young people cannot understand. (Pauktuutit, 1992, p. 13)

Emily said it was crucial to increase the number of elders in schools in not only a teaching, but also a counselling capacity. She was passionate about the benefits of involving elders as school counsellors. However, Rose felt the preservation and promotion of more Inuktitut would have to begin in the home and be fostered by the community. All participants agreed that an understanding of the importance of community is fundamental to appreciating what is required for cultural survival and the success of school administration in Nunavut society. This is critical in a cross-cultural context, as it exists today.

Expectations

Inuit often expressed the need to take time to remove themselves from contemporary pressures at work to spend time with their families camping some distance from the settlements in which they resided. This gave them the opportunity to return to a lifestyle reflecting traditional values. Although school attendance was mandatory for students, accommodations were legislated to recognize the cultural value of these experiences.

Children were allowed to stay up as late as they wanted and eat whenever they were hungry, without prescribed schedules, because it was considered inappropriate to direct the elder after whom the children were named. Inuit believed the soul of the deceased person, who lived on within the namesake and gave them characteristics, skills and personality traits, would let them know what they needed. Children were not restrained unless there was a possibility they might be harmed. Such freedom was frequently interpreted by non-Inuit as excessive permissiveness, but control and punishment by school authorities was often considered inappropriate by Inuit parents. The following response by Liz regarding what parents expect of principals indicates that discipline might be interpreted as protecting their own child from others who might pose a threat to the child's safety.

Liz: They expect a principal to be able to make sure that the kids are educated properly and disciplined and, a lot of the times, when the students are not behaving properly, parents come in upset and expect the principal to fix everything. That was the hardest part, I think. But other than that, like I said, the support was there.

All of the participants expressed a preference for more traditional materials and communication patterns in their hopes for the future of Nunavut education.

Emily: But to become stronger Inuit, I think we should focus on... uh, not just writing and doing paper work, but what Inuit used to survive, and uh, get the students aware that Inuit didn't use papers back then. They did this... and whatever it takes to get them aware. We can work with elders; we can work with parents; volunteering other principals, other colleagues. Like, it's not just a school thing. I think it should be a whole community thing, and it would involve not just teaching elders and community members, and volunteers or whatever.

Emily's comments reflect the Inuit belief that teaching students is a collective responsibility and requires shared leadership. Collaboration and drawing on existing resources in the community to teach the young about what is important through Inuit practices is generally understood as necessary.

Rose: We're doing what we can right now to keep our language going. I don't know what more we can do. When I became a principal... we were getting a lot of classroom teachers and parents because there's not enough Inuktitut here. But when the students are going into kindergarten, when we do the registration, they're tracing the majority of parents are choosing English rather than Inuktitut. And a lot of the times we get blamed for it. But it's not us. It's coming from the parents. And the students that are coming into the schools are only speaking English. It's not the school's fault; it's at home. It has to come from the home first.

According to Emily, school administrators require strength of character to deal with work-related stress when interacting with parents, teachers and students who might be upset. She said it takes a strong person who wants to make a difference.

Another essential quality is flexibility to accept and support the changing priorities for principals for whom turnover is high. Ellie feels administrators need to have strong language skills to handle the amount of reading and writing in English that is involved. Rose and Liz claim that it is essential that administrators be "people-persons" who can "get along with everybody, no matter who it is"... and "love working with the people around them". Rose felt it was a conscious choice to show respect for others by not criticizing them.

Ellie said she relied on her mother for support and advice when dealing with stress at work.

Ellie: I go crying to my mother (*laughs*). No, well, not crying. But I often go to her

> for support, because of all the challenges that I face here. Because being brought up in an Inuit community, and I think we're still reminded daily of it, is that we're to respect our elders... some of my teachers are elders... It's really hard for me to draw that line. Like, am I a youngster here talking to this person, or am I their supervisor? So when I meet challenges like that, I... I speak to my mother.
>
> My mother is quite old and she's open-minded. Yes, and I am her daughter, but she's not one that will defend me. And she'll always tell me, or give me ways to think about approaching it this way. She'll often say, "Look, Ellie. You're going down this road. Why don't you try this way?"

Ellie's seeking advice from her mother about interpersonal problems at school was appropriate since families supported each other in times of stress and elders were considered a source of wisdom. Mothers were responsible for teaching their children to meet challenges with resourcefulness and perseverance. It was unlikely that she might have consulted her mother for advice on school operations practices that originated in southern Canada. For this, she, as Emily expressed earlier, would probably consult with non-Inuit administrators in her school.

Emily claimed that she does not separate Inuk and Kalluunaq in her vision for the future, because "we have one thing in common or interest— to improve or to help students have a future."

Liz explained that a working group of educators, including administrators, was examining ways to improve student assessment to make it more relevant to Inuit culture and language. They attended a conference on assessment in southern Canada and then applied what they had learned to their situation in Nunavut. Their goal was to have the students explain to their parents what they were learning in school and how their progress

was being measured at parent-teacher-student conferences. It was hoped that by using students as intermediaries, the parents would become more involved in their formal education.

Emily: There is a big change. The first one that we noticed was uh, about five years ago when the *Inuuqatigiit* curriculum was made and it was very useful, and we used that *Inuuqatigiit* curriculum a lot and for that year... for those two years there were... we had an Inuk principal and it made a big difference cause our culture was focussed on and, uh, it was introduced in the classroom more and we did activities that involved elders and stuff, and it's improving. We now have... um, Inuktitut curriculum... with objectives and social studies is being developed and it's improving a lot with the Northern aspects of teaching and, uh, the objectives that focus on the Inuit culture. We've got some principals who are working as a working team on putting some input into what needs to be part of student assessment with the schools.

Summary

Background

The four participants in this research had much in common. Three of them began their careers in education, by working as a Student Support Assistant, Classroom Assistant and Student Support Teacher. The fourth participant began as a classroom teacher. All were motivated by a desire to help students. All were ambitious to learn more and took teacher education courses to help them improve the lives of students. One earned her Bachelor of Education degree, one was awarded an Aboriginal Language Specialist certificate, and one completed a two-year special education program through distance education at a southern Canadian university. One of these women is hoping to enter a Bachelor of Education degree program in the near future. Two of them approached the Minister of Education to discuss a Bachelor of Education program

to be offered in their home communities and requested that funding be made available to provide training for future Inuit teachers and principals. All four participated in the Principal Certification Program, and one of them helped develop the Education Leadership Program that is being offered in Nunavut. One participant expressed an interest in creating a newsletter for Inuit principals. One served as a member of a working group of administrators to make assessment more relevant to the needs of students in Nunavut.

Place in the Community

These women are advocates and leaders in community organizations and churches as well. They held responsible positions on committees and were active volunteers in their home communities. Each of the participants had been encouraged by others to seek administrative positions in their schools, but each was reluctant to apply because she wanted to maintain personal contact with her students. Their passion for their students was the most outstanding characteristic that the participants shared in their employment situations.

Conflict between Personal and Professional Life

Each of the four women interviewed was a devoted parent, whose family responsibilities took precedence over obligations outside the home. This was a domain in which their context varied, depending on the ages of their children and needs of their families, but their priorities were not unique. Emily was unwilling to attend meetings for administrators in other communities before her daughter was 16 years old and could be left at home, so she depended on her principal's report after meetings

for information relevant to her situation. Liz enjoyed attending conferences and workshops and learning about priorities and concerns in other schools, now that her daughter was no longer a child. At one point, however, she was unable to complete the second phase of her administrator training program because she was needed at home to care for her mother who was ill. Ellie gave careful consideration to the possible negative effects of her work commitments on her children before accepting an administrative position; she confided that she would not have ventured into such a demanding career if she thought her children might suffer. Rose claimed that although she had a busy family life, and had thought occasionally of resigning her position as co-principal, she felt a moral obligation not to abandon her commitment to the students in her school. Students were at the heart of Nunavut education in these stories.

Chapter Five will discuss conclusions in relation to the research questions posed in Chapter One and the data presented in Chapter Four. Implications of the results for education and the field of educational administration in Nunavut will be raised, and recommendations for additional research and policy development will be suggested.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

In this chapter I revisit the research questions presented in Chapter 1 and discuss what I have learned from the findings. Each question is addressed separately and recommendations are suggested in hopes of making the education system more responsive to the needs of Inuit school administrators. The implications of additional research using narrative inquiry will also be presented.

Answers to the Research Questions Found in Data

How do Inuit women principals understand their role?

The ways the participants talked about their experiences as school administrators in our discussions, suggests that they perceived leadership differently from what has been expected in the dominant southern Canadian discourse. Each woman hesitated before reluctantly accepting a leadership role in the school, even though she felt she possessed the necessary skills, knowledge and experience that the work would require. One Inuit educator whom I had expected to include as a participant, confided, when I contacted her, that she had left her administrative position to return to her role as full-time teacher, because she did not consider herself ready for administration due to having insufficient knowledge. One of the participants mentioned that her gender was a factor that caused her to hesitate, which is surprising since most Inuit educators are women. The other three claimed that they did not see themselves as leaders even after they had become educational administrators. This seems to reflect the Inuit concept of leadership as

situational; whoever has the knowledge and skill that is required for a task contributes for the welfare of all, and no individual should take credit for a group effort.

For the participants, it is important to have time for family and community. Visiting community members and participating in community events are integral to health and well-being. Community members have a right to know what goes on in school and are responsible for the care and happiness of children. School is not a place controlled by staff; it is an expression of who the people in a community are. The participants were unanimous in their assertion that community members should participate in school and that education takes place both inside and outside the school building. For example, the local chairperson of the school's education council was in charge of leading its meetings at which the principal presented reports of school activities, shared information sent from the regional school operations office, and discussed visitors the community could expect. The chairperson was elected by the community, and followed an agenda prepared by the principal, but all members of the education council contributed equally to discussions and decision-making.

In my conversations with participants, they regarded positive personal interactions with school visitors, community members and others as separate from administrative duties. This may be partly due to the fundamental belief that social networking through oral communication and group participation is integral to their way of life. Inuit people are expected to be socially involved with everyone in their home community in a way that is not easily understood by many southern Canadians who are more transient and come from larger and less isolated social settings. The expectation of performing tasks that

require written communication, record-keeping, strategic planning, scheduling and accounting, often in isolation, is foreign to most Inuit administrators and necessitates the acquisition of skills that must be learned. A distributed leadership perspective that acknowledges the participation of several people who offer their expertise on an *ad hoc* basis is more familiar in Inuit culture than the established practice in southern Canadian schools of designating a few officials who hold decision-making powers. Gronn (2003) suggested that in order for a distributed leadership model to work, there would need to be a distributed division of labour performed by organized school teams, with an accountability mechanism in place. There are "naturally fitted leaders" through ascription (p.11), "formally fitted leaders" recognized through achievement (p. 120), and "suitably fitted leaders" enshrined through standards (pp.14-15). Work would have to be articulated by someone, in order for the units (or teams) responsible for it, to get it done (pp. 41-42). Gronn's model might be too formal and restrictive for the needs of Inuit communities, but Crawford (2003) claims that it might be necessary for teachers and leaders to:

> ... develop capability in dimensions of role performance... This aligns with Gronn's characterization of distributed leadership as having to have a finely tuned tolerance for ambiguity. If school leaders are to acquire a sense of how events coalesce, fuse and flow then they need to be able to develop synergies within the whole school, so that work intensification does not become a hindrance to distributed leadership practices, but an impetus for them. (p. 87)

Inuit governance of institutions that have evolved with the creation of settlements might be more reflective of Noddings' (1986) ethic of care that is frequently observed in

people-centred administrative practice. Wallace (2004) found this type of administration to be "enmeshed in the first core value of student-focused programming" (p. 8). Hurty (1995) and Strachan (1999) described "student-focused teaching and learning and shared decision-making in enabling the provision of caring school environments as core values in their practice" (cited in Wallace, 2004, p. 6). In my own practice, I found that the imposition of southern Canadian educational administration models created tensions with the Inuit core values to which the participants of this studyobviously adhered.

What forces have shaped the way Inuit women see themselves as leaders in educational settings?

The participants' teachers, principals and community members believed that these Inuit women were capable of becoming administrators; this support inspired confidence in the Inuit administrators to accept the challenge of the role. Each of them expressed appreciation for the support they received from colleagues. Ellie named her mother as the person she consulted for advice when dealing with staff conflict. They all mentioned feeling support and learning through staff discussions and in-service workshops. The recognition by family and community members that the participants cared for them as well as their students was a powerful motivator in their vision and job performance. The data support the assumption that the encouragement of others is a motivational force in the women's lives. Supervisors both within the schools where the participants worked and at the regional level, as well as community members and Inuit officials, encouraged

them to apply for administrative positions, believing that they could succeed. There is evidence that being able to help others was also a motivating factor.

Are the perceptions of the participants consistent with the paradigm ofadministration in Nunavut schools expressed by the Nunavut Department of Education and the principal certification program that is required for Nunavut principals?

Three participants expressed their concern that there was insufficient time in their schedules to learn from the non-Inuit co-principals, supervisors and instructors to whom they had been assigned. Due to budget cuts, one co-principal reported that she and her mentor were unable to schedule office time together. One of the women who functioned as both vice principal and teacher, and as an on-the-job principal trainee, was left to teach herself much of the work because the principal/coach was unavailable. When she resigned so she could deal with personal issues at home, provisions were not made to help her complete her training. Only one participant believed that she had adequate support from the other members of her administrative team because they had regularly scheduled meetings and her duties were separate from those of her colleagues.

Two of the participants indicated that they had approached the Minister of Education with the request that the Nunavut Teacher Education Program be offered in their home communities. Because Arctic College was already offering the program in another community in their region, they were told they would have to wait until that program was completed before having the courses offered where they lived.

The data suggest that each of these women aspired to complete principal certification requirements and was motivated to complete requirements using the mainstream Canadian educational paradigm. However, the time of year and duration of certification courses scheduled away from home were inappropriate, and the demands of the curriculum did not allow them time to learn from other Inuit administrators. The Educational Leadership Program in Nunavut lacked sufficient focus to support an Inuit conception of leadership, although the participants appreciated that elders had been included as part of the instructional team. In spite of the appeal to the Minister of Education by two of the participants to offer courses for educators in their community, insufficient programs were available in communities across Nunavut.

There was little on-line communication by Inuit co-principals, although this might have been due to a lack of priority and technical support from the regional headquarters. Unfortunately, the issue has not been addressed through the education leadership program curriculum, nor has it been promoted through follow-up monitoring and assistance at the school level. Leadership from the school operations office might be needed to coordinate a concerted plan to help Inuit administrators become more comfortable with computer technology.

What Inuit values are reflected in what the participants regard as their greatest achievements in their professional work?

In the past, most Inuit educators entered the field of education as classroom

assistants because they were able to communicate with students in Inuktitut. This was in keeping with Cummins'(1989) model of bilingual education for Nunavut. Inuktitut was to be the language of instruction in the primary grades, with Grade Four as the transition year when students could be taught in both Inuktitut and English. Because Inuit students rarely graduated from high school, classroom assistants lacked the necessary professional qualifications for certification beyond the primary grades. It is obvious from the data that the participants were qualified to assume additional positions.

Each of the participants acknowledged the importance of team work in the performance of her duties. Emily talked about meeting with the other members of her administrative team on a regular basis, sharing responsibilities and seeking advice for decision-making from colleagues when necessary. The other three expressed regret that they did not have more time to learn from the administrative colleagues in their schools. Gross (2006) discussed the importance of avoiding a "cookie-cutter approach when setting up a mentor program for new principals, and he acknowledges the difficulty of locating mentors who share the same background, life experiences and struggles as the proteges (pp. 17 & 23). However, it is necessary to stress the mutual benefit of such a relationship, and ensure that both parties are committed to the process. Trust is at the heart of its success, and a successful mentoring system requires "attention to a range of issues that include abstract, ethical problem solving as well as concrete technical issues" (p. 35). A good mentoring program needs to build in time to appropriately match suitable candidates, preparation and orientation, and ongoing collaboration and trust-building throughout its duration. During my last year in Nunavut, it was becoming increasingly

common to hire retired principals to mentor Inuit administrators, because pool of applicants from southern Canada was drying up (for reasons discussed in Chapter 1). The difficulties with such candidates included their desire to share their wealth of experience and expectations from their extensive careers, coupled with their interest in short-term placements so that they could also enjoy some of their retirement away from Nunavut. High principal turnover was one of the problems Gross (2006) was attempting to address with his leadership mentoring model. He envisioned placements with several years duration for empowerment and trust-building to take place.

Each of the participants indicated that strengthening her language and cultural traditions was very important for students. All believed this was a crucial component in their vision of education for their communities. While they understood their role as significant, they did not believe they were solely responsible for helping students in this mission. They saw it more as a group effort to which all community members could contribute. Mentoring individual Inuit administrators to assume positions of leadership in a hierarchical organization contributed to more tensions than cohesiveness.

What changes are needed to make the principal's role more reflective of Inuit beliefs and ways of leading?

The participants expressed satisfaction in being able to teach their school staff and students more about Inuit traditions and practices. Emily stated that she was doing this in cooperation with the Department of Education as her principal certification school improvement project. Liz revised the parent handbook in her school to be more reflective

of Inuit practices. She was also passionate about helping education staff in other communities, as well as in her own, to focus on improving Inuktitut instruction. An Inuit focus in Nunavut schools is crucial for realizing the Inuit vision of education, as articulated in previous chapters. While Inuit school leaders want to acquire the skills and knowledge of Qallunaat principals to make education in Nunavut helpful for students to negotiate northern as well as global cultures, they are passionate about instilling pride for their culture and traditions in them.

What supports are needed to encourage more Inuit women to become principals and persist in that role?

The responses of participants suggest that they prefer teaching and being in direct contact with students to being responsible for many of the duties that they designate as administrative. For example, Rose claimed that candidates with good people skills would be better suited to classroom teaching than "dealing with the duties of a principal". Another woman stated that everyone wants to interact with people who come into the school instead of focusing on paperwork and the other office-related work of principals. Ellie asserted that "paperwork scares people away because of weak English skills" and suggested that they might require help to increase their self-confidence. The data indicate that many Inuit educators could benefit from additional instruction in mathematics and English literacy, to be better prepared and confident to perform related duties. Yet, a principal's job is also about social interaction. Much social interaction falls outside the boundary of what a principal does. Disciplining students, staff and dealing with unhappy

parents are the kind of negative social behaviours for which administrators are responsible, but these pertain to stressful situations the participants considered as barriers for people considering becoming administrators. This is not surprising since most Inuit live in small communities with kinship bonds, and disharmony runs counter to traditional Inuit values of cooperation and consensus-building. One participant mentioned that it was stressful for her to be in a supervisory role to an elder on staff and that it was her mother who provided support to her with this conflict. A distributed leadership model might alleviate the stress experienced by Inuit principals in a hierarchical organization.

Discussion of Themes

The data suggest several themes. Each is discussed separately.

1. **Dedication to caring for children is a driving force in the work of Inuit school administrators.**

How the participants experienced their gender and ethnicity in their classrooms was not unique to Inuit teachers. Reynolds (1995), Hall (1996), Wallace (2004) have contributed a wealth of evidence in their research to the premise that "...student-focused practice is central to how these women think about their work and find pleasure and fulfillment in it (Wallace, 2004, p. 7). Moreover, Blackmore (1996, 1999) used the phrase "emotional labour" to describe the nurturing role expected of women in their work in school systems. Reynolds cites the claim that "women taught while men managed" (Ozga, 1993) to illustrate the gender roles practised by administrators in educational institutions (Collard & Reynolds, 2005, p. 200). In spite of the mainstream paradigm of

managerialism, success seems to be measured by Inuit education leaders in terms professional learning communities and they continue to regard schooling as a moral enterprise; they see success in terms of student happiness. This reflects the understanding of moral leadership framed by Greenfield and Ribbins (1993), and Gilligan, Ward and Taylor (1988) when they "mapped the moral terrain". Just as Wallace (2004) found that "the word 'passion' was used regularly by participants... to describe how they felt about their work as protectors of students" (p. 7), I found the four women I interviewed to be animated and passionate whenever they discussed the excitement and satisfaction they experienced when mentioning the students in their care.

2. All the participants were ambitious to increase their skills but were limited by lack of opportunity and access.

Professional certificates for teachers and principals were earned, and all the women welcomed the opportunity to learn additional skills. Concern was expressed that courses offered through McGill University's Arctic College and other professional development courses were seldom available in their home communities. Family, childcare, and community responsibilities made it difficult for them to be out of town for extended periods of time.

> I wasn't allowed to go to high school when everybody else was, so that's why I started working as a classroom assistant. But over the next few years, I did get my GED (Rose).

All participants were long-term employees, with experience in the school system

ranging from 10 to 30 years. Three participants had entered the work force as Student Support Assistants, a common entry point for Inuit staff, and all of them expressed dedication to improving the lives of students. Student Support Assistant and Classroom Assistant were used interchangeably by the participants to describe this designation. They also served as an Aboriginal Language Specialist, Student Support Teacher and Classroom Teacher.

The inclusion of Inuit women's practical experience and knowledge of the way children learn is a necessary focus in Inuit administrative theory. Increasing the opportunities for Inuit administrators to take courses and professional development workshops in their home communities might hold tremendous potential for merging familial and educational considerations. In addition to reducing barriers to training, community members might become more involved as mentors for Inuit trainees. A less fragmented approach to community-based training could offer a learning environment that would attract and nurture the next generation of Inuit school leaders.

3. The curriculum, format and timeframe of the Nunavut Education Leadership Program is inadequate for the needs of Inuit school administrators.

The principal certification program for Nunavut school administrators, called the Education Leadership Program (ELP) was instituted to replace a program for potential leaders throughout Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Some of the participants regarded it as an improvement over the former NWT Principal Certification Program because the ELP materials were culturally embedded with local content that was at times

presented by elders. They recommended lengthening the course and offering it at a time other than during summer vacation which conflicted with personal pursuits. Building in opportunities for Inuit co-principals to interact and share experiences with each other would be an improvement and would permit them to learn collaboratively. Participants expressed concerns that while the certification program had been moved from the Northwest Territories to Nunavut Territory, and there appeared to be greater focus on Inuit culture, little has actually changed in its structure, pedagogy and basic philosophy. There needs to be a reorganization from the ground up, that permits Inuit participants in the program to discuss, share challenges and insights, and develop a format based on Inuit values and needs. It was disheartening to read in the materials that have been developed for the Nunavut Educator's Leadership Program that, in spite of input from Inuit planners, southern models continue to have a stronghold. Rose's suggestion that what might help eradicate program deficiencies is learning from elders, whose qualifications are their lived cultural experience, was insightful. Liz indicated that it might help to learn more about how to negotiate school requirements that are currently in place.

4. There was insufficient sharing of time and expertise between Inuit co-principals and non-Inuit co-principal mentors.

Inherent problems in the co-principal model, through which Inuit administrators learn on-the-job from more experienced non-Inuit principals, were lack of time together and the division of labour between the roles. The Inuit principals dealt more with discipline and inter-personal relationships, while the non-Inuit principals focused on

financial planning, budget allocation, ordering, record-keeping and attending meetings with supervisors. The Inuit co-principals seldom attended regional meetings for principals or participated in regular conference calls. They supervised the school on their own at these times. Information brought back by the non-Inuit administrator was not always shared unless it was considered relevant to the Inuit administrator's work. For example, some of the participants were members of a student assessment committee that attended a conference in Ontario, but none of them were participants of a Principal Working Group formulating new evaluation criteria for principals.

5. Inuit conceptions of school leadership originate from and are integrally linked to home communities and Inuit interaction patterns.

These Inuit administrators enjoyed teaching students, communicating with parents and community members in Inuktitut, and working collaboratively with school staff. They all expressed surprise that they had been identified as school leaders when first approached and were hesitant to assume the role of principal. They regarded a parent or elder as an appropriate person to consult for advice on school problems. They felt that elders were under-utilized as teachers and school counsellors and recommended they be employed as regular staff members to model Inuit ways of being.

An important influence that led them to school administration were aspiring to emulate Inuit school leaders who had made them aware of their role in incorporating and promoting Inuit values in the school. The participants, however, did not express discomfort in working cooperatively with non-Inuit staff. I was surprised to learn that

they said it would be beneficial for the students to learn from personnel from both cultures particularly in terms of having a good future. The participants felt they had more in common with than dissimilarities from non-Inuit staff because fundamental values of respect for people and for the environment are universal principles.

Conclusions and Implications

This study suggests the following conclusions: 1) Schooling is different from education and is shaped by the degree to which Inuit communities are interested in and able to permeate the structures that have been erected through historical colonizing influences. When formal schooling was introduced to the Inuit in the 1800s, it was intended to not only ensure that the Inuit were assimilated into the worldview of traders, but it was justified by missionaries and politicians as bringing them into a better way of life.

> Paquette asserts that dominant cultures expect ethnic minority groups to blend and assimilate because it is the best thing for them and for society at large. He contends that rejection of assimilation labels them as failures and the consequence is to try to immerse them even more in the values, beliefs and languages of the majority. Therefore, minority groups become powerless to alter either their state of affairs or the form and type of the education provided to them; the dominant group views this powerlessness in society as appropriate and fair (Agbo, 2002, p. 17).

Menezes de Sousa (2004) claimed that the efforts of colonizers to capture and preserve indigenous speech on paper could lead to the destruction of indigenous language because multimodal texts distort perceptions of language and culture. He called for the need to "be conscious of how our perspectives predispose us to see things" and cautioned those who hold Eurocentric values against presupposing that they are universal (Menezes de Sousa, 2004, Presentation at The University of Western Ontario).

The tensions between how educational goals and practices of non-Inuit are received by Inuit in Nunavut schools are measured by how resistant Inuit people are to them. "School success is a constantly evolving concept... a fragile quality that always involves a balance among different demands and pressures" (Gaskell, 1995, p. 278). In the national report of the Exemplary Schools Project, Gaskell (1995) reported that Qitiqliq Secondary School in Arviat, Nunavut was selected due to:

> how it is trying to deal with change and prepare young people for a different future, in its links with the community, the development of community-oriented programs, and a climate of openness and collaboration.
>
> The school community is remarkable in its sensitivity and its efforts to negotiate Inuit and southern approaches to learning, in a way that young Inuit will profit from the latter without undermining an identity rooted in the former (1995, p. 40).

Courses offered in this school included Career Orientation, Enterprise and Innovation, Career and Life Management, Inuktitut and Wildlife Management. Through a cultural-inclusion program, work-study opportunities, and day care services in the school for students, is something missing here? Such a curriculum represents what Agbo

(2002) recommended as an "intrinsically bicultural process" in his call for administrators to "go beyond Aboriginal traditions and culture and to encourage a cross-fertilization of insights, practices and mental prototypes of different cultures" (p. 33).

With the rapid environmental changes in the Canadian Arctic due to global warming, and the threat of increasing social and political change due to discussions between the Canadian and other national governments to open military bases to both protect sovereignty and to open the Northwest Passage for global trade, Inuit culture and way of life will inevitably evolve. Watt-Cloutier, a prominent Inuit activist considers the fight against global warming to be about human rights; "climate change threatens her people's culture and way of life" (McIlroy, 2007, p. A3). It is time for Inuit voices to be heard in the changing political discourse in order to avoid becoming victims of global progress. If Inuit people are to survive, they must be equipped with the knowledge and skills to flourish in mainstream society through connections that do not yet exist. What I am suggesting is that a third space be created in the discourse between Inuit and non-Inuit educators in which the language of "both and in-between" (Wang, 2006, p. 111) can be heard. Hegemonic voices need to be suspended so that engaged pedagogy can be nurtured within a state of cultural hybridity. In order for authentic openness to exist, both "conservation and conciliation" (Wallace, 1998, p. 9) should be allowed to emerge.

Recommendations

Recommendations for additional investigation into educational administration in

Nunavut are suggested. It is hoped that other researchers will be encouraged to apply this work in future explorations. Suggestions for further research are to document initiatives and consequences of working together as partners with all the stakeholders: students, parents, community members, educators and government officials. It is clear that the Inuit participants in this study were willing to work with administrators from other cultures to learn what they could do to further the prospects for employment of future generations. Inuit youth appear to be trapped in poverty and disregarded by Canadian politicians and society. But the Inuit participants revealed in their data that they are aware of ways they can help their culture by focusing on the commonalities between Inuit and southern Canadian societies with a compassionate spirit. There are scars from past experience in residential schools, and courage is needed to address the challenges of the future. This research has demonstrated the desire of Inuit to participate in a learning community. Inuit face the same hopes that of their children will have a better future. There needs to be a coalition of educators who will work collaboratively to challenge views that prevent the education system from improving.

Wihak (2006) states that:

> Non-Inuit educators need to consciously cultivate an attitude of cultural reciprocity, demonstrating an interest in and respect for Inuit culture, being highly sensitive to cultural friction, taking the lead in articulating cultural conflicts, and examining the roots of such conflict in underlying differences of behaviour, values and beliefs... Rather than relying on written curriculum materials reflecting only Euro-Canadian culture, an oral curriculum can be developed by inviting Inuit to

participate in the program as co-instructors... As long as the organization is dominated by Euro-Canadians, the lived curriculum may continue to be at odds with explicit attempts to reflect IQ in curriculum materials.(p. 15)

Relevant data bases need to be collected that educators and researchers can access, in the way that the Teaching and Learning Centres provided resources for schools in the past. There needs to be a concerted effort to create a virtual community of practice such as Hibbert and Rich (2006) described, based on Wenger's (1998) model of practice within cultural contexts that cross institutional boundaries. According to Rich:

> A virtual community of professional practice:
>
> 1. Establishes and builds on commonalities
> 2. Fosters dialogue between participants
> 3. Encourages links between and application of learning to practice
> 4. Recognizes the expertise of learners. (Rich, 2002)

The participants in this study stated that being able to converse with each other in their prepatory courses, and on an on-going basis was lacking. I myself found that communicating with colleagues in my administrative training program, and feeling comfortable in relying on them subsequently was important to me. I recommend that technological training and support for Inuit administrators be a priority, especially since opportunities for travel to Nunavut communities are limited because of geographical isolation and time/cost factors.

I recommend that longitudinal studies of Inuit administrators be conducted using critical narrative methodology, to follow-up on progress and changes in support structures within the existing school system. The value of a mechanism for participants to express their satisfactions and concerns to an empathetic listener is significant. It is hoped that more time for co-principals to collaborate and work together will be structured in their schedules.

What I Have Learned

When I envisioned this study, I regarded the North as an exciting place in which I could learn more about my teaching practice in a foreign culture, even though it was located within Canada. The unpredictable weather, developing school system, and welcoming people were appealing. I was pleased to be accepted by southern and Inuit colleagues and given professional responsibilities through which I could adapt and apply my skills and knowledge. George and Sims (2007) cautioned: "Becoming an authentic leader takes dedication to your development and growth, as there will be many temptations to pull you off the course of your True North" (p. 1). Macmillan's example of a novitiate becoming disoriented in an alien environment and jolted into a better understanding of self in the process (2003, p. 13) speaks to my journey to discover authentic leadership in a territory controlled by Qallunaat power. It was through relationships I formed with Inuit where I lived and worked, that I began to question my embedded assumptions, and struggled to articulate a vision of education that was appropriate

for Inuit culture. It was necessary for me to understand that there were different visions for different circumstances. I was taught through listening and observing at sewing circle meetings in the school kitchen after hours, camping and drinking tea on the tundra, attending skidoo races on the ice and visiting bereaved families after funerals, rather than learning procedures in books and meetings organized by Qallunaat educators. I had not appreciated the sacred connection Inuit people had with the land until I experienced its power myself. Just as texts inspire personal and subjective meanings in listeners that might be projected differently from what the speaker intended, the interpretation of how we experience landscapes reflects the grounding of our knowledge in the past, transformed by the present. Meinig writes:

> To regard the scene before us as no more than a laboratory for so-called objective research is to be indifferent to human needs. Professors for whom every landscape is a design problem... their common perspective is to look at the landscape and imagine a different one: one they have redesigned.. it is obviously closely related to the view of landscape as an artifact: the critical difference lies in the realm of control and comprehensive planning. (1979, p. 40)

Everyone's interpretation of experiences varies according to the meanings they attach to them. In her study of the lives of three Inuit women, Wachowich (1999) reports the pain one of the participants, Rhoda, felt from being born into Inuit culture and being compelled by "teachers, ministers, nurses, researchers, and

other outsiders" to prepare for life in another (p. 152). Chambers (2006) cautions that "Repatriation is not simply the return of objects to their original owners: it is the reclamation of the past; it is the place where history and memory meet, and makes a less precarious future possible" (p. 31).

Contemporary formal education is important to Inuit. They look forward to understanding Qallunaat ways and helping their children succeed in school . There is currently an imbalance of power which necessitates learning what Inuit value and how they teach, lead and care for children. Qallunaat power must be downgraded to make space for an equitable sharing between the two cultures. Professional qualifications are not only academic; Nunavut school administrators need to draw on the wisdom of Elders, community members, school personnel and students, to bring an authentic and exciting school atmosphere to others. Being able to have a voice in consensus decision-making, and engaging in conversation with Inuit colleagues who were so willing to share their hopes and fears was a humbling experience.

The narrative inquiry methodology I employed allowed me to gain understanding in a non-threatening way. It opened a door to greater self-awareness for myself. I look forward to reading future studies in which this method is utilized. The four women who participated in this research with me have told stories that are inspiring and poignant. More stories need to be told and documented so outsiders can hear from Inuit administrators how they are confronting the challenges to their core beliefs by forces within their own culture.

Summary

The purpose of this thesis was to understand how Inuit women in Nunavut perceived their role as school administrators. My experience with education in the far North was concerned with initially bringing a southern Canadian philosophy and pedagogy to bear on a culture with a very different approach to teaching, learning and leading. The longer I remained in Nunavut communities and became acquainted with their rich traditions and values, the more convinced I was that Inuit and Qallunaat educators were working at cross purposes. Southern Canadians were labouring to assimilate Inuit into their vision of education through institutions which belonged to the Inuit. Through my research I was able to hear from four Inuit school leaders how they experienced being a part of the education system, and what changes they needed. These women are brave and dedicated to creating the kind of schools that reflect their world, and learning how to help the next generation to succeed in a rapidly changing environment. The challenges they face are great, but they are prepared to take the necessary risks. They believe working together with other cultures as collaborators, not dominators, will bring about the kind of society they need. By listening to Inuit leaders and growing together as educators, it might be possible that authentic ethical leadership will be practised on their terms.

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APPENDIX 1

Glossary of Inuit Terminology

Glossary of Inuit Terminology

aajiiqatigiingniq	consensus decision-making
avatimik kamattiarniq	respect and responsibility for protecting the environment
isuma	a person's innermost thoughts and feelings
Inuk	a human being, measured by maturity and wisdom
Inuit	people
Inuit Qaujimatatuqangit	traditional knowledge, approaches and values to be passed on to future generations
Inuktitut	Inuit language
Inuuqatigiit	curriculum from an Inuit perspective
inuusiq	way of life
inuusiqattiarniq	a healthy and independent way of connecting with others
isuma	personal thoughts and feelings
Nunavummiut	Beneficiaries of Nunavut Territory
Nunavut	Inuit land
Pauqatigiit	a professional development initiative for Nunavut educators
Piniaqtavut	a curricular program of integrated themes based on Inuit beliefs
Pijitsirarniq	serving and contributing to the welfare of one's community
Pilimmaksarniq	acquiring skills and knowledge of Inuit ways in a respectful manner
Piliriqatigiingniq	collaborating and working together for a common goal

Qallunaat	non-Inuit people
Qallunaatitut	non-Inuit language

APPENDIX 2

The University of Western Ontario Ethics Approval Notice

The University of Western Ontario Ethics Approval Notice

APPROVAL OF PhD THESIS PROPOSAL Form A

If the proposed research does not involve human subjects or the direct use of their written records, video-tapes, recordings, tests, etc., this signature form, along with ONE copy of the research proposal should be delivered directly to the Graduate Education Office for final approval.	If the proposed research involves human subjects, this signature form, along with ONE copy of the research proposal and THREE copies of the Ethical Review Form must be submitted to the Chair of the Ethical Review Committee, Graduate Office, Faculty of Education.

IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE A COPY OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL (INCLUDING REVISIONS) TO THE THESIS SUPERVISOR AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Student's Name: Caroline Thompson

TITLE OF THESIS: Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories

DOES THIS RESEARCH INVOLVE THE USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS: YES ☐ NO ☐

Name of Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Sharon Rich

Name(s) of Members of the Thesis Advisory Committee: Dr. Sandy Deluca

Dr. Janice Wallace

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:

Graduate Student: _____

Thesis Supervisor: _____

Advisory Committee: _____

_____

Ethical Review Clearance: _____

Review #: 0310-01 Date: Nov 6/03

Chair of Graduate Education: _____ Date: Nov 10/03

A STUDENT MAY PROCEED WITH RESEARCH WHEN A COPY OF THIS FORM CONTAINING ALL APPROVAL SIGNATURES HAS BEEN RECEIVED.

A COPY OF THIS PROPOSAL WILL BE MADE PUBLIC AND KEPT ON A TWO-HOUR RESERVE IN THE EDUCATION LIBRARY.

The University of Western Ontario Ethics Approval Notice

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS - ETHICS APPROVAL NOTICE

Applicant:	**Caroline Thompson**
Advisor/supervisor:	**Dr. Rich**
Type of research:	**Ph.D. thesis**
Review number:	**#0310-1**
Title:	**Inside school administration in Nunavut: three women's stories.**
Approval date:	**November 6, 2003**

This is to notify you that the Faculty of Education Ethical Review Committee, which operates under the authority of The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects, according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the date noted above.

No deviations from, or changes to, the research projects as described in this protocol may be initiated without prior written approval, except for minor administrative aspects. Investigators must promptly report to the Chair of the Faculty Ethical Review Committee any adverse or unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected, and any new information which may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study. In the event that any changes require a change in the information and consent documentation, newly revised documents must be submitted to the Committee for approval.

Dr. Anne Cummings (Chair)

2003-2004 Faculty of Education Ethical Review Committee

Dr. Anne Cummings	**Faculty (Chair)**
Dr. Allan Pitman	**Faculty**
Dr. Ellen Singleton	**Faculty**
Dr. Robert Macmillan	**Faculty**
Dr. Jacqueline Specht	**Faculty**
Dr. Carol Beynon	**Chair of Graduate Education (*ex officio*)**
Dr. Jerry Paquette	**University Ethical Review Board (*ex officio*)**

The Faculty of Education
1137 Western Rd.
London, ON N6G 1G7

Patricia Allison, Institutional Research Officer
Room 2031 Faculty of Education Building

APPENDIX 3

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Application for Nunavut Licences and Results

Appendix C: Social Sciences and Traditional Knowledge Research

Project Proposal

- Overall Program

I am a third year Ph.D. student in the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario. My research will investigate the factors that motivate Inuit women to become principals in Nunavut. The study will build on my M.Ed. research, in which I used a written survey to collect the perceptions of Inuit women educators of the principal's role. In my proposed study I would like to interview three Inuit educators about school administration.

- Methodology

I will audiotape the stories of three Inuit women in and at a location of their choosing. Each of the participants will have the opportunity to respond in Inuktitut with an interpreter. I will listen for common themes that emerge in what they say. Their stories will be presented anonymously and collectively, to ensure confidentiality.

Sample questions are:

1. How many years have you been employed by the Nunavut Department of Education?
2. What is your current job title?
3. How many years of professional preparation as specified by the Nunavut Department of Education have you had?
4. What influences led you to an interest in school administration?
5. Describe a typical day for a principal in your school.
6. What prepared you for work in school administration?
7. What changes do you think a principal can make to create a school that reflects Inuit values?
8. What has been your role in the development of curriculum and educational policy documents?

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- **Data**

When the interviews of no more than two hours each have been completed, I will transcribe them onto paper, and read them until themes emerge. I will send each participant her transcript to verify that my understanding of what she said is correct, and make any requested changes. The data will be kept in a locked file cabinet in my office at the University of Western Ontario, in compliance with requirements of the university. The audiotapes will be erased after the data has been transcribed and approved by the participants as accurate. The Inuit participants will have intellectual property rights, in keeping with *Ethical Principals for the Conduct of Research in the North*, a publication of the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, and *Negotiating Research Relationships in the North*, published by the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada.

- **Participant Consent**

The form to obtain written consent from the participants to be in the study is attached. Signed documents will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office at the university until the end of the research, when they will be destroyed.

- **Reporting**

In reporting the results of the study, no one will be identified by name. The stories of the three women will be presented collectively. Copies of the entire study will be sent to the Minister of Education, the Executive Director of School Operations, the Nunavut Research Institute, and the Education Library of the University of Western Ontario. Bilingual copies of the Executive Summary of the research will be sent to each District Education Authority in Nunavut.

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

ᓱᓇᑐᐃᓐᓇᕐᓂᒃ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᐃᓂᕐᒧᑦ ᓚᐃᓴᓐᓯᑖᕈᑎᒃᓴᖅ ᑭᐅᕈᓚᐃᓐ ᑖᓪᓴᓐ

ᓇᓗᓇᐃᔭᐅᑎ C: ᐃᓅᖃᑎᒌᖕᓂᕐᒧᑦ ᐃᓕᖅᑯᓯᑐᖃᓕᕆᓂᕐᒧᓪᓗ ᖃᐅᔨᒪᔭᕆᔭᐅᔪᓂᒃ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑎᒃᓴᖅ

ᐱᓕᕆᐊᖑᔪᒪᔪᒧᑦ ᑐᒃᓯᕋᐅᑦ

ᐃᓗᐃᑦᑐᒃᑯᑦ ᐱᓕᕆᐊᖑᔪᒪᔪᖅ

ᐱᖓᔪᐊᓂᒃ ᐅᑭᐅᒥᒃ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᓕᖅᑐᖓ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᓂᓕᕆᓂᐅᑉ ᒥᒃᓵᓄᑦ ᐋᓐᑎᐅᕆᔫᑉ ᓯᓚᑦᑐᖅᓴᕐᕕᖓᓂ. ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑎᒋᔭᕋ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑕᐅᓂᐊᖅᑐᖅ ᓱᖕᒪᑦ ᐃᓄᐃᑦ ᐊᕐᓇᑦ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᖕᓂ ᐃᓱᒪᑕᖑᕈᒪᖃᑦᑕᕐᒪᖔᑕ ᓄᓇᕗᒥ. ᑕᒪᓐᓇ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑕᐅᔪᖅ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕈᑎᒐᓄᑦ ᐱᕚᓪᓕᕈᑕᐅᓂᐊᖅᑐᖅ, ᑎᑎᕋᖅᓯᒪᔪᒃᑯᑦ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑎᖃᕆᐊᖃᕐᓂᖏᓄᑦ ᑲᑎᑦᑎᓗᖓ ᖃᓄᖅ ᐃᓄᐃᑦ ᐊᕐᓇᑦ ᐃᓱᒪᖃᑦᑕᕐᒪᖔᑕ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᖕᒥᒃ ᐃᓱᒪᑕᖑᕈᒪᖃᑦᑕᕐᓂᖏᓐᓄᑦ. ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑎᒐᓂ ᐊᐱᖅᓱᕈᒪᔪᖓ ᐱᖓᓱᓂᒃ ᐃᓄᖕᓂᒃ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᖅᑐᓕᕆᓂᕐᒧᑦ ᑲᒪᔨᐅᓯᒪᔪᓂᒃ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᖕᓂᒃ ᐊᐅᓚᑦᑎᖃᑦᑕᕐᓂᐅᑉ ᒥᒃᓵᓄᑦ.

ᐱᓕᕆᐊᖑᔪᒃᑯᑦ ᐋᖅᑭᐅᒪᓂᕆᔭᖓ

ᓂᐱᓕᐅᕐᓂᐊᖅᑕᒃᑲ ᐱᖓᓱᑦ ᐊᕐᓇᑦ ᐃᓄᐃᑦ ᐃᖕᒥᓂᒃ ᓂᕈᐊᖅᑕᕐᓗᑎᒃ ᓇᓂ ᐊᐱᖅᓱᖅᑕᐅᔪᒪᓇᔭᕐᒪᖔᖏᒃ. ᐊᐱᖅᓱᖅᑕᒃᑲ ᐃᓱᒪᖅᓱᕐᓂᐊᖅᑐᑦ ᑭᐅᖃᑦᑕᕈᒪᒍᑎᒃ ᐃᓅᒃᑎᑐᑦ ᑐᓵᔨᖃᕐᓂᐊᕐᒪᑦ. ᐊᔾᔨᒌᖕᓂᒃ ᐅᖃᐅᓯᖃᖅᓯᔭᖅᑐᓂᒃ ᐅᔾᔨᖅᑐᖃᑦᑕᕐᓂᐊᖅᑐᖓ ᐅᖃᐅᓯᐅᔪᑦ ᒪᓕᒡᓗᒋᑦ. ᐅᓂᒃᑳᖅᑐᐊᖏᑦ ᓴᖅᑭᑎᑕᐅᖃᑦᑕᕐᓂᐊᖅᑐᑦ ᑕᒪᕐᒥᒃ ᐃᓱᒪᒋᓗᒋᑦ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᑲᑎᓗᒃᑖᖅᓯᒪᓗᒋᑦ, ᑭᒃᑯᑐᐃᓐᓇᕐᓄᑦ ᑐᓴᐅᒪᔭᐅᖁᓇᒋᑦ.

ᐆᒃᑑᑏᑦ ᐊᐱᖅᑯᑕᐅᓇᔭᖅᑐᑦ:

1. ᖃᑉᓯᓂᒃ ᐅᑭᐅᓂᒃ ᓴᓇᓕᖅᐱᑦ ᓄᓇᕗᒥ ᒐᕙᒪᒃᑯᑦ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᓂᓕᕆᔩᒃᑯᖏᓐᓂᒃ?
2. ᓱᓇᓕᕆᔨᐅᕕᑦ?
3. ᖃᑉᓯᓂᒃ ᐅᑭᐅᓂᒃ ᐸᕐᓇᒃᓯᒪᕕᑦ ᒪᓕᒡᓗᒋᑦ ᓄᓇᕘᑦ ᒐᕙᒪᒃᑯᖏᑦᑕ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᓂᓕᕆᓂᕐᒧᑦ ᐊᑐᐊᒐᖏᓐᓂᒃ?
4. ᓱᓇᑦ ᐱᔾᔪᑎᒋᑉᓗᒋᑦ ᑕᒪᑐᒥᖓ ᐱᔫᒥᒍᓱᓕᓚᐅᖅᐱᑦ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᖕᓂ ᐊᐅᓚᑦᑎᔨᐅᔪᓐᓇᕐᓂᕐᒧᑦ?
5. ᐅᖃᐅᓯᖃᓇᑦ ᖃᓄᖅ ᐅᑉᓗᖃᕐᓇᕐᒪᖔᑦ ᐃᓱᒪᑕᐅᓪᓗᓂ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᖕᒥ?
6. ᖃᓄᖅ ᐸᕐᓇᓚᐅᖅᐱᑦ ᓴᓇᔨᐅᓂᐊᓕᖅᓗᑎᑦ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᖕᒥ ᐊᐅᓚᑦᑎᔨᐅᓂᕐᒧᑦ?
7. ᖃᓄᑭᐊᖅ ᐊᓯᔾᔩᔭᓐᓇᖅᐸ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᖕᒥ ᐃᓱᒪᑕᐅᔪᖅ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᐅᔪᑦ ᐃᓄᖕᓄᑦ ᐊᒃᓱᕈᑕᐅᕚᒃᑐᓂᒃ ᐃᓗᓕᖅᐸᓪᓕᐊᓕᕈᓐᓇᖁᑉᓗᒍ?

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

ᓱᓇᑐᐃᓐᓇᕐᓂᒃ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᐃᓂᕐᒧᑦ ᓚᐃᓴᓐᓯᑖᕈᑎᒃᓴᖅ ᑭᐅᕈᓚᐃᓐ ᑖᒻᓴᓐ

ᑎᑎᖅᑲᑦ

ᐊᐱᖅᓱᐊᓂᒃᑯᒪ ᒪᕐᕈᒃ ᐃᑲᕐᕋᑦ ᑐᖓᓂ, ᑎᑎᕋᖅᐸᓪᓕᐊᓕᕋᔭᖅᑕᒃᑲ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᐅᖃᓕᒫᕐᓗᒋᑦ ᑐᑭᓯᓇᖅᓯᓂᖓᓄᑦ ᑎᑭᑉᐸᓪᓕᐊᓂᓗᒃᑖᖓᓄᑦ. ᐃᓚᐅᖃᑕᐅᔪᑦ ᑕᒪᕐᒥᒃ ᑐᓂᓇᔭᖅᑕᒃᑲ ᐅᖃᐅᓯᕆᓚᐅᖅᑕᖕᒥᓐᓂᒃ ᓇᓗᓇᐃᖅᓯᒋᐊᕐᓗᖓ ᑐᑭᓯᑦᑎᐊᓚᐅᕐᓗᐊᕐᒪᖔᕐᒪ ᐅᖃᐅᓯᐅᔪᓂᒃ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᐊᓯᔾᔨᕐᑯᔭᐅᔪᓂᒃ ᐊᓯᔾᔩᓗᖓ. ᑎᑎᕋᖅᓯᒪᔪᑦ ᑐᖅᑯᖅᓯᒪᓇᔭᖅᑕᒃᑲ ᐸᓐᖓᐃᖅᓯᒪᔪᒥ ᐊᓕᓚᔪᖃᕐᕕᖕᒥ ᑎᑎᕐᕕᖓᓂ ᐊᓐᑎᐅᕆᔫᑉ ᓯᓚᑦᑐᖅᓴᕐᕕᖓᓂ, ᒪᓕᒃᓗᒋᑦ ᓯᓚᑦᑐᖅᓴᕐᕕᐅᑉ ᒪᓕᒐᖏᑦ. ᓂᐱᓕᐅᖅᓯᒪᔪᑦ ᓄᖑᓴᓕᕋᔭᖅᑕᒃᑲ ᑎᑎᕌᓂᒃᑯᑉᑭᑦ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᓈᒻᒪᒋᔭᐅᓂᕋᖅᑕᐅᓯᒪᓕᖅᐸᑕ ᐃᓚᐅᖃᑕᐅᓚᐅᖅᑐᓄᑦ. ᐃᓄᐃᑦ ᐃᓚᐅᖃᑕᐅᔪᑦ ᓇᖕᒥᓂᖃᕐᓂᖏᓐᓄᑦ ᐃᓕᑕᕆᔭᐅᓯᒪᓇᔭᖅᑐᑦ, ᒪᓕᒃᓗᒍ ᑎᑎᕋᖅᓯᒪᔪᖅ *ᒪᓕᒃᑕᐅᔭᕆᐊᖃᖅᑐᓄᑦ ᕿᒥᕐᕈᓂᖃᕐᓂᐊᕐᓗᓂ ᐅᑭᐅᖅᑕᖅᑐᒥ,* ᑎᑎᕋᖅᓯᒪᔪᓂᒃ ᓴᖅᑭᑎᑦᑎᖃᑦᑕᕐᓂᖅ ᑲᓇᑕᒥ ᓯᓚᑦᑐᖅᓴᕐᕕᖕᓂᒃ ᐅᑭᐅᖅᑕᖅᑐᒥᐅᓄᑦ ᑐᕌᖓᔪᓂᒃ, ᐊᒻᒪᓗ *ᐊᖕᖃᑎᒌᒐᓱᐊᖃᑦᑕᕐᓂᖅ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑕᐅᔭᕆᐊᓕᖕᓄᑦ ᐅᑭᐅᖅᑕᖅᑐᒥ,* ᓴᖅᑭᑎᑕᐅᓚᐅᖅᑐᖅ ᐃᓄᐃᑦ ᑕᐱᕇᒃᓴᑦ ᑲᓇᑕᒥ.

ᐃᓚᐅᖃᑕᐅᓂᐊᖅᑐᑦ ᐊᖏᕈᑎᖓ

ᑕᑕᑎᖅᑕᐅᔭᕆᐊᓕᒃ ᑎᑎᕋᖅᓯᒪᔪᒃᑯᑦ ᐊᖏᕆᐊᖃᕐᓂᕐᒧᑦ ᐃᓚᐅᖃᑕᐅᓂᐊᖅᑐᓂᒃ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑕᐅᔪᒧᑦ ᐃᓚᐅᖃᑕᐅᔪᖅ. ᐊᑎᓕᐅᖅᑕᐅᓯᒪᔪᑦ ᑐᖅᑯᖅᑕᐅᑦᑎᐊᖅᓯᒪᖃᑦᑕᕐᓂᐊᖅᑐᑦ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕐᕕᐅᑉ ᑎᑎᕋᕐᕕᖓᓂ ᓯᓚᑦᑐᖅᓴᕐᕕᖕᒥ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕐᓂᐅᔪᖅ ᐱᐊᓂᒃᐸᓪᓕᐊᓂᓗᒃᑖᖓᓄᑦ ᑕᐃᑲᖓᓗ ᐊᓕᒃᑐᖅᑕᐅᓗᑎᒃ ᐃᒋᑕᐅᓇᔭᖅᓗᑎᒃ.

ᐅᓂᒃᑳᓕᐅᕐᓂᖅ

ᐅᓂᒃᑳᓕᐅᕐᓂᐊᖅᑎᓪᓗᖓ ᖃᐅᔨᓯᒪᔭᒃᑲᓂᒃ, ᐊᑎᕐᓂᒃ ᐊᑐᔾᔩᖏᑦᑐᖓ. ᐱᖓᓱᑦ ᐊᕐᓇᑦ ᐅᖃᐅᓯᕆᔭᒃᑲ ᑲᑎᓪᓗᒋᑦ ᐅᓂᒃᑳᓕᐊᕋᓄᑦ ᐃᓕᓯᒪᓂᐊᖅᑕᒃᑲ. ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑕᐅᔪᖅ ᑐᓂᕐᕈᑕᐅᓂᐊᖅᑐᖅ ᒥᓂᔅᑕᒧᑦ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᓂᓕᕆᓂᕐᒧᑦ, ᑐᑭᒧᐊᒃᑎᑦᑎᔨᐅᔪᒧᑦ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᓐᓂᒃ ᐊᐅᓚᑦᑎᔾᔪᑕᐅᕙᒃᑐᓂᒃ, ᓄᓇᕗᒥ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᖅᑎᐅᔪᓄᑦ ᐊᒻᒪᓗ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᓂᓕᕆᓂᕐᒧᑦ ᐅᖃᓕᒫᒐᖃᕐᕕᖕᒧᑦ ᐊᓐᑎᐅᕆᔫᑉ ᓯᓚᑦᑐᖅᓴᕐᕕᖓᓄᑦ. ᐃᓄᒃᑎᑑᓕᖓᔪᑦ ᖃᓪᓗᓈᑎᑐᓪᓗ ᑎᑎᕋᖅᓯᒪᔪᑦ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᕈᑎᒧᑦ ᓇᐃᓪᓕᒋᐊᖅᓯᒪᔪᑦ ᐅᓂᒃᑳᓕᐊᑦ ᐊᐅᓪᓚᖅᑎᑕᐅᓂᐊᖅᑐᑦ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᓂᓕᕆᔨᒃᑯᑦ ᑲᑎᒪᔨᖏᓐᓄᑦ ᓄᓇᕗᒥ.

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Nunavummi Qaujisaqtulirijikkut / Nunavut Research Institute
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: slcnri@nunanet.com

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENCE

LICENCE # 0300604N-M

ISSUED TO: Caroline Thompson
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario
1137 Western Road
London, On
N6G 1G7 Canada
519 661-2111

TEAM MEMBERS: Caroline Thompson

AFFILIATION: University of Western Ontario

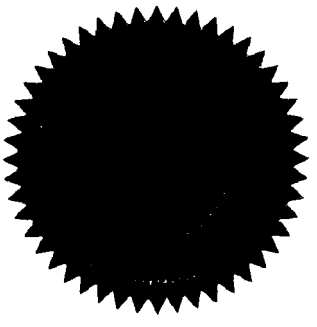
TITLE: Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:
My research will investigate the factors that motivate Inuit women to become principles in Nunavut. In this study I would like to interview three Inuit educators about school administration. I will audiotape the stories of three Inuit women in and at a location of their choosing. Each of the participants will have the opportunity to respond in Inuktituk with an interpreter. I will listen for common themes that emerge in what they say. These themes will be used to create the final report. Their stories will be presented anonymously and collectively, to ensure confidentiality.

DATA COLLECTION IN NU:
DATES: April 01, 2004-August 01, 2004
LOCATION:

Scientific Research Licence 0300604N-M expires on December 31, 2003
Issued at Iqaluit, NU on

Earle Baddaloo
Science Advisor



Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Nunavummi Qaujisaqtulirijikkut / Nunavut Research Institute
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: slcnri@nunanet.com

NOTIFICATION OF RESEARCH

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT SCIENCE RESEARCH LICENCE No. 0300604N-M HAS BEEN ISSUED TO:

Caroline Thompson
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario
1137 Western Road
London, On
N6G 1G7 Canada
519 661-2111

TO CONDUCT THE FOLLOWING STUDY:
Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH:
My research will investigate the factors that motivate Inuit women to become principles in Nunavut. In this study I would like to interview three Inuit educators about school administration. I will audiotape the stories of three Inuit women in and at a location of their choosing. Each of the participants will have the opportunity to respond in Inuktituk with an interpreter. I will listen for common themes that emerge in what they say. These themes will be used to create the final report. Their stories will be presented anonymously and collectively, to ensure confidentiality.

THE STUDY WILL BE CONDUCTED AT:
BETWEEN: April 01, 2004 - August 01, 2004

Mary Ellen Thomas
Manager, Research Liaison

DISTRIBUTION:
Executive Director, Divisional Board of Education
Mayor SAO
Chairperson HTO
Mayor SAO
Chairperson HTO
Mayor SAO
Chairperson HTO
NTI Social and Cultural Development Department
Lands Manager

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Mail :: INBOX: Re: license info Page 1 of 1

INBOX Compose Folders Options Search Help Address Book Logout Open Folder INBOX

INBOX: Re: license info (19 of 198) Move | Copy This message to

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Date: Fri, 18 Jun 2004 16:04:39 -0400
From: Rene Malcom
To:
Cc:
Subject: Re: license info

Caroline,
This was an error that was printed improperly. I believe it was the section that says "community involvement, as I can see that you listed " and " in this section. Please don't worry I can make you a new licence minus the wrong locations. I will fax this amendment to you asap. Sorry about the confusion!!!

Renee Malcom
Manager, Research Liaison
Nunavut Research Institute
979-7279

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Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Nunavummi Qaujisaqtulirijikkut / Nunavut Research Institute
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NT X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: slcnri@nunanet.com

June 08, 2004

Caroline Thompson
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario
1137 Western Road
London, On
N6G 1G7 Canada
519 661-3029

RE: 2004 Science Research License

Please find enclosed your 2004 Research License No. **0300604N-M AMENDED** which was prepared under the *NUNAVUT SCIENTISTS ACT*. Should you require further support from the NRI Research Centre, please contact the Manager to discuss your research needs.

Consistent with the *Scientists' Act*, researchers issued licenses must submit to NRI an *Annual Summary Report* of their research. Upon completion of your fieldwork in the Nunavut, please ensure that you submit a 500-1000 word non-technical *Annual Summary* of your research activities and findings within one year from the date of license issue, or with any new project application, which ever is earlier. To ensure maximum accessibility of your research results to Nunavut residents, we require that you provide us with an Inuktitut or Innuinaqtun translation of your *Annual Summary Report*. A list of translators is available from the Nunavut Research Institute upon request. We also require a copy of your *Final Report* and an English and translated executive summary. Copies of papers that you publish are greatly appreciated. Computer disk copies of reports, in Word Perfect or Microsoft Word, would be most appreciated for posting on the NRI web site (www.nunanet.com/~research).

Thank-you in advance for assisting in the promotion and development of a scientific research community and database within Nunavut. The reports and information you provide are utilized to prepare an annual research compendium, which is distributed to communities and organizations in Nunavut as well as to researchers across Canada.

Please accept our best wishes for success in your research project.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Thomas
Manager, Research Liaison

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Nunavummi Qaujisaqtulirijikkut / Nunavut Research Institute
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: slcnri@nunanet.com

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENCE

LICENCE # 0300604N-M AMENDED

ISSUED TO: Caroline Thompson
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario
1137 Western Road
London, On
N6G 1G7 Canada
519 661-2111

TEAM MEMBERS: Caroline Thompson

AFFILIATION: University of Western Ontario

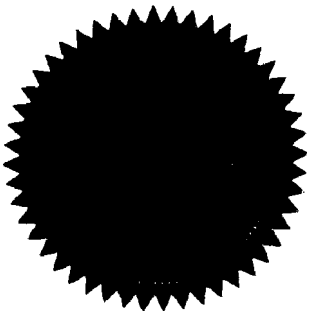
TITLE: Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:
My research will investigate the factors that motivate Inuit women to become principals in Nunavut. In this study I would like to interview three Inuit educators about school administration. I will audiotape the stories of three Inuit women in [illegible] and [illegible] at a location of their choosing. Each of the participants will have the opportunity to respond in Inuktituk with an interpreter. I will listen for common themes that emerge in what they say. These themes will be used to create the final report. Their stories will be presented anonymously and collectively, to ensure confidentiality.

DATA COLLECTION IN NU:
DATES: April 01, 2004-December 31, 2004
LOCATION: [illegible]

Scientific Research Licence 0300604N-M expires on December 31, 2004
Issued at Iqaluit, NU on June 8, 2004

Earle Baddaloo
Science Advisor



Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

INBOX: Your License Question (1 of 197) Move | Copy

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Date: Tue, 14 Sep 2004 10:25:04 -0400
From: Moshi Kotierk
To:
Subject: Your License Question

Hi Caroline,
You and I spoke with each other yesterday regarding the possibility of reapplying for a research licence since two of the people you wished to interview have moved to different communities.
If you are going to be performing the interviews over the phone, you will not be required to reapply. If you wish to go to or for these interviews, then you will be required to reapply.
I hope that this is understandable. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to ask us at the Nunavut Research Institute.
Qujannamiik.
Moshi

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Request for Renewal of Multi-Year Scientific Research License # 0300604N-M

Caroline J. Thompson
University of Western Ontario
Faculty of Education
1137 Western Road
London, ON N6G 1G7

Annual Summary Report

I am a fourth year Ph.D. student in the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario. My research is investigating the factors that motivate Inuit women to become principals in Nunavut. The study builds on my M.Ed. research, in which I used a written survey to collect the perceptions of Inuit women educators of the principal's role. In my current study I interviewed four Inuit educators about school administration.

I was fortunate to be awarded a Northern Training Grant of $2,150 from the Northern Scientific Training Program of Canada's Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to support some of my transportation costs when I traveled to and in September 2004 for the field work portion of my study. While in Nunavut, I interviewed three Inuit administrators in and Each of the participants was given the opportunity to respond in Inuktitut with an interpreter. Two of the participants that I interviewed, suggested that it might be helpful for me to also interview a fourth Inuit administrator in When I contacted the Acting Manager and Research Liaison of the Nunavut Research Institute, Moshi Kotierk, requesting permission to reapply for an additional research license to interview someone in he advised me by e-mail on September 14, 2004 that it would not be necessary for me to apply for another license if I

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

conducted the interview by telephone. I interviewed the fourth participant by phone on October 7, 2004 after I had returned to the University of Western Ontario.

I audiotaped each of the interviews I conducted and transcribed them into writing in my office at the university. I have sent each of the participants a copy of their written transcript for them to verify that I have understood what they meant to say. Each participant has been invited to add to, or remove from the transcript any information for the sake of clarification. Once I have received confirmation from the four Inuit administrators that they are satisfied with the information I have, I will listen for common themes that emerge in all four transcripts. In the reporting of my research, their stories will be presented anonymously and collectively, to ensure confidentiality. In the meantime, the data is being kept in a locked file cabinet in my office at the University of Western Ontario, in compliance with requirements of the university. The audiotapes will be erased after the data has been approved by the participants as accurate. Written consent from the participants to be in the study is also being stored in a locked file cabinet in my office at the university, and will be destroyed at the end of the study.

In reporting the results of the study, no one will be identified by name. The stories of the four women will be presented collectively. Copies of the entire study will be sent to the Minister of Education, the Executive Director of School Operations, the Nunavut Research Institute, and the Education Library of the University of Western Ontario. Bilingual copies of the Executive Summary of the research will be sent to each District Education Authority in Nunavut.

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

January 4, 2005

Caroline Thompson
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario
1137 Western Road
London, On
N6G 1G7 Canada

This is to acknowledge receipt of your ***Annual Summary Report*** on the project "Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories", license number **0300205R-M** granted on January 26, 2005.

NRI appreciates the information you have submitted. Your report will be placed on file at NRI and copies of your report will also be distributed to those agencies that were involved in the licensing review process for your project. Your report will also be a welcome addition to the NRI database.

The NRI database is used to assist in replying to public requests for information, and to provide information to other researchers who may wish to undertake similar projects. We hope that sharing information will help to foster growth in Northern science and increase awareness of the value of research to Nunavut residents.

We look forward to receiving a copy of the ***Final Report*** on your project, whether it is a paper, thesis, or other publication. Computer disk copies in Word Perfect or Microsoft Word would be most appreciated if you would like posting or referencing of your report on the NRI web site (www.nunanet.com/~research).

In closing, we trust your research experience in Nunavut has been positive and ask that you please encourage your colleagues to contact NRI if they intend to undertake a research project in Nunavut. We look forward to assisting them in obtaining proper approvals from community agencies, Designated Inuit Organizations for the Nunavut Land Claim and government regulatory bodies.

Regards,

Jennifer Cockwell
Manager, Research Liaison

cc: Executive Director, Divisional Board of Education
Mayor SAO
Chairperson HTO
Mayor SAO
Chairperson HTO
Mayor SAO
Chairperson HTO
NTI Social and Cultural Development Department
Lands Manager
Policy Analyst Dept. of Education

P.O. Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0. Tel: (867) 979-6734, Fax: (867) 979-4681, Internet: iqrenri@nunanet.com
ᑎᑎᖅᑲᓂᐊᕐᕕᖓ ᔫᒥ 1720, ᐃᖃᓗᐃᑦ, ᓄᓇᕗᑦ X0A 0H0, ᐅᖄᓚᐅᑦ: (867) 979-6734, ᐱᓯᒃᑯᑦ: (867) 979-4681, ᖃᕆᑕᐅᔭᒃᑯᑦ: iqrenri@nunanet.com
ᖃᕆᑕᐅᔭᒃᑯᑦ ᓴᖅᑭᔭᖅᑎᑦᑎᕕᒃ. Web site: www.nunanet.com/~research

ᓄᓇᕗᑦ ᐃᓕᓐᓂᐊᕐᕕᒃ
Nunavut Arctic College

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Nunavummi Qaujisaqtulirijikkut / Nunavut Research Institute
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: slcnri@nunanet.com

January 26, 2005

NOTIFICATION OF RESEARCH

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT SCIENCE RESEARCH LICENCE No. 0300205R-M HAS BEEN ISSUED TO:

Caroline Thompson
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario
1137 Western Road
London, On
N6G 1G7 Canada
519 661-2111

TO CONDUCT THE FOLLOWING STUDY:
Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH:
My research will investigate the factors that motivate Inuit women to become principles in Nunavut. In this study I would like to interview three Inuit educators about school administration. I will audiotape the stories of three Inuit women in and at a location of their choosing. Each of the participants will have the opportunity to respond in Inuktituk with an interpreter. I will listen for common themes that emerge in what they say. These themes will be used to create the final report. Their stories will be presented anonymously and collectively, to ensure confidentiality.

THE STUDY WILL BE CONDUCTED AT:
BETWEEN: January 01, 2005 - December 31, 2005

Jennifer Cockwell
Manager, Research Liaison

DISTRIBUTION:
Executive Director, Divisional Board of Education
Mayor SAO
Mayor SAO
Mayor SAO
NTI Social and Policy Advisor
Lands Manager KivIA
Policy Analyst Dept. of Education

Application for Nunavut Research Licences and Results

Nunavummi Qaujisaqtulirijikkut / Nunavut Research Institute
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: slcnri@nunanet.com

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENCE

LICENCE # 0300205R-M AMENDED

ISSUED TO: Caroline Thompson
Faculty of Education
University of Western Ontario
1137 Western Road
London, On
N6G 1G7 Canada

TEAM MEMBERS: Caroline Thompson

AFFILIATION: University of Western Ontario

TITLE: Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:
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TERMS & CONDITIONS: Approval from each District Education Authority must be obtained.

DATA COLLECTION IN NU:
DATES: January 01, 2005-December 31, 2005
LOCATION:

Scientific Research Licence 0300205R-M expires on December 31, 2005
Issued at Iqaluit, NU on March 9, 2005

Earle Baddaloo
Science Advisor

APPENDIX 4

Information Letter to Executive Directors of Regional School Operations Offices and their Responses

Information Letter to Executive Directors of Regional School Operations Offices and their Responses

INSIDE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NUNAVUT: THREE WOMEN'S STORIES

LETTER OF INFORMATION TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL SERVICES

My name is Caroline Thompson and I am a full-time Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into how Inuit women understand their role as the principal of a Nunavut school and would like to invite you to participate in this research.

The aims of this research are to examine Inuit principals' perspectives of school administration at the current time, and what it is like for them in their role as school leaders.

Information for this research will be collected by means of audiotape recordings of some structured demographic questions and semi-structured conversational interviews. There will be as many as three interviews that will range from 1.5 to 2 hours in length. In some cases follow-up by telephone or e-mail may be requested. Interviews will be conducted at a location mutually agreed upon by the participant and researcher.

I have applied to the Nunavut Research Institute for a research license and to the Ethical Review Committee of the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario for approval of my proposed study. I will take all precautions to ensure that the research procedures are consistent with the highest ethical stamdards. I am writing to request permission from you to include Inuit women educators who have been, are currently, or aspire to be principals of Nunavut schools, as participants in the study. I plan to collect data this winter through structured and semi-structured interviews that will be conducted in Inuktitut if the participants desire. I will make the results available to the Nunavut Department of Education, all Nunavut District Education Authorities, Nunavut School Services, and the Nunavut Research Institute. I will share my interpretations of the data with the participants on an ongoing basis throughout the study. No individual participants will be identified by name and the their stories will be combined and reported collectively to protect confidentiality.

If you have any questions or require further clarification, please contact me by e-mail at or by telephone at . You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. Sharon Rich, by e-mail or by telephone at

Sincerely,

Caroline Thompson
Ph.D. Candidate
Faculty of Education
The University of Western Ontario

Information Letter to Executive Directors of Regional School Operations

Offices and their Responses

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Ilikhaktuliginikut Havakviat

Department of Education
Kivalliq School Operations

Ministère de l'Éducation
Services scolaires – Kivalliq

September 10, 2004

Caroline Thompson
Ph. D. Candidate
Faculty of Education

Dear Caroline,

The Kivalliq Regional School Operations office is pleased to be able to support your research project: Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories.

We are hopeful that the insight gained through this project will assist us to continue to develop strategies to support our current Inuit administrators as well as to encourage Inuit teachers to apply for administrative positions.

We look forward to reviewing the report and discussing its outcomes with you.

Yours truly,

Bonnie Spence-Vinge
Executive Director
Kivalliq School Operations

P.O. Box 90
Baker Lake NU X0C 0A0
Canada

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867-793-2803
867-793-2896

Information Letter to Executive Directors of Regional School Operations Offices and their Responses

INBOX: RE: Inuit Principals (1 of 55) Move | Copy

Delete | Reply | Reply to All | Forward | Redirect | Blacklist | Message Source | Save as | Print

Date: Fri, 30 May 2003 18:02:24 -0400
From: "Kuliktana, Millie"
To: "'cthomp4@uwo.ca'"
Subject: RE: Inuit Principals

Good afternoon,
I would be happy to assist you with your studies. In the Kitikmeot Region we have Inuit Principals, with a coming on line this fall. This third position will be in a Co-Principalship with another Principal who is not an Inuk. out of the are women.
is based here in Kugluktuk at the Jimmy Hikok Iliharvik (Elementary, is at the Quqshuun School in Gjoa Haven and will be a Co-Pal in Kuugaruk beginning this fall. I hope this helps you.

Millie Qitupana Kuliktana
Executive Director
Kitikmeot School Operations, Dept. of Education
P.O. Box 287 Kugluktuk, NU XOB OEO

Information Letter to Executive Directors of Regional School Operations

Offices and their Responses

INBOX: RE: Information request (1 of 50) Move | Copy This mess

Delete | Reply | Reply to All | Forward | Redirect | Blacklist | Message Source | Save as | Print Back to IN

Date: Fri, 30 May 2003 11:39:02 -0400
From: "Banfield, Charles"
To: "'cthomp4@uwo.ca'"
Subject: RE: Information request

Hi Ms. Thompson

There are . . Inuit women principals (& co-principals) in the Qikiqtani School Operations (Baffin) region.

You have my permission to contact them to determinate if they are agreeable to being interviewed. Their involvement is their choice.

As discussed, it is important that you request and receive permission from the respective community's District Education Authority before you begin your research activity in the schools.

Also, please keep me informed of your activity in this regard.

Thank you,

C. Banfield
Executive Director
Qikiqtani School Operations

APPENDIX 5

Information Letter to Participants, Consent Form, and Letter Requesting Confirmation of Data Analysis for Thematic Content

Information Letter to Participants, Consent Form, and Follow-up Letter

INSIDE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NUNAVUT: THREE WOMEN'S STORIES

LETTER OF INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS

My name is Caroline Thompson and I am a full-time Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into how Inuit women understand their role as the principal of a Nunavut school and would like to invite you to participate in this research.

The aims of this research are to examine Inuit principals' perspectives of school administration at the current time, and what it is like for them in their role as school leaders.

Information for this research will be collected by means of audiotape recordings of some structured demographic questions and semi-structured conversational interviews. There will be as many as three interviews that will range from 1.5 to 2 hours in length. In some cases follow-up by telephone or e-mail may be requested. Interviews will be conducted at a location mutually agreed upon by the participant and researcher.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name will not be used. I cannot guarantee you anonymity because you are known in your community as a principal, or someone who has expressed interest in this role. Each participant in the study will be given a pseudonym of their own choosing, and data collected will be identified by this pseudonym or number. Confidentiality will be protected by transcribing the data on each audiotape by number only. You will be given the audiotaped recording of each interview, and will have the opportunity to clarify what you have said. All files will be kept in my office at The University of Western Ontario until the audiotapes have been transcribed. At that time my interpretations of what you have told me will be shared with you. After you have made any corrections to my possible misinterpretations, the audiotapes will be erased. At the end of the study, all of the data will be erased from computer files and paper files will be shredded.

Should you consent to participate in this research, please be aware that you have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty, should you wish to do so, or to decline to answer any specific questions you would prefer not to answer.

If you have any questions about this research, or any comments to make now or at a later date, please contact Caroline Thompson at [redacted] extension [redacted], or Dr. Sharon Rich at [redacted], extension [redacted]. I look forward to talking with you soon, and will be calling you in the near future to discuss arrangements for your participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Caroline Thompson
Ph.D. Candidate
Faculty of Education
The University of Western Ontario

Information Letter to Participants, Consent Form, and Follow-up Letter

Information Letter to Participants, Consent Form, and Follow-up Letter

INSIDE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NUNAVUT: THREE WOMEN'S STORIES

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Letter of Information relating to the above-titled project, I understand the proposed research and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without incurring a penalty of any kind, that I may decline to answer any specific questions should I choose to do so, and that the information collected is for research purposes only.

I consent to participate in this study.

Name (please print):

Signature: Date:

Information Letter to Participants, Consent Form, and Follow-up Letter

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Information Letter to Participants, Consent Form, and Follow-up Letter
Caroline Thompson

September 26, 2005

Dear Research Participants:

I hope you enjoyed your summer vacation and found some time to relax and prepare for the new school year. As I promised, I am sending you the themes that emerged from our interviews last fall. Please look them over and let me know my understanding matches with what you intended to convey. I invite you to also provide any additional information that might clarify your perspective, and recommendations that I delete what might be an incorrect interpretation on my part. Please send me your reactions by email at cthomp4.uwo.ca, by telephone at [redacted], extension [redacted], or by mail at the above address. If I haven't heard back by the end of October, I will phone you to make sure I'll be communicating what you intended. Thank you for being part of this study of school administration in Nunavut.

The themes are presented in the order of what generated the most response. I am assuming this means that they represent the issues you felt were most important in sharing what it is like for you to be a school administrator – my research question. I interviewed four people but am presenting the data collectively so no one person can be identified. If you feel any them does not represent your feelings, please let me know. I want you to be comfortable with the results of the study.

1. Students are the administrators' primary concern.
    a. Students deserve to be treated with respect.
    b. The nature of interactions between students and staff determines how successful a school is.
    c. Students are a driving force in shaping the future of education and need to communicate school goals, curriculum and procedures to parents.
    d. Teaching students gives the Inuit administrator greatest satisfaction.
    e. Teachers have the best understanding of student needs and progress through daily contact with them.

2. Inuit administrators have insider knowledge regarding community values that affect discipline, policies, and communication.
    a. They experience first-hand community events that affect student behaviour.
    b. Speaking Inuktitut is essential for developing pride in students and calming upset parents and children.
    c. They want elders to be included as staff members on a regular basis.

3. Inuit administrators perform their duties through personal interactions with others.
   a. They require more time with their principals and co-principals during working hours for discussion.
   b. Every administrator needs to be informed of the activities, progress and results principal working groups. Efforts should be made to make everyone aware of regional plans, initiatives and activities, regardless of whether they have attended regional meetings.
   c. Inuit administrators require knowledge of budget allocation, record-keeping, and other clerical duties that their non-Inuit colleagues use.
   d. Inuit administrators have interpersonal skills that ensure schools are adequately staffed on a daily basis, that cultural programs are in place, that students retain their dignity whenever discipline problems are resolved, and that staff perceive their administrators support them.
   e. More opportunities to interact with other Inuit administrators at meetings and training programs, and through organized electronic networks and regular conference calls are needed.
   f. Staff need to be approached directly to meet their needs and resolve conflicts.

4. Being a principal requires strength and courage.
   a. Dealing with problems of parents, students, teachers and custodial staff can be stressful.
   b. Being a good listener, being outspoken about convictions, and resourceful in seeking solutions to problems are valued personal qualities of school leaders.
   c. Administrators are approached regarding school concerns both on and off the job.
   d. The support of community, DEA members, staff and family help reduce the stress of employment demands.
   e. Living up to parent expectations is the most challenging aspect of the job.
   f. The time commitment is huge. Preparation for teaching classes, administrative paper work, and ensuring that the school building is operational after a storm are just some of the responsibilities that are attended to after hours on personal time.

5. Family relationships are most important in Inuit society.
   a. Caring for one's mother and children sometimes prevents Inuit administrators from traveling to meetings and courses held outside their home communities.
   b. Mothers can serve as advisors for their children who are administrators.
   c. Parents want school administrators to be caring and understanding of their circumstances to ensure children are educated and disciplined responsibly.

6. Each administrator, school, community, and region are distinct and have their own priorities in meeting educational goals.

7. Career development of Inuit educators is varied.
    a. Individuals may enter the profession as student support assistants and classroom assistants, as well as certified teachers.
    b. Seeking training or qualifications depends on individual initiative.
    c. Correspondence courses, on-line learning, and college courses, and professional programs are options that can be undertaken.
    d. Supervisors, principals, staff, community members and family influence people to accept administrative positions.

8. Academic upgrading and administrative certification programs in home communities might increase confidence in potential applicants to apply for leadership positions.
    a. The availability of opportunities to acquire skills which will not require staff to sacrifice personal family responsibilities is necessary.
    b. An Inuit vision of school leadership which does not include clerical duties may be necessary to attract candidates.
    c. Perceptions of inadequate bilingual proficiency may be preventing some Inuit staff from taking registering in programs that could lead to assuming leadership positions.
    d. School staff can help to support beginning administrators through programs that emphasize cooperative working relationships.
    e. Principals who inspire colleagues become their leadership mentors.

9. IQ provides the best guiding principles for Nunavut administrators. The values are universal and apply to Inuit and non-Inuit.
    a. Text books and policy manuals are outdated. Newspapers that show students involved in current events are more relevant teaching materials.
    b. It is necessary for students to learn and experience survival and land skills.
    c. Parents must assume responsibility for strengthening Inuktitut before children enter school.
    d. The whole community needs to be involved in teaching students to understand and appreciate the Inuit way.
    e. The administrator's goal is to make a difference in a student's life: to help students acquire the necessary skills to have careers and become productive citizens.

Sincerely,

Caroline Thompson

APPENDIX 6

Information Letter and Consent Form for Interpreters

Information Letter and Consent Form for Interpreters

INSIDE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NUNAVUT: THREE WOMEN'S STORIES

INFORMATION LETTER FOR INTERPRETERS

My name is Caroline Thompson and I am a full-time Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into how Inuit women understand their role as the principal of a Nunavut school and would like to invite you to participate in this research.

The aims of this research are to examine Inuit principals' perspectives of school administration at the current time, and what it is like for them in their role as school leaders.

Information for this research will be collected by means of audiotape recordings of some structured demographic questions and semi-structured conversational interviews. There will be as many as three interviews that will range from 1.5 to 2 hours in length. In some cases follow-up by telephone or e-mail may be requested. Interviews will be conducted at a location mutually agreed upon by the participant and researcher.

The information collected will be used for research purposes only. I cannot guarantee the participants anonymity because they are known in your community as a principal, or someone who has expressed interest in this role, but request that what they sat in the study will not be disclosed . Each participant in the study will be given a pseudonym of their own choosing, and data collected will be identified by this pseudonym or number. Confidentiality will be protected by transcribing the data on each audiotape by number only. Participants will be given the audiotaped recording of each interview, and will have the opportunity to clarify what you have said. All files will be kept in my office at The University of Western Ontario until the audiotapes have been transcribed. At that time my interpretations of what has been said will be shared with the respondents. After they have made any corrections to my possible misinterpretations, the audiotapes will be erased. At the end of the study, all of the data will be erased from computer files and paper files will be shredded.

Should you consent to participate in this research as an interpreter, please be aware that you have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty, should you wish to do so, or to decline to answer any specific questions you would prefer not to answer.

If you have any questions about this research, or any comments to make now or at a later date, please contact Caroline Thompson at , extension , or Dr. Sharon Rich at , extension . I look forward to talking with you soon, and will be calling you in the near future to discuss arrangements for your participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Caroline Thompson
Ph.D. Candidate
Faculty of Education
The University of Western Ontario

Information Letter and Consent Form for Interpreters

INSIDE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NUNAVUT: THREE WOMEN'S STORIES

CONSENT FORM FOR INTERPRETERS

I agree to participate in the research study entitled *Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Three Women's Stories* as described in the Letter of Information.

I fully understand the information in the letter and the effect and significance of signing this form.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Acknowledgement

I, _____ acknowledge that I translated the above letter and consent form for _____ in the Inuktitut language before they signed the consent form.

_____ _____

Signature Date

_____ _____

Witness Date

APPENDIX 7

Information Letter to Principals

Information Letter to Principals

INSIDE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN NUNAVUT: THREE WOMEN'S STORIES

LETTER OF INFORMATION TO PRINCIPALS

My name is Caroline Thompson and I am a full-time Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into how Inuit women understand their role as the principal of a Nunavut school and would like to invite you to participate in this research.

The aims of this research are to examine Inuit principals' perspectives of school administration at the current time, and what it is like for them in their role as school leaders.

Information for this research will be collected by means of audiotape recordings of some structured demographic questions and semi-structured conversational interviews. There will be as many as three interviews that will range from 1.5 to 2 hours in length at a location of the respondent's choosing. In some cases follow-up by telephone or e-mail may be requested. Interviews will be conducted at a location mutually agreed upon by the participant and researcher. If a participant indicates a preference for being interviewed in the school, in order to talk a quiet, comfortable setting, I am requesting permission from you to provide us with space after school hours where we will be undisturbed. Your school will not be identified by name when the results of the study are reported.

I have applied to the Nunavut Research Institute for a research license and to the Ethical Review Committee of the Faculty of Education at The University of Western Ontario for approval of my proposed study. I will take all precautions to ensure that the research procedures are consistent with the highest ethical stamdards. I am writing to request permission from you to include Inuit women educators who have been, are currently, or aspire to be principals of Nunavut schools, as participants in the study. I plan to collect data this winter through structured and semi-structured interviews that will be conducted in Inuktitut if the participants desire. I will make the results available to the Nunavut Department of Education, all Nunavut District Education Authorities, Nunavut School Services, and the Nunavut Research Institute. I will share my interpretations of the data with the participants on an ongoing basis throughout the study. No individual participants will be identified by name and the their stories will be combined and reported collectively to protect confidentiality.

If you have any questions or require further clarification, please contact me by e-mail at cthomp4@uwo.ca or by telephone at , extension . You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. Sharon Rich, by e-mail at or by telephone at , extension .

Sincerely,

Caroline Thompson
Ph.D. Candidate
Faculty of Education
The University of Western Ontario

APPENDIX 8

Research Awards

Research Awards

Dr Robert C Bailey
Director ~ Environmental Research Western
Director ~ Environmental Science Graduate and Undergraduate Programs
Professor of Biology

7 April, 2004

Ms. Caroline Thompson
Faculty of Education
UWO

Re: Northern Training Grant

Dear Ms. Thompson:

I am pleased to inform you that the UWO Northern Research Committee has awarded you a Northern Training Grant (NTG) of $2150. Your supervisor will be notified shortly by Research Accounting of the account number for this grant. Under the terms of the Northern Scientific Training Program (Canada Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development), it is to be used in support of expenses in your field work in northern Canada in the coming year. Your budget model will be:

Transportation: $2150

Please be advised that your NTG cannot be used for equipment and other field materials, or salaries. Over expenditures will ***not*** be reimbursed by the UWO Northern Research Committee, so please ensure that your costs stay within your budget model plus any other financial support for the research.

All northern researchers must obtain all necessary licenses and permits prior to carrying out research in the north, including ethical review if appropriate. The responsibility making sure this is done rests with you, the researcher, not the Northern Research Committee, or your supervisor, or your other advisors or supporters. Please contact me if you need help in determining what approvals are needed for your research.

Please acknowledge receipt of this notice and ***ADVISE ME IF THERE ARE ANY CHANGES TO YOUR PROPOSED NORTHERN RESEARCH PLAN AS***

Research Awards

APPLIED FOR IN FALL 2003. Finally, you are required to submit a report on your research by 15 November 2004 as indicated in the NSTP electronic forms website (http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nstp/electro_e.html).

I hope you have a successful and stimulating research experience in the north!

Sincerely,

Robert Bailey
Chair – UWO Northern Research Committee

Research Awards

Caroline J. Thompson
PhD Candidate
Graduate Studies in Education
Faculty of Education
The University of Western Ontario

January 23, 2006

Dr. Carol Beynon
Chair, Graduate Studies in Education
Chair, Awards Subcommittee
Faculty of Education
The University of Western Ontario
1137 Western Road
London, ON N6G 1G7

c. Dr Sharon Rich
Thesis Supervisor

RE: Western Graduate Thesis Research Awards

Dr. Beynon:

I would like to be considered for a Western Graduate Thesis Award to support some of my expenses while completing research for my thesis. I am a fulltime PhD student in the final stages of completing my thesis entitled *Inside School Administration in Nunavut: Four Women's Stories*. My thesis proposal was approved in July 2003 and I received university ethics approval #0310-1 on November 6, 2003. It was also necessary for me to obtain a multi-year scientific research licence #0300604N-M from the Nunavut Research Institute prior to conducting the field portion of my study which investigates the factors which motivate Inuit women to become principals in Nunavut Territory.

I was fortunate to be awarded a Northern Training Grant of $2,150 from the Northern Scientific Training Program of Canada's Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to support part of my travel expenses when I traveled to two communities in the · Region of Nunavut in September 2004 to collect my data. This amount was designated for transportation only and did not cover all of the expenses I incurred for accommodations, meals and research materials while I was there. My expenses for seven days in the field totalled $4,961.42. Since that time there have also been translator fees, telephone, fax and postage expenses related to my research. I have been in touch with the participants in my study on a regular basis in order to receive feedback on the transcripts

Research Awards

of the interviews and my data analysis, and continue to communicate with them by phone and email.

Budget for Spending the Funds

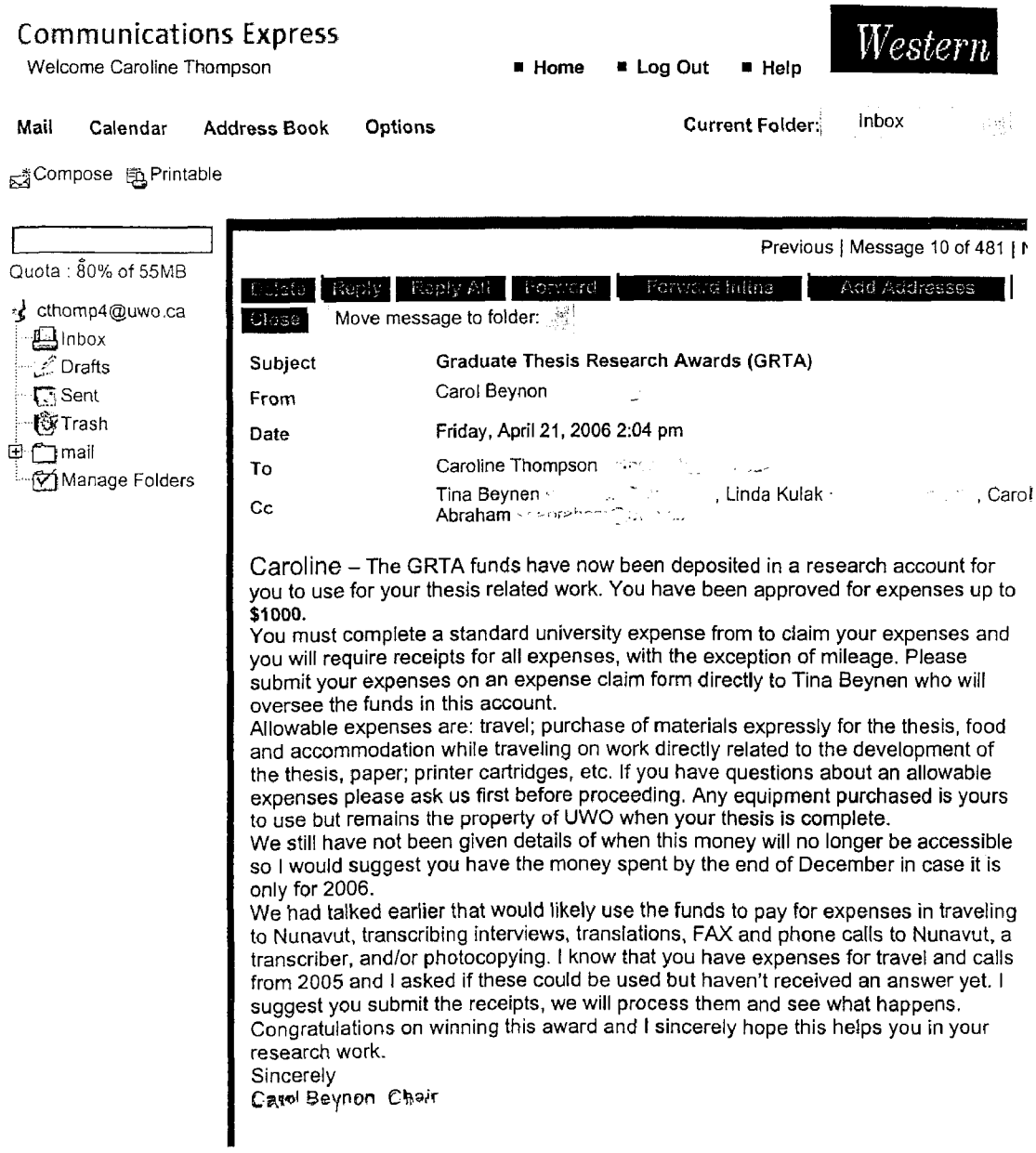
Translator fees are $50.00 per page, and in order to satisfy the application and reporting requirements of the Nunavut Research Institute, I have borne considerable expense. At the conclusion of my study, it will be necessary for me to submit an annual summary report and executive summary of my research in Inuktitut, the language of the Inuit, for dissemination to the Nunavut Minister of Education, Executive Directors of School Operations in each region, and District Education Authorities in every community in Nunavut. I anticipate the cost to exceed $1,000, to which the $750 Western Graduate Thesis Award could be applied, if I am fortunate enough to be selected as a recipient.

Thank you the opportunity to submit my application for this award.

Sincerely,

Caroline Thompson

Research Awards



Communications Express
Welcome Caroline Thompson ■ Home ■ Log Out ■ Help Western

Mail Calendar Address Book Options Current Folder: Inbox

Compose Printable

Quota : 80% of 55MB

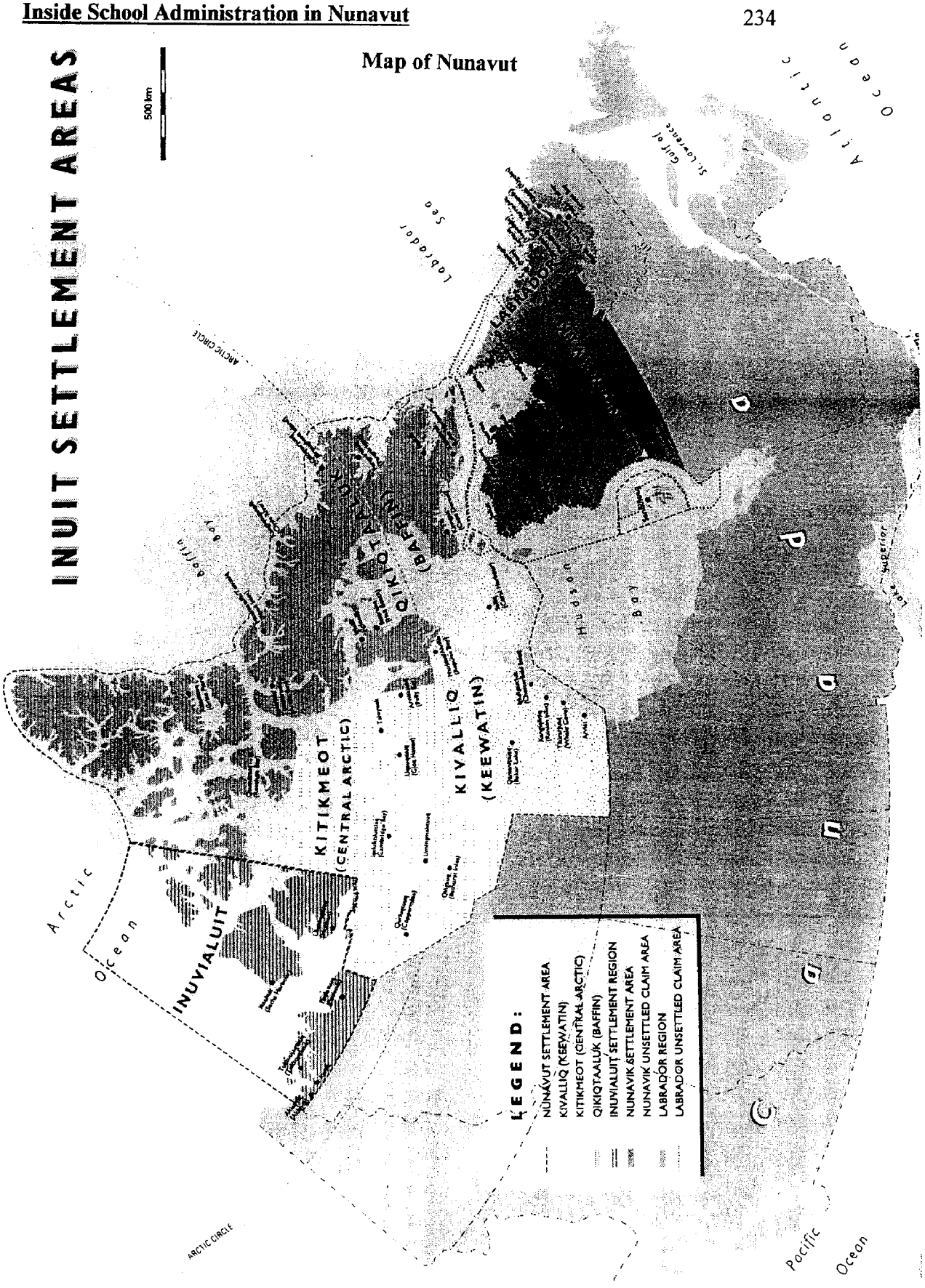
cthomp4@uwo.ca
Inbox
Drafts
Sent
Trash
mail
Manage Folders

Previous | Message 10 of 481 | N

Delete Reply Reply All Forward Forward Inline Add Addresses
Close Move message to folder:

Subject: Graduate Thesis Research Awards (GRTA)
From: Carol Beynon
Date: Friday, April 21, 2006 2:04 pm
To: Caroline Thompson
Cc: Tina Beynen , Linda Kulak , Carol Abraham

Caroline – The GRTA funds have now been deposited in a research account for you to use for your thesis related work. You have been approved for expenses up to **$1000.**
You must complete a standard university expense from to claim your expenses and you will require receipts for all expenses, with the exception of mileage. Please submit your expenses on an expense claim form directly to Tina Beynen who will oversee the funds in this account.
Allowable expenses are: travel; purchase of materials expressly for the thesis, food and accommodation while traveling on work directly related to the development of the thesis, paper; printer cartridges, etc. If you have questions about an allowable expenses please ask us first before proceeding. Any equipment purchased is yours to use but remains the property of UWO when your thesis is complete.
We still have not been given details of when this money will no longer be accessible so I would suggest you have the money spent by the end of December in case it is only for 2006.
We had talked earlier that would likely use the funds to pay for expenses in traveling to Nunavut, transcribing interviews, translations, FAX and phone calls to Nunavut, a transcriber, and/or photocopying. I know that you have expenses for travel and calls from 2005 and I asked if these could be used but haven't received an answer yet. I suggest you submit the receipts, we will process them and see what happens.
Congratulations on winning this award and I sincerely hope this helps you in your research work.
Sincerely
Carol Beynon Chair



Makivik Corporation, Cartographic Service, 2002.
www.makivik.org
www.makivik.org/nunavikatlas