

**TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE
AND UNIQUE HELPING PRACTICES
IN AN ABORIGINAL FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY**

by

Roma Joseph Fisher

**A Practicum Report Presented to
the University of Manitoba
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Social Work
at the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Social Work.**

Winnipeg, Manitoba

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FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY

BY

ROMA JOSEPH FISHER

A practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

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Abstract

The practicum placement on which this report is based focused on the significant and unique helping practices of Aboriginal people within a Native helping environment. (The terms Aboriginal and Native are used interchangeably throughout this report.) The placement took place at the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre from May 7, 1990 to August 10, 1990. The student reviewed literature relating to Native helping practices in the areas of Native child welfare, cross-cultural communication, counselling, and cultural programming and development. The literature indicated that there are significant differences in helping practices between Native people and the larger Canadian community. The student's contact with the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre proved to be very valuable in that the student was able to observe the staff providing services in a culturally sensitive manner. The student's primary purpose was to examine and record through participatory observation significant and unique practices of Native traditional helping within a Native environment. The student found that it is possible to deliver services that are truly reflective of Native culture by utilizing the teachings of the elders and traditional teachers. In order to be a most effective helper within a Native environment, individual practitioners and agencies must adapt their knowledge, skills and values to Native perspectives and helping.

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PREFACE

This practicum report is a result of the student's eagerness to understand his own culture and to assist others who are not well acquainted with traditional teachings and practices of Aboriginal people. Throughout his career as a social work practitioner, the student has faced the lack of adequate knowledge and materials in the area of appropriate interventions within Native culture. The student apologizes for any inconsistencies or misrepresentation of Native practices and culture recorded in this report. The student's intention was primarily to enhance the knowledge of social work practitioners so that they may be more effective in servicing Native clients and their communities.

CHAPTER 1

Overview of Practicum

Cultural diversity is common in our society, yet few people recognize the significance of this to the Canadian way of life, and in particular to the delivery of social services. Canada is a nation rich with a magnitude and variety of people representing various colours, creeds, races and religions. Differences among people are naturally revealed and expressed in their value systems and in their behaviours. Professionals in the helping fields must recognize that while there are general frameworks for intervening and assisting individuals and client groups, caution must be exercised when dealing with particular sub-cultures so that culturally appropriate services can be implemented.

There are great expectations placed on social work practitioners and other related helpers to assist the client to adapt to the social structure of Canadian society. Much damage has been rendered to many recipients in the name of "helping" because of social pressure for quick and inappropriate methods of intervention. It seems at times that we live in an atmosphere where "instant help" is the best way to approach prospective problems. At times, the need to procure the "quick fix" relaxes our ethical and professional standards of assisting individuals with the most

appropriate and effective measures of interventions.

In the community of Canada's aboriginal peoples, there is an urgent need to understand the internal social structures and dynamics that have been historically and traditionally established by the "anishnabek people". Professionals in the helping field must learn to operate within the frameworks of the established orders of Native environments so that the development and implementation of culturally appropriate social service delivery can occur.

It seems that it took more than a century for the non-Native society to barely recognize that there is a significant difference between the Native person and the rest of North American citizens. For decades, various Canadian governmental interventions have failed to administer proper, effective social services for Native Canadians. This pattern has continued for many years. The governments' failure to change old patterns and methods has caused many misunderstandings between Canada's Natives and the Canadian public. This evolutionary cycle has continued to haunt and dominate the relationship between the Government of Canada, Native people and the general public.

The cycle of the mismanagement of appropriate social service administration to Natives has been filtered down from poorly established federal policies to provincial levels of governments and, finally, to social services professionals. This perpetual cycle of poorly conceived and administered

programs and services to Natives has dominated the social welfare scene for too long and it must not be permitted to continue.

Over the last century, there have been many well intentioned individuals who have inadvertantly contributed to unnecessary difficulties because of the way the helping relationship has been exercised within Native environments. The lack of understanding, sensitivity and the unwise exercise of power and authority has hindered and sometimes destroyed the competence of the Native client's perception and ability to receive needed assistance. In order to effectively rectify this problem, helping professionals need to be educated in the fact that not all theories and methods of helping apply to every kind of intervention. While some existing theories of helping apply to particular sub-cultures or ethnic minorities, they may not be applicable to specific Canadian Native populations.

There have been numerous statements from Native communities across the country in recent years which urge changes in the methods and procedures regarding the programs and services that are delivered to their people. Similar arguments have also been made by practitioners in the fields of education, health and social work.

According to Kelley, Nelson and McPherson, there is a great need to understand the unique system of the Native environment in order to propose an effective process of

helping. They suggest that Native and non-Native workers differ in terms of their formal and informal helping methods because of their cultural diversity and background.¹ Native workers tend to view themselves as part of the community and work from within the community they serve, not as separate, independent helpers. In contrast, non-Native workers function from outside the community, separated and independent of the communities they serve. The authors suggest that informal, natural helping methods are more effective when implementing services and programs within the Native environment.

James W. Green suggests that cultural diversity is common in our society and differences among cultures reveal the important values each segment of society possesses. He says that cultural groups need to be serviced in an acceptable manner which enhances their position, power and well-being. He strongly suggests that professionals working with various cultural groups need to use terms, references and perceptions that are reflective of the particular cultural groups that they serve.²

While these authors note the need for culturally appropriate helping, specific guidelines and information in this area are only beginning to emerge. Across Canada, there has been an increase in the development of Native social service agencies, particularly in the areas of child welfare and mental health. These agencies offer programs and

services which have been conceived, developed and implemented by Native people. Because these organizations now exist, there is more opportunity to examine if particular steps are being taken to develop consistent culturally appropriate service delivery with Native clients. Moreover, service providers that assist Native clients can now utilize the cultural information that is beginning to be provided by these Native agencies.

With the call for appropriate and effective interventions within the Native environment, several interesting questions emerge. What exactly is culturally appropriate helping within the confines of the Native environment? When it comes to appropriate helping within the Native environment, are there unique internal dynamics that one must consider in order to provide the most effective help? If helping professionals are to be truly effective when working with Native people, what are some of the major adjustments that must be made in the way they they conceive, establish and implement their services?

In order to examine the area of culturally appropriate helping within the Native culture, the student undertook a practicum placement within a Native agency. The student's purpose was to examine and record through participatory observation significant and unique practices of Native traditional helping within a Native environment. It was also important that the student examine these unique practices in

light of recent literature and expertise from the Native culture.

During the time period of May 7, 1990 to August 10, 1990, the student undertook a qualitative research project which involved assuming a staff role at the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre. The implementation of this practicum consisted of the student's participation in three primary activities: direct observations, interviews and document review. In order to conduct these activities, the student recorded information as he observed people in their natural work settings, conducted interviews with key individuals of the agency and reviewed documents such as files, reports and program information.

Given the presence of recent literature regarding the need for culturally appropriate helping practices and the existence of distinctive Native social service agencies, it was a timely opportunity for the student to embark on this practicum. Its focus allowed the student to learn more about Native culturally appropriate helping and to contribute towards the growing body of knowledge in the area of culturally sensitive social work practices.

The next chapter will deal with the problems and issues concerning inappropriate social service interventions with Native individuals and communities in the light of recent literature. It will deal specifically with the historical colonization practices of the Canadian government regarding

interventions in Native systems which have serious implications for present day practices within Native communities.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on three major areas dealing with culturally appropriate service delivery within Native social environments. The first section deals with the problems or issues centering around inappropriate social service delivery in Native environments. The second section addresses the immediate need for culturally appropriate service delivery to Native people. The final section discusses new dimensions and changes for future innovations related to the development of culturally appropriate services within the Native environment.

2.2 The Problem

A critical issue in social work today, especially among the Native community, is the need for culturally appropriate social service interventions. The colonization of Native people in Canadian society over the last century has proven to be a destructive force which has adversely affected the preservation and development of Native people and their culture. Brad McKenzie and Pete Hudson define colonization as "creating dependency among a nation or group, the objective of which includes the extraction of benefits by the

dominant nation or group".³

During the last century, the Indian Act of 1876 was exercised with considerable power in the legislation of policies relating to virtually all aspects of the lives of Native people. The Indian Act creates a category of people known as "status Indians" distinct from those people of Indian ancestry who are not entitled to be registered under the Act, and who are known as "non-status Indians". In relation to this study the terms "Native" and "Anishnabek" will be used generically to include the following four categories of aboriginal peoples: Status Indians, Non-Status Indians, Metis and Inuit. Native people were powerless under the authority of the federal government and were unable to determine their future or exercise their rights. Although the Act was theoretically intended to protect and promote the well-being of Native people, in actuality it served to provide a mechanism of social control of Native people by the federal government. The Indian Act experienced a series of frequent changes throughout history without any direct consultation with Native people. Changes in the Act were undertaken for the benefit of the federal government's agenda to institute its colonization efforts more effectively. According to Ponting and Gibbins "the 1951 Indian Act, like its predecessors, was framed to promote the integration of Indians into Canadian society".⁴ In addition they state:

If there has been a central pillar to Canadian Indian policy, it has been the goal of assimilation. While the

terminology has varied among "assimilation", "integration", "civilization", and "moving into the mainstream", the policy has remained virtually unaltered; Indians were to be prepared for absorption into the broader Canadian society. It was expected that eventually Indians would shed their languages, customs and religious beliefs and would become self-sufficient members of the modern Canadian society and labour force.⁵

In relation to the development and implementation of social work services, Brad McKenzie states:

The provision of universal professional social work services has largely failed the Native people in Canada and, in fact, has contributed to problems of dependency and feelings of inadequacy among this minority group. While we may recognize that the economic and social problems facing Native people, including poverty and racism, are not dissimilar to those confronting other minority groups, historical patterns of colonization raise fundamental concerns about the need for special social and economic rights. The ideology of assimilation reflected by the attempts of missionaries and early settlers to "civilize" Native people through integration into the economic and social fabric of the dominant society has remained remarkably consistent over the past century.⁶

Native people across the nation have been particularly critical in citing cases where human services developed and implemented by non-Native systems have failed Anishnabek peoples. Dr. Paul Driben indicates that "government agencies such as DIAND and Manpower (now CEIC) almost always worked at cross purposes, failed to monitor and assess their programs, and most of all, never really consulted with the people they were supposed to be serving".⁷

As an example, many Native children were separated for

extended periods of time while they attended year-round residential schools instituted by the federal government. This caused many difficulties for the Native family and consequently eroded strong bonds of orally transmitted and interactive relationships of learning between parent and child. The federal policies of Indian education did not even consider the destructive manner in which their inappropriate programs were implemented. Even after many years of the passage of the residential school system, many Native people reflect the continued hardships resulting from these government initiatives of assimilation.

However, the problem was not limited to the residential school system. According to Brad McKenzie and Pete Hudson:

The residential school system was established unilaterally by the dominant society in an effort to perpetuate the definitions and perspectives of the colonizer. Similarly, in the child welfare system, policies and procedures have been established in law and executed by courts and agencies with no input from Native people.^a

A significant note to remember is that the colonial approach as it applied to child welfare did not value Native self-help practices and paid no attention to the traditional ways Native people have handled family problems. Hudson and McKenzie outline the process which was historically followed:

Decisions related to apprehension and custody have primarily been made outside Native communities and have continued to deny the validity of formal or informal political and social structures within these communities. Devaluation of an indigenous group is one of the most

significant aspects of colonial relationship. The success of this process depends on the acceptance of the belief that the colonizer is the sole carrier of a valid culture. Child welfare practices has paid little attention to the ways in which Native communities have handled parental neglect through serial parenting or extended family networks.⁹

Traditionally, Native people viewed their children as gifts from the Creator and thus, took collective responsibility for their well-being. Whereas formal child welfare organizations which serve to protect the child and prevent abuse and neglect are of a recent vintage, safeguarding children is as old as Native culture itself. It was not uncommon for extended family or community members to be designated as guardians of children left without parents. According to Native systems there were no orphans because everyone shared in the responsibility of parenting. As noted by Terry L. Cross, "children were protected from abuse and neglect by the very nature of their society. They belonged not merely to one individual or couple but rather to the entire community."¹⁰

Past interventions within Native ecological systems have failed because of the inappropriate measures implemented by outside non-Native sources. Corrective measures must be taken in order to ensure that interventions within the Native environment are culturally relevant and consistent with the value systems of Native people. In turn, this will ensure the preservation of the Native culture and its unique social

structure.

2.3 The Need for Appropriate Practice

In the last decade, Native people throughout North America have been more assertive in articulating their needs to government. They have expressed the view that government administration of policies and programs has not worked, and that the inappropriate policies and programs which emerge must be stopped or replaced. Native people throughout history were never consulted when a policy or program was to be implemented. Thus, programs and services were developed which did not reflect the needs and aspirations of Native people and as a result, failure was often the consequence. This perpetuated a negative stereotypic view of Native people as negligent and lazy, when in fact it was the fault of poor governmental planning and program implementation.

It is of vital importance that professionals in the helping fields recognize that applying some forms of interventions may in fact disrupt the social dynamics within a given society. Anthropologists and more recently, sociologists and social workers have demonstrated empirically that each society has its own social context, structural norms, values and attitudes that are perceived to be accepted practices within a particular society. When conventional social work practice interferes with the norms of a given society, it inevitably brings disharmony and damage to that

society's equilibrium. Jimm G. Good Tracks suggests that we must remember not to interfere with pre-existing social structures that are functional to a Native society. First, we must accept that all societies have a functioning social structure. Second, we must operate within the boundaries of the social structure in order to be successful. It is most important that social workers be educated to work within the societal insfrastructures of Native social systems.¹¹

Similarly, Nelson, McPherson and Kelly emphasize that contextual patterning is very important in effective, appropriate helping, and that we must operate from within a social structure, not from without, to avoid causing conflict and damage.¹² This is part of the reason why many human services, particularly Native organizations everywhere in Canada, are turning to Native customary practices when dealing with the Native client. For example, agencies are now utilizing Native elders in dealing with Native families as part of an effective casework management strategy. There is a strong suggestion that this trend will continue, and that there will be even more utilization of Native customary practices within the process of helping the Native client.

According to Terry L. Cross, Native communities across North America are faced with a unique challenge in the child welfare system to develop and operate these new child welfare programs.¹³ Their non-Native counterparts have the advantage of relying on previous developmental experiences, whereas,

Native child welfare organizations are in the infancy stage of developing culturally appropriate programs and do not have the benefit of previous experience. In order for these programs to be effective, Native child welfare agencies must adapt their services to the cultural environment of the Native client and his or her community. Native people are meeting this unique challenge by utilizing the identifiable values and traditional strengths of Native culture.

According to Brad McKenzie, a new social work practice must be developed when working with Native people. This social work practice must directly respond to the needs of Native people rather than to the needs of the dominant society. He goes on to say that we must first understand that current social work theory and practice with Native people is inadequate because it is derived from and developed upon assimilationist values. Secondly, we must develop another approach to working with Native people that is not based on the colonization methods of helping which perpetuate stereotyping and racism. We must also remember that past social work practice has contributed to the colonization of Native people.¹⁴

Recent literature indicates the definite need for culturally appropriate and culturally sensitive helping practices. Culturally sensitive practice knowledge is of recent vintage and therefore has not been refined for effective program implementation. More study regarding what

is relevant and significant regarding social work practice with Native people must occur. This gap in knowledge became the major focus of this student's practicum. With this need in mind, it was the hope of the student that this practicum placement would result in the documentation of additional information relevant to culturally appropriate social work practices within Native cultures.

2.4 New Dimensions and Change

The aim of this practicum placement was to record significant and unique practices of Native traditional helping styles within a Native environment. The student's ultimate intent for this practicum was to contribute to the knowledge base regarding culturally appropriate Native helping practices. Such information is needed in order that both Native and non-Native helping practitioners can be educated to alter and enhance their present mode of operation when dealing with the Native client or Native communities.

Granger and Portner state that while ethnic minority practice material is generally recognized, it is often very slow to be incorporated into the mainstream of social work literature. They state:

Social work educators and practitioners have long recognized the need for incorporating content related to cultural, racial, ethnic, and women's issues into the entire social work curriculum. (Yet) coverage of these subject areas has remained fragmented.¹⁵

These authors state that the inclusion of this material often gets less priority than do other materials due to the low prioritization of ethnic issues within the field.

Consequently, such material often receives little or no public attention. In the presence of this trend, the general public, and more importantly, helping professionals receive little education about this important subject area. They go on to note that:

Social work curriculum either tends to ignore such cultural and ethnic components or places the emphasis on acculturation of ethnic minorities into the Anglo-European American mainstream.¹⁶

The authors also stress that culturally sensitive practice issues need to become more central in the attention of helping practitioners so that culturally appropriate practices can be well adapted into the mainstream of the helping professions. Eventually, this will ensure that accurate perceptions of ethnic minorities will be developed for effective program interventions and services. These authors further indicate that:

In order to accomplish a genuine transition to ethnic and gender sensitive social work education and practice it is necessary to generate accurate perceptions, cognitions, and awareness of feelings, unbiased attitudes, and impartial societal interactions.¹⁷

The authors assert that old established perceptions and interventions which refer to ethnic minorities must be

abolished and replaced with accurate perceptions so that positive and accurate practices with minorities can be easily facilitated.

Peter Puxley also mentions that inaccurate perceptions of minorities in society results in the devaluation of the weaker culture. He says that the colonization of Native people in Canada has done much damage to the Canadian aboriginal. Puxley, in referring to the colonial experience of the Dene nation states:

This experience has been costly, breeding assumptions of cultural inferiority (or superiority) and eliciting racist analysis by both the white and Dene population.¹⁸

In describing the colonial relationship, Puxley states:

Colonialism must be seen as an experience not simply a structural relationship. As such, it conditions both the colonizers and the colonized.¹⁹

Puxley defines the colonial relationship from a cultural perspective which involves the more dominant culture using its power to exploit and oppress the weaker culture. In this sense, the weaker culture is always perceived as insignificant and non-important.

Nelson, McPherson and Kelley, drawing on examples of appropriate social work practice with Native people in Northwestern Ontario show how helping practitioners must work from within the Native cultural environment. They argue that the development of interventions must be established

according to the realities of the "contextual" ecological systems of Native people. In reference to the non-Native practitioner working in a Native environment, the authors state:

We found that traditional theoretical models for structuring human service delivery and accepted practices of professional conduct have limited applicability in either of the community settings.²⁰

Regarding accountability, management of programs and policy development, the authors note that most professionals take no account of the people they serve, but rather operate from outside the Native community, imposing policies and procedures that have been developed by external non-Native sources and are as a result, often unrelated to the needs of the community. They state:

Professionals who deliver human services are placed in a situation of having to carry out policies and procedures that are largely determined outside the community. The professional is accountable within the structured confinement of the organization and not to the local community. The pressure is to answer to the goals of the organization's request rather than what are local community issues. Professionals are asked to be accountable in ways that have little impact on improving the quality of life within the community. They are asked to measure the number of client cases served as if they were measuring depth of water, paying no attention to its contextual nature.²¹

The authors stress that social workers must play an integral part as educators in the development of appropriate service delivery to Native people and their communities.

Terry L. Cross states that the key to successful

interventions within the Native environment is to utilize Native cultural teachings. He infers that for too long, non-Native practitioners have continued to fail in the area of social services practices with the Native community and therefore, must draw on the Native traditional ways in order for these social services to be implemented successfully. Cross, referring to the development of appropriate cultural programs states:

To make these programs effective, they must tailor services to fit the unique cultural environment of Indian communities.²²

Likewise, Wynne DuBray states that professionals who work with Natives must have a good grasp of the Native culture and need to be responsive to the uniqueness of the Native client. She states:

It is extremely important that such workers and counsellors be well informed about all aspects of Indian culture and particularly familiar with the value system.²³

This author says that the problem with most non-Native professionals working with the Native client is that they are unprepared to deal with the issues that confront the Native client simply because of a lack of understanding regarding the uniqueness of the Native culture. She states that there is a vast difference between the Native person's values and perceptions and those of the non-Native professional. This fact accounts for most of the difficulty in the client-worker

relationship. As examples of value differences, she cites research which compared American Indians with non-Indians. The results indicated that Pueblo Indians are present-time oriented, having the attitude that "time is always with us", whereas Anglo-Americans are future-time oriented and have the mentality of "clock-watching". This research revealed that Pueblo Indians are more co-operative and submissive in nature while Anglo-Americans are competitive and aggressive. Also, the research indicated that the Pueblo Indians possess the value of sharing their wealth whereas Anglo-Americans are oriented towards saving for the future.²⁴

Similarly, Wax and Thomas observe unique patterns of communication among Natives and whites. The socialization process for these two cultural groups is very different, and it produces diverse patterns of interaction such as the following:

From childhood white people and Indians are brought up to react to strange and dangerous situations in quite different ways...In an unfamiliar situation, a white man is taught to react by aggressive experimentation--he keeps moving until he finds a satisfactory pattern. His motto is to "try and try again", but the Indian puts his faith in observation. He waits and watches until the other actors show him the correct pattern.²⁵

The significant differences in cultural behavior and values play an integral part in the existing disharmony and confusion between Native and non-Native people. There has been little educated awareness of these critical cultural factors that contribute to the lack of success in the

relationship between the Native client and practitioners that deal with the Native community. It is important to note here that not all Native practitioners are fully aware of Native culture and they must also be educated along with non-Native helpers as to what is appropriate helping within the Native environment.

Wax and Thomas also suggest that the training of helping professionals as to what are appropriate or inappropriate helping practices in Native systems must occur at the formal academic level. Courses regarding traditional Native culture and social work practice in the Native environment need to be developed. This would serve to untangle biased perceptions and practices in this area of social work. This is of great importance because most professional social workers have been taught in very ethnocentric institutions.

Kelly, McKay and Nelson suggest that the ecological perspective is very useful for non-Native practitioners when implementing social work interventions in a Native environment. The ecological perspective provides a basic and important framework for non-Native practitioners which enables them to visualize the Native person within a traditional Native environment. The authors also state:

The ecological systems perspective provides the necessary conceptual framework to deal with the complexity of variables in indigenous Indian agency development.²⁶

This systems perspective provides for the incorporation

of legitimate and appropriate cultural factors which contribute to the success of their interventions. It allows the practitioners to see what is important to the Native client or community they are servicing. Ultimately, this perspective can provide a model for the incorporation of quite diverse elements of practice into the social work intervention. For example, if the Native client perceived that it was important to include a traditional ceremony into a particular stage of the intervention, then the practitioner would allow for those significant cultural practices. Such traditional ceremonies may include sweet-grass and prayer for purification, use of the pipe for significant spiritual intervention and the counsel of an elder for direction. Using what is important in the Native person's life will contribute to a better success rate when social work practitioners work with Native people in their environments.

According to McLaughlin and McKay, in order to administrate meaningful social work interventions in the Native environment, practitioners must incorporate Native perspectives in conjunction with their contemporary social work practice. They give the following example:

The most effective way to do this, it seemed, was to demonstrate awareness of and the respect for the ceremonial rituals that formed the basis of what the Natives in this agency were calling the "Native Way", for these seemed to be what supported the staff members sense of identity and autonomy as Native people. One way that the social worker did this was by beginning all staff meetings with the burning of sweetgrass and prayer. This was done only following consultation with the Native staff group regarding their wishes in this

manner.²⁷

And finally, regarding the outcome of the incorporation of Native cultural perspectives and contemporary social work practices, the authors state:

There must be no assimilation of one way into another way, but rather a mutuality and a sharing, and through this process, a development of new principles of practice. In this way, there can be unity and diversity--unity of purpose and diversity of approaches to meeting client need.²⁸

These authors recognize that the process of developing new social work practices that are consistent with the Native culture is not a simple task. Social workers must proceed sensitively and with great care in order to successfully merge contemporary social work practice with traditional Native helping procedures.

According to Wing Sue, et al., practitioners in the helping fields must be challenged to re-evaluate and revamp their present mode of interventive applications to facilitate and appreciate relevant cross-cultural interventive approaches. The problem in most helping professions is the failure to recognize the need for developing and practicing appropriate cross-cultural helping methods. In reference to mental health, these authors state:

One of the main arguments proposed against the need for a cross-cultural perspective in the mental health profession has been the belief that current research strategies and approaches as well as mental health practices are adequate and appropriate in application to various minority groups.²⁹

Within the social welfare environment, the need for culturally appropriate helping services has been recognized. Native traditional beliefs are being implemented in Native organizations which deliver social welfare services to Native people. For example, staff meetings are being opened with a sweet-grass ceremony followed by a prayer for assistance in the daily affairs of the workplace. Practices such as these are becoming more commonplace for Native helping practitioners who are rediscovering their culture, identity and traditional ways. Although these Native practitioners are graduates of formal institutions, they share one desire and vision, which is to implement culturally appropriate services to their own people.

In the final analysis the development of efficient and effective social services within the Native environment must involve the incorporation of valid Native cultural perspectives in the conceptualization, design and implementation of particular Native helping practices.

With this understanding of the need for culturally appropriate helping practices within Native environments, the student took on a practicum experience that enabled him to study this area of need. The next chapter outlines the basic procedures that occurred before and during the student's practicum experience at a Native family services centre.

CHAPTER 3

Development of Practicum

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the primary and secondary goals of the practicum experience as well as the educational benefits to the student. It includes a description of four working concepts which were developed at the onset of the practicum placement. The chapter also outlines the nature of the practicum agreement as well as a detailed description of the agency in which the student practicum was implemented.

3.2 Primary and Secondary Goals of the Practicum

In April, 1990, a practicum proposal was submitted to and approved by the student's advisory committee. The proposal outlined the overall plan and purpose of the student practicum.

The primary goal of the practicum was to record through participatory observation significant and unique practices of Native traditional helping styles within a Native cultural environment and to verify some of these unique approaches by relating to recent literature and experts within the Native culture.

A secondary goal was to examine how these helping styles are conceived, developed and implemented by Native management

personnel and how they are administered through policies and programs in a Native-operated agency.

3.3 Educational Benefits to the Student

This practicum experience has allowed the student to develop a fundamental level of skills and knowledge in the design, implementation and analysis of a process evaluation. In addition, the significant information derived from this study will be useful for the student's professional development in the area of culturally sensitive social work practice with Native people.

The student was able to conceptualize and develop a basic understanding of the meanings of the following concepts: "culturally sensitive helping practice", "culturally appropriate helping practice", "unique Native approaches" and "the Indian way".

The student also benefited from the overall experience of the study in relation to the development of appropriate Native policy and program administration by learning about the Native traditional ways that are consistent with the "anishnabek" people.

3.4 Concept Development

This agency did not specify what constituted "culturally appropriate practices" or "culturally sensitive approaches". For the purpose of this study, concept meanings were

developed by the student with input from the Ma Mawi Chi Itata agency administration and the student's practicum committee prior to the onset of this qualitative study. In this way consistent and clear terminology could be used for the terms "culturally sensitive helping practice", "culturally appropriate helping practice", "unique Native approaches" and "the Indian way". In the final analysis, the following definitions were developed:

(a) Culturally Sensitive Practice

A culturally sensitive helping practice within the Native culture is an intentional interventive approach that utilizes the basic mental and emotional knowledge of and sensitivity to significant Native cultural values, beliefs and practices in a Native systemic environment. Emphasis is placed on the cognitive and affective elements of the culture.

(b) Culturally Appropriate Helping Practice

A culturally appropriate helping practice within the Native culture consists of both formal and informal helping procedures that keep in consistent step with established behavioral norms and customs of the existent Native cultural systems. Emphasis is placed on the behavioral aspect of the culture. This behavioral aspect of the culture is preceded by the cognitive-affective element of the culture.

(c) Unique Native Approaches

Unique Native approaches are perspectives and methods of helping arising from traditional Native culture which are indigenous to Aboriginal peoples and are significantly different from the mainstream of conventional human services methods.

(d) The Indian Way

The Indian Way is the utilization of the teachings of the Native culture which emphasize the four directions of the earth representing the significant Native cultural values of

wisdom, knowledge, kindness and love. It is the practice of helping to and by Native people in ways that are entirely free from the colonial methods of operation in Canadian society.

These four definitions were developed to help clarify exact meanings of terms most commonly used and referred to in Native helping environments. These concepts were relevant to the practicum in that they gave the student a specific understanding of the distinct areas of Native helping.

Culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate helping practices differ in that the first requires knowledge and sensitivity of Native culture and the second requires the application of that knowledge in an appropriate manner.

Unique Native approaches are perspectives of indigenous methods of helping that come from all aspects of Native culture whereas the Indian Way refers directly to specific teachings of the Native culture. Both of these concepts are free from the interference of outside conventional helping methods.

3.5 Practicum Agreement

From September 27, 1989 to January 5, 1990, a number of meetings were held between the student and key Ma Mawi Chi Itata staff members regarding the student placement and study. During these meetings the discussions centred around the primary goal and specific objectives of the placement. Both the agency and the student saw benefits that would

result from the placement. From an academic perspective, the student would be able to complete a study for the practicum and final report as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an M.S.W. degree. This practicum experience would also enable the student to learn more about Native culture and specific methods of helping which would be beneficial to his professional development and training. From the agency's perspective, the particular data derived from the study would yield important decision-making information significant to program and policy development in the agency.

(a) Time and Position

On January 5, 1990, a formal meeting was held at the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre between the student, the Executive Director, Wayne Helgason, the Family Support Program Team Leader, Vern Morrisette and Student Faculty Advisor, Dr. Brad McKenzie to finalize the student placement.

The practicum placement began on May 7, 1990 and ended on August 10, 1990. The practicum experience was approximately three months in duration during which time the student was located within the administrative section of the agency.

The student's primary contact was with the Family Support Program Team Leader, but the student also had other significant interaction with administrators, staff and clients of the agency.

In the context of this placement, the student was to function as a regular staff member of The Ma Mawi Chi Itata organization. In this capacity, the student observed and recorded significant Native helping styles.

(b) Commitments

To ensure the success of this experience, four principles were outlined and mutually agreed to by all stakeholders.

1. Cooperation and Commitment - mutuality will be a guiding principle in activities conducted by all parties concerning this practicum.
2. Space - office space will be designated for the student to conduct recording and possible interviews without undue interference to staff or the student.
3. Freedom of Observation - as an observer, the student will be allowed the freedom to record observations accurately and express them objectively.
4. Staff - a staff member from the agency will be available as an agency resource person and supervisor. This person will become a part of the student's practicum committee which oversees the tasks undertaken during the practicum and completion of a final report.

It was understood that subsequent agreements could be added if necessary as the practicum experience proceeded.

3.6 Practicum Setting - The Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre is a human services agency which is designed to meet the needs of Native people using a culturally sensitive approach to Native family

services. It is the hope of this organization that the Native client may find contextually relevant help without being discriminated against or belittled in any way.

The agency is a well established organization in the City of Winnipeg. It operates as a non-mandated Native family services agency. The agency seeks to provide a holistic approach in the administration of Native family support services. It relies dually on Native traditional methods and contemporary social work practices for its intervention.

(a) Historical Background

The agency's beginnings can be traced to the spring of 1982 when the urban Native community was concerned with preventing the loss of Native children to the apprehension and adoption procedures of conventional family and children's services. The procedures and methods employed by family and children's services were causing the erosion and destruction of Native families. Native people were frustrated with the child welfare system and became strong advocates of structural change. As a result, individuals and families, together with Native organizations and other concerned parties, successfully lobbied government in establishing the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre. The agency began operation in September of 1984.

(b) Philosophy and Mission

"The philosophy of the Centre is based on the belief of collective responsibility in reciprocity as the basis of a truly helping relationship, and the belief in the rights of Aboriginal people to self-determination."³⁰

The name of the Centre, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, means "we all help one another", which reflects the basic philosophy of the Centre. This incorporates the belief of Native people that it is everyone's responsibility to help raise and care for children, giving the centre an extended family systems approach. The underlying idea is that everyone can and does help one another, thus giving the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre a mutual, natural helping perspective. The informal approach of the Centre reflects its basic philosophy in an ecological helping perspective.

The core mission of The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre is to support and strengthen Native families within the City of Winnipeg. The goal of the Centre is to maintain and strengthen Native families through the provision of culturally appropriate support services to families, youth and children.

(c) Primary Objectives

The following objectives were identified by the agency in conjunction with their core mission to support Native families. These objectives are derived from the 1989 Ma Mawi

Chi Itata Centre News Report.

- To establish and maintain a resource centre in the City of Winnipeg which provides support programs to Native families that are designed to encourage and promote the maintenance and well-being of the family in the community.
- To promote Native culture as the basis for developing programs and services as well as providing opportunities for developing Native cultural awareness within the community as a whole.
- To promote and facilitate Native community involvement in the development and provision of services to families.
- To develop and maintain preventative services for Native children and families.
- To act as an advocate on behalf of Native children and families involved with or receiving services from child welfare agencies.
- To work co-operatively with all Family Service Agencies in Manitoba in the development of programs and the delivery of services that are in keeping with these goals and objectives.
- To develop and maintain a standard of service that protects the rights of the individual to self-determination.³¹

(d) Clients

The Centre provides interventive services to Aboriginal people within the City of Winnipeg who are experiencing family related difficulties that cause stress and imbalance in daily living. It seeks to support the Native family system.

(e) Staff

All staff members are of Native descent, are well oriented to Native issues and are sensitive to cross-cultural social work practices. The organization employs graduates from professional Schools of Social Work as well as grass-roots "traditional" Native workers with practical expertise. Staff are encouraged to use both contemporary human services intervention and Native traditional methods of helping.

(f) Culturally Sensitive Organizational Structure

The Centre fashions itself after a culturally oriented agency and operates under a Native traditional frame of reference, meaning that it seeks to service its clients in a culturally sensitive manner.

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre incorporates Native cultural practices as much as possible into its daily delivery of services. For example, the Centre utilizes services from a community of elders from within the city of Winnipeg and surrounding area. These elders provide guidance, support, advice and direction to the organization at large and also to individuals and families.

The youth support program is also based on a traditional and cultural framework utilizing Native cultural teachings such as the traditional drum, pipe and sweet-grass. These traditional teachings are imparted to the youth by a local body of Native elders.

The Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre is structurally organized as a bureaucracy with a hierarchial chain of command. However, in practice, the organization does not assume a formal autocratic approach in the delivery of human services. It receives the core of its funding from the Manitoba provincial government with other funding coming from the federal government, the City of Winnipeg and philanthropic bodies.

The Executive Director of this agency, Wayne Helgason, states that the agency's hierarchial structure is set up for the purpose of identifying accountability mechanisms for agency personnel within the organization, and is not necessarily reflective of a Weberian style of management. For example, the role of Executive Director is not exercised authoritatively, but in a collegial fashion emphasizing mutuality, team work, cohesion, advocacy and support to team management leaders. In this way, management personnel and line staff do not experience the Executive Director as acting in an authoritarian fashion.

In practice, this agency promotes collegiality within its environment by providing an atmosphere for group integration and team work. Everyone is given the responsibility of becoming an integral part of the organization because participatory management is practiced in weekly group meetings dealing with the administration of programs and services. For example, each department has a

designated team leader who represents the team at a weekly business meeting to discuss internal concerns presented by the team. Each team leader is given the responsibility to be the chairperson on a rotating basis, thus sharing the responsibility for leadership.

This organization perceives itself to be a part of the Native community of Winnipeg and not a separate entity within its socio-political environment. By participating within its environment, the agency is oriented towards community social affairs. For example, the agency hosts an annual community celebration commemorating its inception. It also celebrates other feasts and community events which help to promote Native culture and community development. These events feature special Native speakers from other communities as well as from political and social organizations. Traditional ceremonies such as the pipe and sweet-grass ceremonies, and traditional practices such as the sweat-lodge, the sacred circle, dancing and gift giving are an integral part of these events. Staff are encouraged to participate in these community events and ceremonies as they promote community cohesiveness and solidarity. However, staff members are not ostracized if they choose not to participate, as the organization respects staff autonomy and personal differences.

To summarize, this chapter focused on the preliminary stages of the student's practicum experience in terms of

establishing goals, working concepts, practicum agreements and identifying the characteristics of the agency in which the practicum would be implemented. The next chapter will describe the methodology utilized in the student's participatory evaluation study.

CHAPTER 4

Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the data collection procedures implemented during the student's practicum. It outlines the process of developing evaluation questions, general data gathering procedures and the main methods of collecting data. The last section of this chapter deals with the major constraints the student encountered during the data collection process.

4.2 Development of Evaluation Questions

Pietrzak et al., state that the evaluation question is the most essential task in conducting the evaluation. The evaluator must perform two tasks at this juncture. First, the evaluator must formulate the research questions which precisely draw out the area of investigation. The second task the evaluator must perform is to assess whether he has sufficient resources to accomplish the task.³² The task of selecting the research questions is always a difficult one, but the completion of it is well worth the effort.

When formulating the research question, it is always helpful for the evaluator to include those who are connected and interested in the particular evaluation. In this case,

all relevant stakeholders were considered in this process. This gave the exploratory evaluation more meaning for all concerned parties. For example, when the student first proposed to study significant Native cultural practices within this Native agency, the relevant stakeholders such as the student's practicum committee and the agency administration were consulted in the formulation of the research questions. The input of the stakeholders consisted of informal discussions with the student about what significant questions needed to be addressed in connection to culturally appropriate helping practices.

Regarding this particular study, the evaluation questions involved culturally related issues that centred around the provision of culturally appropriate Native programs and services. These questions follow:

1. Is this agency providing services that are culturally unique for this particular community environment as compared to other agencies that offer similar services?
2. Are the programs and services offered at this agency appropriate and consistent with the practices of Indian culture and its environment?
3. What is the general view of the clients who are serviced by this agency regarding culturally relevant and culturally sensitive services?

These exploratory questions were developed by the student at the onset of the qualitative study. It was the student's hope that these questions would be answered through this practicum experience and that they would generate

further information on culturally appropriate services.

4.3 General Data Gathering Procedures

According to Patton, "qualitative methods consist of three kinds of data collection procedures: (1) in depth, open-ended interviews; (2) direct observations; and (3) written documents".³³ He states that qualitative evaluation yields the following information:

- detailed description of program implementation
- analysis of major program processes
- description of different types of participants and different kinds of participation
- descriptions of how the program has affected participants
- observed changes (or lack thereof), outcomes and impacts
- analysis of program strengths and weaknesses as reported by people interviewed (e.g. participants, staff, funders, key informants in the community).³⁴

In relation to qualitative studies, Rossi and Freeman state that four sources of data should be considered in the design of an evaluation: direct observation by the evaluator, service records, data from service providers, and information from program participants or their associates.³⁵ The student designed his qualitative study to include the data collection procedures described by these authors.

The role of the student evaluator in this practicum was to become a participant observer within the agency, collecting information through observing internal client-

worker interactions and agency environmental dynamics. However, due to endogenous circumstances such as the hesitancy and fear of workers regarding a concern for the privacy and confidentiality of their clients, extensive observations of direct practice were not possible. Therefore the emphasis for data collection shifted to open-ended and structured interviews and to the review of family service files and organizational documents.

The student conducted personal interviews with key individuals of the agency such as administrators, direct service workers, support personnel and service recipients. Interviews with support personnel and service recipients were conducted in a conversational interview style, at times using an interview guide. All interviews focused on the significant cultural components of the Centre's programs and services. Interviews with traditional elders and Native cultural teachers were utilized to obtain in-depth understanding of the "Anishnabek" way of life.

Native experts or "connoisseurs", such as traditional elders and cultural teachers were utilized in order to examine the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre's interventive approaches of programs and services and to determine whether or not these services are consistent with Native cultural practices.

Rossi and Freeman state that a "connoisseur" or an expert is someone who has deep familiarity with a particular

area that is to be assessed. The connoisseurs in this case were utilized as cultural experts, and their judgement proved to be highly valuable in assessing the Centre's sensitivity to culturally appropriate operations. Rossi and Freeman also state that "the usefulness and validity of such judgements, and hence, the worth of an evaluation using them, depend heavily on the judge's expertise and the development of firm knowledge in the field".³⁶ Within the Native culture, elders and cultural teachers are considered to be the most knowledgeable of Native traditional teachings and culture. Therefore the student interviewed Native elders as experts in the area of Native traditional culture in order to determine if the agency's practices are indeed consistent with Native cultural ways.

Other valuable information was derived from the Centre's program documents, files and records to gain insight regarding the procedures and methods of service delivery by the organization's direct service workers and overall administration of the agency's programs.

4.4 Three Main Methods of Data Collection

The student obtained information through three basic methods. The first method of obtaining information was through direct observation. Direct observation consisted of the student's personal observations of agency dynamics such as client-worker relations and general interactions between

agency staff. The second method of obtaining information was through the student's personal interviews with key individuals of the agency. These interviews included administrators, direct services workers, clients and other related personnel of the organization. The third and final primary method of data collection consisted of the student's review of agency documents. These data included agency files, consultant reports, agency information pamphlets and policy manuals. The most significant data was that extrapolated from family support and family violence client files.

4.4.1 Direct Observation

The first method of data collection implemented by the student was direct observation. The student was able to collect first hand information from the work place in reference to a culturally sensitive organizational environment.

The student had opportunity to observe the agency from a practical and personal perspective. These observations included interactions between workers and clients of the agency and direct interventive techniques implemented by the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre staff. Through these observations the student had the opportunity to reacquaint himself with Native traditional ways and was able to witness a unique Native environment where Native people help Native people.

The student had the opportunity to interact with all

levels of staff within the agency and with clients on an informal basis. The student was able to freely document his personal perceptions and views of the internal social structure and dynamics which exist within the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre.

4.4.2 Interviews

The second method of data collection was interviews with staff and other significant parties of the agency. At the onset of the practicum, the student developed an interview guideline and schedule. Appendices 2 and 3 give detailed outlines of questions developed and utilized by the student for interviews. Interviews were conducted with administration, team leaders, administrative support staff, direct services workers, service recipients, elders and cultural teachers.

Regarding in-depth interviewing, Patton states that this "involves asking open-ended questions, and then following up with additional relevant questions".³⁷ Patton suggests the following three ways for collecting data through in-depth open-ended interviews: 1) the informal conversational interview, 2) the general interview guide approach and 3) the standardized open-ended interview.³⁸ For this particular study, the student employed these approaches separately and in combination depending on the time, place and occasion.

a. Conversational Interview

This approach relied on the spontaneous generation of questions through normal situational interactions. The student employed this approach on a regular basis while associating with those connected with the agency. This approach did not involve pre-determined questions. At the onset of the practicum experience, the student made particular use of conversational interviews which relied on the spontaneity of the interviewee in normal daily interactions at the Centre.

b. Interview Guide

In this approach, pre-determined questions or issues were raised and explored in the course of an interview. Essentially, everyone who was interviewed using this approach were asked to comment on a defined list of issues. This strategy enabled the student to obtain feedback from all targeted respondents on particular issues, and thus, enabled comparative analysis. These questions also acted as a framework for data analysis.

c. Standardized Open-Ended Interview

This approach had a pre-determined set of questions which were carefully worded and arranged. Each interviewee received an identical set of questions in the same sequence. The student employed parts of this method when interviewing

groups of respondents. This approach reduced biases which could have occurred when the student interpreted and phrased interview questions. In this strategy, interview questions needed to be developed in advance and presented to respondents exactly as they were written.

According to Patton, it is possible to combine an informal conversational approach with an interview guide and also to combine an interview guide approach with a standardized open-ended approach. In different situations the student implemented combinations of the above approaches. For example, the student employed an informal conversational approach with an interview guide when conducting a group interview in order to more adequately cover particular areas of concern. As the interview progressed, the student was able to gather information according to topics which naturally arose out of the interview process. The student also applied the standardized open-ended approach with an interview guide. All clients interviewed were asked the same set of questions and were given the same topic areas of coverage.

The student began the interview process with direct service workers since the student had the most contact with them in the beginning of the placement. A combined interview guide and conversational interview approach was implemented for these interviews.

As a result of the student's contact with the direct service workers, the opportunity arose for the student to interview some recipients of the agency's services. These interviews occurred subsequent to interviews with the direct service workers. The student developed an interview guide questionnaire and employed this method along with the conversational interview approach in interviews with clients.

The standardized open-ended interview approach was employed only with adult clients and if the student wanted exact information from the clients. The conversational interview worked better with the youth who were more spontaneous and less able to concentrate on formally structured questions.

After most interviews with staff and clients were completed, the student arranged to interview elders and Native traditional teachers. The student's desire was to conduct the interviews with the elders and Native traditional teachers at the onset of the study in order to verify the consistency of the agency's practices in terms of culturally appropriate and unique Native helping practices. However, it was very difficult to locate these individuals due to the fact that many were active with Native festivals and gatherings which occur primarily during the summer. Consequently, the student had to rearrange his timetable and work format to allow for later interviews.

The interviews with the elders and traditional teachers

were more conversational in nature, although many topics included in the interview guide were covered. The student discovered that it was necessary to concentrate closely on the responses of the elders as they did not always respond to direct questioning. Some elders and teachers responded through the use of proverbs and story-telling. It was a challenge to discern the meaning of the information expressed. The use of tape recordings was most helpful here, but this was not always possible as some elders objected to being recorded on tape.

Lastly, the student interviewed the administrative section of the agency. The student began by interviewing the Team Leaders of the programs of the Centre, followed by the Co-ordinator of Programs and Services and finally, the Executive Director. An interview guide approach was primarily used for these interviews.

The student interviewed a total number of 44 individuals within the Ma Mawi Chi Itata's organizational environment. Out of the 60 full-time employees of the agency, interviews were conducted with 31 members of the Centre. A total of 13 individuals external to the agency were also consulted and interviewed. External interviews included elders and former clients. The clients included four former female recipients of services from the family support and family violence programs and six youth involved with the youth program at the time of the study.

Most interviews were conducted on an individualized basis. A group interview was conducted with the youth support staff because of this program's time restraints during the summer. Also, three group interviews were conducted with service recipients and one group interview was conducted with two of the elders interviewed.

4.4.3 Documentation Review

The third method of information collection for the student was the review of documents. The most significant documents to be reviewed were the agency's client case files. Since the student had most contact with the family support and the family violence program, it was decided that a review of files from these programs would be most appropriate.

The agency's computerized system had a total number of 377 active and inactive cases from the family support and family violence programs. Two hundred and sixty-seven (267) of these files represented cases involving the provision of family support services, and the remaining 110 files represented cases from the family violence program.

Of the 377 cases, the student randomly selected 35 cases for review. File selection was determined by the selection of every eleventh file from the combined case list of files from the family support and family violence program. Out of the 35 randomized file selection, only 25 files were actually

traced and reviewed.

The student also reviewed other materials such as agency information on policies and programs which related to culturally appropriate planning.

4.5 Three Major Constraints in Data Collection

As previously noted, the student operated as a participant observer within the agency. It was the intention of the student to become a participating member of the family support team, however, this was not always possible. Three major constraints limited the student's integration in the agency. These were time management, building trust and the ability to access significant resource people.

The first major constraint was the time factor. Adequate time was required to become integrated into the agency's family support team. Although the student became acquainted with various personnel and staff, a longer time period would have been desirable in order for the student to be fully integrated into the team system of the agency. Considerable time was spent explaining to various staff the intentions of the qualitative study; and these explanations gave the student and staff members the needed connection to develop some sense of relationship. As time progressed, the staff members within the agency were more accepting and willing to cooperate with the student without any hesitation. The student also reassured staff members that confidentiality

would be maintained through the development of a consent form signed by the student and staff member prior to interviews. For more detail, see Appendix 1.

The second constraint was related to the time factor. Time limitations presented some difficulties in gaining the trust of the agency staff. In order to compensate for this, the student focused his initial efforts in sharing ideas and practicum objectives with various personnel of the agency. For example, the student made luncheon dates with staff members of the family support team on an individual basis. This gave the student and staff members some informal quality time in a relaxed atmosphere where trust could be established. The student discovered that informal meetings such as luncheons yielded valuable information and enhanced the working relationship between the student and various staff. Another method of trust building implemented by the student was the sharing of materials such as those related to culturally sensitive social work practice. The student often spent informal time with staff members at coffee breaks and offered his opinions on case management procedures. Although this occurred, the student was hesitant at times to offer his services because of the fact that in some Native environments, the offering of one's perspective and opinions may be interpreted as an impolite gesture. Special efforts were made in offering assistance to avoid being insensitive.

The third and final constraint was the inability to

secure adequate sources of information. For the most part, staff of the Centre were very accomodating and interested in the study, offering their time and personal insight into Native ways. The student's major difficulty in this area was the ability to obtain elders for interviews as many were committed to participating in summer pow wows or engaged in other significant Native activities. However, the student was able to interview three elders at their convenience, and this required the student to be available for special interview times and locations. For example, on one occasion the student travelled to Rosseau Rapids Reserve to conduct an evening interview at the home of an elder couple.

4.6 Methods of Analysis

In analyzing the data, the student developed analytical instruments for compiling data from interviews with administrators, direct service workers, service recipients and Native experts. Appendix 5 is an example of one analytical instrument used. The instrument was used to extract information in accordance with the structure of the interview guide. It compiled information into the following four categories: demographic data of repondent, respondent's experience working in a Native cultural environment, respondent's knowledge of Native culture and respondent's opinions about working in a Native-oriented agency. The student recorded the number of responses to specific

questions from each category. Totals were compiled and translated into percentages.

Regarding documentation review, the student constructed an instrument which was utilized both to gather information from family services files and to organize the data for analysis. Appendix 4 illustrates the family file instrument used. This instrument was utilized to compile information from client files such as client demographics, services received, recording sources and the presence of any particular culturally appropriate helping activity or practice.

This chapter has described the data collection methods and analysis utilized by the student during his practicum. The main methods of data collection procedures consisted of direct observations, interviews and documentation review. The next chapter summarizes the results obtained by the student through the methodology implemented for data collection.

CHAPTER 5

Results of the Study

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the relevant results obtained through the student's data collection procedures. Major findings are related to data derived from interviews conducted with the agency's direct service workers, clients, connoisseurs and administrators but the chapter also includes results from the documentation review. The results from the student's direct observations have been used to verify results reported in the other two sections. As well, these shape conclusions reported in the final chapter of this report.

5.2 Interviews With Direct Service Workers

a. Characteristics of Respondents

There was a total of 42 direct service workers within the agency. Ten full-time direct service workers made up the family support team. One of these positions is a cultural support worker who does not carry a regular caseload. This position was developed as a resource for the agency workers and clients. Other positions included eleven youth support workers, nine after-hours workers, six family violence

workers and six community prevention and development workers.

There was a total of 24 direct service workers interviewed. Two of these 24 workers were not interviewed as direct service workers but were interviewed as connoisseurs because of their vast knowledge and experience in cultural traditional teachings.

Most of the interviews with direct service staff were conducted with family support workers and family violence workers. Those interviewed included nine family support workers, five family violence workers, four youth support workers, three community prevention workers and one after-hours worker.

Seventy percent of respondents were female. Their average age was 34 years. The average age for the male respondents was 32.

Fifty-four percent of respondents had been working in the agency less than one year.

One-third of respondents stated Metis as their aboriginal cultural heritage. The remaining two-thirds identified themselves as Ojibway, Cree, Sioux and Dakota, with the majority being Ojibway.

Forty-six percent of respondents possessed university degrees or were in the process of completing degrees. Forty-two percent were college graduates, eight percent were highschool graduates and four percent relied on personal life experience as their main source of training.

Three-quarters of respondents indicated that they personally practice the Native traditional way of life, while one-quarter stated that they do not follow the traditional way of life.

Seventy-one percent of respondents used a combination of their formal training methods and the Native traditional culture as their main source of interventive practice. Seventeen percent stated that formal training is their main source of helping practice. Eight percent stated that Native traditional culture is their primary method and source of intervention. The remaining four percent relied on their personal life experiences.

b. Responses to Interview Questions

i) Direct Service Workers Describe Their Work Experiences

When direct service workers were asked to describe their main function, half of the family support workers interviewed used the term "empowerment" as a key description of their responsibility to clients. Family violence workers used the term "worker" when describing their positions. Two out of three community prevention and development workers described their positions as "advocates". All five youth support workers interviewed used the term "youth worker" when describing their positions.

When all workers were asked to describe the nature of

their approach to clients, they referred to it as an "informal approach" utilizing natural methods such as "having coffee", "small talk", "taking walks", "visiting a home" and participating in "Native gatherings". However, a majority of the family support workers described their jobs as having a natural combination of both formal and informal approaches. One worker said, "I grew up in a very traditional family, but going through school I learned other ways, knowledge from a different perspective, not only from my own cultural teachings." She mentioned using the teachings of the medicine wheel as a way of describing the circle of life which includes many significant Native teachings. This respondent had formalized educational training from a School of Social Work, but clearly supplemented this with traditional Native teachings. Community prevention-development, youth support workers and the after-hours worker also stated that they apply a combination of formal and informal approaches in their helping procedures. Four out of five family violence workers stated that they use a combination of formal and informal helping procedures, and that these combined methods are learned from their formal education and traditional Native background or teaching.

All eight family support workers who described a typical client identified a single parent family with a female head. They described their clients as "having low self-esteem", "not proud", "very sad", "not educated", "shy" and "non-

aggressive". Community prevention-development and youth support workers had similar statements regarding their clients although they said that the majority of their clients came from dual-parent families. Family violence workers and the after-hours worker also stated that single-parent families with female heads typified most of their clients.

When asked about how workers assisted their clients to feel comfortable in the initial stage of the helping relationship, six out of the eight family support workers who responded to the question stated that they take on an informal approach. Very often, these workers would not apply formalized techniques such as note-taking, interviewing and confronting. Many times these workers described their informal procedures as "just listening", "joking", "teasing", "speaking the Native language" and having informal discussions about life, not focusing on the client's problems". They stated that this type of informality brings on a natural human relationship.

Three out of five family violence workers said they help their clients feel comfortable in the initial stage of the helping relationship by having informal discussions with their clients, beginning with questions related to where they were from and how long they've been in the city. Community prevention-development and youth support workers indicated that participating in a natural activity with their clients was the main method of helping their clients feel comfortable

at the onset of the helping relationship.

Most direct service workers believe that Native people have a unique spiritual relationship with the Creator and they are very conscious of the connection between the spiritual and natural worlds. This is reflected in their daily practices with their clients. Seven out of eight family support workers indicated that they use sweet-grass in their own personal life as a way of spiritual connection between themselves and the Creator. They also indicated they would call on an elder for counselling regarding spiritual matters either for themselves or on behalf of their clients. Four out of five family violence workers stated that they rely on and utilize elders for spiritual counselling for themselves and their clients. All five youth support workers indicated that they use sweet-grass, the sweat-lodge, elders and other significant Native ceremonies as part of their daily spiritual experience.

ii) Direct Service Workers Describe Their Knowledge Base

When family support workers described their culturally appropriate practices, they mentioned utilizing an eclectic perspective as their working knowledge base. One worker stated that he incorporates whatever methods he feels would benefit his client. He stated, "We take what we learn from the white man, but we always remember where we come from", meaning that the foremost interventive tool is always the

Native perspective. Another worker stated that he utilizes contemporary counselling techniques which he learned through his formal education while being consistent with the value of respect, which is a highly regarded value in Native culture.

All family support workers described using a combination of Native teachings and conventional helping information as their working knowledge base. The typical process involved the following pattern. Firstly, they acquaint their clients with Native teachings and then apply whatever formal educational knowledge and skills in implementing their services to recipients. All community prevention-development workers and youth support workers made similar statements.

When workers were asked the question, "What is the most useful resource you can offer your client", five out of eight family support workers identified elders as the main resource for their clients. They stated that elders are most commonly utilized by the agency for counselling and teaching purposes. As the second most useful resource for clients, workers identified crisis counselling which often involves the provision of basic necessities such as food, shelter and safety as well as providing internal referrals. Referrals to outside agencies seldom occur.

All family violence workers named elders as the primary resource for their clients. Community prevention-development and youth support workers also identified elders and traditional teachers as the primary resource for their

clients, although they also reported using other internal agency programs such as family violence counselling and after-hours services.

There is an array of cultural activities that each direct service worker brings to the helping relationship. The most prominent practical activity is the use of sweet-grass. The workers use sweet-grass as a means of purification of the mind, body and soul, which they believe helps them perform better as workers. This activity is a form of prayer and meditation, usually having significant connection with their relationship to the Creator.

All family violence workers indicated that teaching the traditional culture was the main activity in assisting their clients in their daily lives. Community prevention-development and youth support workers also indicated the use of Native cultural teachings as their main focus in their attempt to assist their clients.

Six out of eight family support workers indicated that "respecting the client" is the most important value associated with the Native traditional way of helping. One worker stated, "Regardless of what a person looks like or who he is, you still respect that person". This worker went on to say that "if you work in a white agency, you won't have that respect for a family...it's not what the family wants, they're telling the family, 'this is what you need'. Here, we ask them what they need and want and that's the

difference." Another worker stated, "I most often use respect, regardless of what someone is wearing or their circumstances". Half of the family violence workers stated that "respecting the client" is the behavior that is most strongly associated with the Native traditional way of life. All youth support workers and community prevention-development workers identified this as important but also stated that worker informality and the use of humour were equally significant. Informality refers to the fact that workers dress casually and do not put on professional facades. Humour refers to the use of joking and teasing by the worker as a way of communicating with the client.

Five out of eight family support respondents rated their level of knowledge pertaining to the traditional "Indian way" as being low, whereas the three remaining respondents rated their knowledge level as high. Four out of five family violence workers rated themselves as having a medium level of knowledge regarding the "Indian way". They also said that they are learning more as time goes on and are more aware of it now that when they first started with the agency. All of the youth support workers described themselves as having a high level of knowledge, while the community prevention-development workers described themselves as having a low knowledge level of the "Indian way". One community development worker stated, "I really don't have as much of a firm base of Native teachings as I'd like to and I like

working in this context here where I can pick up and incorporate what I want and leave what I don't want".

Another worker stated, "No, I would not classify myself as having a high level of knowledge regarding Native culture...but I'm familiar with sweet-grass and the medicine wheel because that's something that comes up frequently".

Although individual workers' knowledge levels regarding the "Indian way" varies according to their personal backgrounds and heritage, it is nurtured and developed within the agency environment because of the agency's specialization in Native services. Workers' growth and development in this area is assisted by continuous contact with Native elders and cultural teachers and the presence of frequent traditional activities in the workplace. Although there are no formal methods of training within the organization for learning the "Indian way", observation of cultural activities is regarded in the Native culture as the key ingredient in the education and development of workers.

iii) Direct Service Workers' Opinions About Culturally Appropriate Practices in the Agency

All direct service workers described the atmosphere of the agency as conducive to the client-worker relationship. They mentioned the fact that the visibility of an all-Native staff and the presence of the Native language makes the Native client more receptive to help. The informality of the

agency was also identified as one of the main variables which contributes to the helping process. Workers stated that their informal dress allows the clients to relate to and trust the workers. The clients are perceived as family and treated with dignity as their personal beliefs and views of being Native are respected by the very fact that the agency incorporates Native traditional perspectives of helping into its system. One family violence worker stated, "Most (Native) people don't feel comfortable going to a non-Native agency. (Native) people feel more open coming here to a friendly atmosphere". Regarding informal dress, one worker stated, "It makes the clients feel at ease; it makes them easier to relate to us because we're more casually dressed".

Three quarters of all direct service workers stated that their level of cultural sensitivity regarding the needs of Native clients has increased since working at the agency. Regarding this, one worker stated, "I'm more aware of it; I realize now what's going on, even about the protesting that's going on today". Another worker stated, "I've really learned a lot since being here". In reference to the way Native people are treated in non-Native helping agencies, this worker stated, "after she (the client) left, I cried because it was so painful hearing her (story)".

Seven out of eight family support workers stated that they have acquired specific Native cultural teachings regarding helping practices since working at this agency.

Three out of five family violence workers agreed. All youth support workers and community prevention-development workers also stated that they have acquired specific teachings in relation to helping practices. One family support worker stated, "When I came here I didn't have a clue about the culture...we attend cultural events and we have a cultural worker here (on staff)".

Seven out of eight family support workers described themselves as having a high level of awareness regarding Native spirituality since they've started working at the agency. One worker stated, "When I came here I questioned...there was so much...because it was all so new to me, like the sweet-grass, pipe ceremony, just everything about the Native culture". She went on to say, "we used to have a sweet-grass ceremony every Monday morning". She felt that by practicing fundamental aspects of Native spirituality she has grown in her level of knowledge. All youth support workers and community prevention-development workers stated that they have a high level of awareness in this area. Four out of five family violence workers also stated that they have a high level of awareness regarding Native spirituality.

Six out of eight family support workers stated that the most practical and useful Native value pertaining to helping Native clients is the value of respect. Four out of eight identified the value of non-interference as the second most useful Native value when working with clients. All youth

support workers described respect as being the most useful value and half of the family violence workers described respect as being the primary useful value. Their second choice was the value of caring and sharing. Other values mentioned were having faith in the client and listening to the client.

All direct services workers mentioned that what is significant and unique about this agency is that every staff member is of aboriginal descent. They argued that this brings a very Native-oriented style of management and direct service practice to the Native community. They feel that Native issues and problems are always of a high profile and all workers are very sensitive to the vision and goal of bringing high quality, culturally appropriate services to the Native client.

When workers were asked to rate the three most significant cultural approaches or values within the agency, they mentioned respect as the first, non-interference as the second and informality as the third.

5.3 Interviews With Clients

Three group interviews were conducted with clients. In total, ten people were interviewed in group conversational type interviews. No fixed questions were constructed; rather the interviews involved a normal, natural flow of discussion regarding the manner in which these individuals received

services from the agency.

The first group interview involved two former service recipients of the family violence and family support programs. Both former clients are now volunteers with the agency.

These two former clients are single mothers and recovered alcoholics. They indicated that they have recovered from alcoholism and related problems due to the cultural teachings they have acquired through the agency's programs and services. They also indicated that the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre facilitated their receiving help from the Native cultural perspective. One of the former clients stated, "I feel I can open up more with Anishnabek". They indicated that the teachings of the Medicine Wheel were very instrumental in their understanding of Native traditional ways which aided their recovery. They also indicated that the Native traditional way is a spiritual way of life that has practical applicability. The teachings are simple and informal and provide direction for everyday living. They feel grateful that they have received through their exposure to the traditional way of life an identity and a new beginning. They also stated that the teachings give them a great sense of security and self-esteem regarding their position in life because the teachings have provided a sense of respect and value for them. They indicated that the elders, through the agency programs, have taught them that

the principal value of the Native way of life is "respect". One of the former clients stated, "They taught us a lot about being a woman". The elders have taught them that women hold a very special position in Native society. They are not only seen as significant caregivers but primary contributors to the giving of life, meaning that the Creator has given the woman a special place in the sacred circle of life. All these perspectives have been derived from the Medicine Wheel which teaches the value of respect among other teachings. Regarding respect, one of the former clients stated, "I have learned respect from the elders" and "I've learned how to be myself and to love myself and when I practice the culture, I feel good about myself." When asked the question, "What does Native culture mean to you?" this same former client responded by saying, "Doing my medicines...my sweetgrass, having our own talking circles in our homes. The sweetgrass is for healing; I use it to pray and I receive strength by that."

The second group interview was conducted with six male youth currently involved in the youth support program. These youth ranged in ages from 7 to 11. Most of them were new to the program and had enrolled in the program at the end of the school year. All the boys interviewed came from single parent families headed by their mothers. Most had indicated they had no relationships with their fathers but had some relationship with their mother's partner. They all indicated

that they enjoy being in the program and are getting along with their workers. All the boys indicated that their mothers were on welfare and had a limited amount of spending money and that the program had given them opportunities to participate in activities that they would not have had otherwise. The boys said that they enjoyed field trips to the zoo and museum along with fishing and camping excursions. They indicated that they had opportunity to participate in recreational sports such as soccer, baseball and volleyball. Two of the six boys spoke a Native language fluently and the rest had some understanding of it but could not speak it fluently. When asked about the Native culture, the boys responded by saying that they had just been introduced to many cultural activities and were learning about Native teachings. Some had previous connections to Native cultural activities such as pow wows and other Native gatherings. Most of the boys had never experienced cultural teachings such as the sweat-lodge, sacred circle, Medicine Wheel and pipe prior to enrolment in the program. They were most familiar with the use of sweet-grass which is used each time a teaching is given by an elder. Although they had not had extensive teachings of the Native culture, they had frequent contact with Native elders. Usually, elders visited the program once a week, but this was a less frequent practice during the summer months.

The third group interview involved the student's

observation of a sacred circle meeting. This was a rare opportunity because the student was allowed to record the session on tape. The women in this session indicated that they had acquired some teachings from the Medicine Wheel and were frequent practitioners of sweet-grass and sage for purification during a time of prayer to the Creator. They all discussed the value of respect in connection to Native teachings. They said that respect is a virtue given by the Creator and that all must incorporate this value in their daily lives. In connection with respect, every created thing on earth is seen as having equal status, i.e., man, beast and nature. Everything is seen as having a living spirit. These women indicated that the Native cultural teachings have given them a new meaning for life and that they feel grateful for these teachings. The elders have played a significant role in the teachings these women have acquired. Through these teachings they have received an inner strength and faith to confront life's problems. All these women indicated that they can relate more to Native spirituality than to any conventional religion.

Lastly, these women indicated that the traditional way of life is not a philosophy, but a practical, spiritual way of life which has lasting results.

5.4 Interviews With Connoisseurs

A total of six Native experts were interviewed in order

to obtain opinions which would help to discern whether or not the services and practices of the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre were consistent with Native cultural practices. Of the six Native experts interviewed, three were cultural teachers, and two of these were on staff at the Centre. All these interviews were completed in an informal manner with no structured set of questions. Interviews focused on significant topics that were covered in the guidelines developed for the interviews with direct service workers. For example, the interviews concentrated on Native traditional helping practices in family situations and the community in general, focusing on formal and informal helping procedures that were used.

a. Elders

Prior to the interviews with elders, the student consulted with an internal source regarding the proper procedure in requesting help from an elder. There is an important formal procedure to be followed in approaching an elder for counsel regarding the acquisition of important traditional information. This involves the presentation of tobacco to the elder as an offering which has significant meaning for the transference of knowledge. The tobacco is an offering as well as a token of appreciation to the spirit which reveals the knowledge from the Creator. The elder is used as a vessel by the Creator to transmit this knowledge.

In addition to the offering of tobacco, a gift such as a blanket or other useful article must also be presented to the elder as a sign of respect and appreciation for the role they play in this process.

It should be mentioned at this point that all elders interviewed had experienced the residential school system.

The first interview was conducted with an elder at the Centre. She seemed to be very delighted to share her knowledge of the Native culture. The discussion with this elder yielded rich information on a wide range of cultural practices of Native people. This elder stated that there are many teachings within the Native culture and that the non-traditional Native person is not familiar with these teachings. She stated that Native youth have lost most of the cultural ways. Loss of the cultural way has consequently affected Native people in their daily spiritual walk. She stated that the most important teaching that youth lack is that of respect. She said that this is due to the colonization practices of the Government of Canada and other institutions such as established religions and the educational system. She identified the biggest problem as the residential school system which separated youth from their indigenous lifestyles. This resulted in the loss of their language and the loss of the teachings through the natural process of socialization. She stated that the Native ways are learned through observation and that elders must

continue to be utilized as teachers and role models.

The second interview was conducted at the home of an elder couple. Both of these individuals were involved in counselling and teaching the traditional ways to Native families. This elder couple verified many of the statements made by the first elder interviewed. They began the interview by discussing the problem of colonization and its crippling effect upon their own lives as well as on the lives of Native people in general. These elders also indicated that the youth within the Native community have lost many of the traditional teachings due to the colonizational efforts of the government and as a result are in great turmoil today. They cited the example of name-giving as a significant practice which has been lost. This practice involves the giving of an Indian name in order to have a spiritual identity, which is the basis of Native traditional teachings. The Indian name also signifies the type of person you are as well as encompassing the meaning for your existence. This practice was relinquished because Native children were literally forced away from their homes to residential schools and as a result, were denied contact with their elders and family. The elders stated that the conventional practice of child baptism in certain Christian denominations has replaced the traditional name-giving practice.

The elders stated that one of the main reasons why many of the traditional teachings were lost is because Native

people were perceived as savages, a nation to be conquered and subdued, a nation that needed to be controlled. All Native ceremonies were seen as evil, satanic and witchcraft. They stated that these practices are not "things of the Devil or evil", but were only perceived as such by missionaries and the government. The elders went on to describe their experience in the residential schools where they were not even permitted to speak their Native language and were given English names in place of their original Indian names. They stated that Native children in these residential schools were forced to conform to a culture alien to them, often by being required to attend church services three times daily. They were subjected to religious teachings and practices not minutely understood by them.

The elders stated that the traditional teachings of the Medewin Lodge people must be revitalized in Native culture. They defined the term Medewin as "people of the heart"; sensitive people who practice a peace-loving way of life by respecting all things. People of the heart act according to their heart, not according to their intellect or mind. According to these elders there are many teachings which must be learned by the young people. The only way to learn these teachings is to attend the teaching lodges and ceremonies and visit Native communities where these teachings are taught. They stated that by attending these teachings, one is able to listen, observe and learn. Although observation is the key

to learning, one must also be a doer of what one observes. These elders insisted that it is imperative that Native youth attend the teaching circles and socialize with the elders and teachers in order to regain the traditional teachings which they have lost. Although the elders interviewed were of the Ojibway nation, it can be assumed that similar traditional teachings are shared by all Native peoples.

b. Cultural Teachers

The third interview was with a cultural teacher who is a regular staff member at the agency and is consistently consulted by staff members and clients to provide traditional cultural counselling. Although he is a member of the family support team, he was not interviewed in this capacity, but as a connoisseur or Native expert. The student met with this cultural teacher on two separate occasions because of time restraints. Both interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes.

During the student's initial meeting, the cultural teacher identified himself as a Native traditionalist. He stated that the traditional values that he consistently practices in his job are listening, respecting, non-interference and observation. He practices these principles in an informal, natural setting. For example, after developing a relationship with a client, he spends time with them through natural activities such as visiting them, inviting clients to his home and treating them like family.

members. He stated that his duty is to empower the client by providing appropriate culturally significant counselling to deal with issues such as feeling unimportant and lacking direction in life. He tries to teach individuals and families that they are significant members of the human race and that the Creator has a purpose and plan for their lives. He always operates from the perspective of mutuality, hoping that his relationship with the client will always be on a reciprocal basis. He believes that as he gives help, he also receives help, placing the relationship on an equal level. He says he never tells the clients what to do or interferes in their lives by suggesting strongly what they should do. He believes you have to let people live their lives and make their own choices. He spends a lot of his time listening to his clients and treats them with as he would like to be treated. He stated that he learned this from his uncle who taught him how to treat people. He noted that a majority of his family members follow the Medewin way of life. He feels that his responsibility is to support and guide Native families who come to him by teaching them the spiritual Indian way.

This cultural teacher went into some detail regarding specific cultural teachings of Native people. In his conversation, the cultural teacher described the term, Medewin as "good-hearted people". He described it as a way of life which must be learned and incorporated into the daily

affairs of Native traditional people. He stated that there are seven traditional teachings from the Medewin Lodge, but could not elaborate on these as it would be very time consuming. Because there are many Medewin lodges and various teachers, these teachings may vary somewhat, but all have the same basic meanings. He also stated that in order to truly understand and benefit from these teachings, one must be fully committed to the traditional way of life.

He stated that tobacco is offered prior to receiving any teaching, but is not necessary for acquiring basic knowledge and information regarding the Native traditional way.

The pipe is utilized when teachings are given. The smoke is offered to the spirits who give knowledge and help. The spirit enters into the pipe and comes into the person's spirit and mind. The smoke signifies the honoring of a spirit such as the bear. Different spirits are attached to different types of pipes and spiritually gifted persons.

He stated that elders have much knowledge about life and must teach the younger generation the traditional ways. Some elders are healers, while some are just teachers. The healing elders can heal spiritually or physically, either with the help of a spirit or by natural means using herbs. He said dreams are also significant and helpful to healers and Native people. They are given by grandfather spirits to give aid and assistance in the direction of life. He said visions are given in the sweat-lodge by the grandfather

spirits to help individuals or the elders themselves. These are all ways in which the grandfather spirit, or the Creator helps the Native people.

He stated that sweet-grass symbolizes knowledge and is used as a purifier to cleanse your whole being. It is used as an offering before you communicate with the Creator. He said that humans need to be cleansed by that practice before they enter the spirit world to communicate with the Creator. The Creator has provided this method for Native people to purify themselves from tainted lifestyles and wrongs, as no one is pure in themselves to communicate with the Creator.

The sweat-lodge symbolizes the renewal of life. He stated that when one enters the sweat-lodge one is re-born in mind, body and soul and comes out of the sweat as a new person. The sweat is a place for renewal, rededication and commitment to the Creator. It brings on a total life change creating strength, harmony and vision in a person's life.

The rocks in the sweat-lodge symbolize knowledge. They are used in the sweat because the spirit of the rock gives knowledge and as the steam from the rock is inhaled, knowledge is transmitted to the person.

The fourth person interviewed was another cultural teacher who is a staff member of the after-hours program. Although this person is a full-time direct service worker, he was not interviewed in this capacity, but as a connoisseur or Native expert. As a Native traditional teacher, this staff

member believes that the colonization of Native people has diluted the purity of the culture. Like others, he stated that the residential school system established by the federal government eroded the Native family system. Native children were separated from their natural families for great lengths of time and consequently lost many significant aspects of their cultural heritage. He stated that the general life skills of Native people were taught within Medewin Lodges. In these lodges, important Native values and teachings were imparted to the youth. In the residential schools developed by the government, children learned to develop their mind and body, but spiritual development was neglected. He believes that non-Native schools are established only for the development of the intellect and does not offer a balanced teaching for children. In the Medewin Lodges, elders teach a simple way of life that does not require higher intelligence. Teachings from the elders are balanced, emphasizing the spirit, mind and body. The Medewin way of life is a spiritual way of life.

Training in the Medewin Lodges begins at an early age. It is a process of socialization in which the youth and the elderly interact to share important aspects of their lives. Teachings have been lost because the Lodges are not a natural part of contemporary Native life. The agency has begun to assist the Native community of Winnipeg in reacquainting individual Native people with the simple teachings of the

traditional way of life.

He described his helping methods at the Centre as informal, applying simple interventive practices which utilize the values of kindness, love, honesty, humour and non-interference. He believes that the agency reflects very closely the Native traditional perspective because at the agency, workers are allowed to be themselves. The agency, he feels, does not impose rigid rules and regulations to dictate its helping practices. He feels that the use of the teachings from the elders have aided and shaped the agency to align itself with consistent Native cultural practices.

The fifth interview was with a cultural teacher who is on student placement within the youth support program. Most of what this cultural teacher describe was a reiteration of what the previous elders and cultural teachers have described regarding Native culture and helping practices. The significant point made by this cultural teacher was that in most Native circles, traditional teachings of the Medewin way of life is utilized in conjunction with contemporary helping practices. For example, the Medewin teachings in conjunction with medical science have been successful in treating the sick. He states that many times his grandfather, who is a medicine man, has been requested to attend the bedside of a sick person who has been given up to die by medical science. His grandfather has been able to assist the sick person to receive spiritual and physical healing.

He stated that the Native traditional way of life recognizes that every person has a spirit, mind and soul and that these need balancing. The Medewin teachings attempt to address all three areas. He feels that in many instances, people need healing not only in the physical realm, but also in the spiritual and mental realms. The teachings of the Medewin life embody the total person.

5.5 Interviews With Administrators

a. Characteristics of Respondents

The Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre's administrative section of the agency has a total of eight managerial-type positions. These consist of one Executive Director, one Coordinator of Programs and Services and six team leaders, one for each program. These programs are as follows: Administrative Support, Family Support, Family Violence, Community Prevention and Development, After-Hours and Youth Support.

Six out of eight administrative personnel were interviewed. These included the Executive Director, the Coordinator of Programs and Services and four team leaders. The student's intention was to interview all administrative staff, but two of the staff were unavailable. All administrative interviews were conducted on an individual basis using an interview guide developed by the student. Interviews consisted of the conversational and the interview

guide approach.

Out of the six administrative staff interviewed, three were female and three male. The average age of administrative staff is 36 years.

Four out of six administrators have been employed at the agency for more than two years. One out of six have been employed for more than one year and 1 out of 6 have been employed for less than one year. Four out of the six have previously occupied other positions within the agency.

Half of administrative staff identified their Native cultural heritage as Cree and the other half as Ojibway. Five out of six administrators indicated that they have a solid understanding of the Native traditional way of life. Half of them indicated that they follow the Native traditional way of life by practicing Native customs, beliefs and values.

Four out of six administrative staff possess university degrees. One indicated possessing a community college diploma and one is a high school graduate.

All administrative staff indicated that they utilize a combination of formal education and training along with traditional teachings in developing the agency's interventive helping methods. They stated that they encourage the direct services workers to utilize a combination of conventional and Native helping methods.

b. Responses to Interview Questions

i) Administrators Describe Their Experiences as Managers

When administrators were asked to describe their positions as managers, they responded in the following manner. Four of the six administrators described their position as being a program manager and that they utilized a collegial perspective in the administration of their programs. For example, policies and programs of the agency are developed by all internal staff using the external Native community for direction. The Native community of elders and families of the agency also have input regarding the development of services, and this helps to ensure that services are geared towards the needs of the Native community.

Four of the six described their responsibilities as program administrators and policy developers. Other functions of the job involve analysis and coordinating. The administrators seemed to be clear of their key responsibilities but were unsure of their other functions.

Four of the six administrators described their workers as having a combination of conventional education and Native traditional methods of helping. Five of the six administrators mentioned that their role is to enhance the workers' capacity to implement culturally appropriate services by providing Native traditional elders and cultural teachers to educate and have direct contact with agency workers. They also encourage the workers to participate in

Native cultural events which occur frequently within the Native community of Winnipeg.

Four of the six administrators participate in the traditional way and rely on the utilization of elders for personal consultation. Half of the administrative staff indicated they use sweet-grass and the sweat-lodge on a regular basis. All administrative staff indicated that they try to use the elders and attend significant ceremonies in order to understand the spiritual and cultural way of life.

ii) Administrators Describe Their Knowledge of Indian Ways

When the agency's administrators were asked to describe the primary method of developing their programs and services, five of the six administrators identified Native traditional and cultural teachings as the main method for developing client interventions, but added that conventional helping methods are used in the actual delivery of services. These same individuals stated that they are just beginning to learn the Native traditional way.

Five of the six administrators stated that the main resource for conceptualization and development of the agency's programs and services are elders and cultural teachers, not formal educators and trainers. They indicated that the Native community is well utilized as an added resource to the Native family clients. Families within the Native community are used in an informal way to help clients

of the agency on a voluntary basis. For example, resource families extend themselves to provide food, childcare, clothing and consultation for individuals and families.

Five of the six administrators described themselves as people who encourage the direct service workers to consult with elders as a way of encouraging a more culturally appropriate environment in the agency. When workers have contact with the elders, they receive traditional teachings which help the workers to interact with the clients in a more culturally sensitive manner.

When administrators were asked to rate Native traditional values in order of importance, all administrators named respect as the core value which is most often demonstrated by agency workers. The value of non-interference was next in importance, followed by acceptance.

iii) Administrators' Opinions About Working in a Native Oriented Agency

Four of the six administrators stated that it is most advantageous to work in a Native-oriented agency when providing service to the Native client. The atmosphere of the agency creates a helping environment conducive for the Native client to receive help. All administrators stated that they are more sensitive regarding the general cultural needs of the Native client since working in the agency. A culturally conducive environment helps to bring out the most essential knowledge regarding delivering culturally

appropriate services.

Half of the administrators regarded themselves as possessing a medium level of understanding of the Native culture. Two of the six said that they had a high understanding and one stated they were functioning at a low level of understanding but was in the process of learning. Four out of six administrators stated that they have a medium level of understanding regarding the Native spirituality and are continuing to learn in this area. However, all administrators described themselves as beginners who were learning more about Native traditional ways. They stated that their personal background knowledge through their upbringing has been most essential in relating to Native teachings and contemporary issues.

When asked to identify the most unique attribute of the agency, all administrators stated that it was the fact that the agency was developed and is operated by Native people. This is unique because they mentioned that there is no other Native family services agency which is staffed solely by people of Native descent. Also, all administrators identified the value of respect as a unique attribute of the agency. Because this value is a highly regarded principle in the Native culture, it is incorporated into the overall philosophy and practice of the agency, thereby contributing to their success as a Native oriented agency.

5.6 Documentation Review

Of the 25 client files randomly selected for review, 15 files were family support cases and 10 were family violence cases. All clients had been residents of the City of Winnipeg for more than six months. All clients had English as their first language and spoke Cree, Ojibway or Saulteaux partially or fluently.

The majority of files reviewed indicated that single mothers and their families were the main recipients of services. Fifteen of the twenty-five files (60%) represented single mothers, one of the twenty-five files (4%) was a single father and the remaining files involved either common-law relationships or married couples with children.

Twenty of the twenty-five files (80%) indicated that most direct service interventions were being implemented with status Indians who are just migrating to the City of Winnipeg. These cases involved new city residents who had only resided in the city between 6 and 12 months.

Ten of the twenty-five family support files (40%) indicated crisis intervention work is or was being completed with the clients. Five cases (20%) indicated that supportive work was continuing. The remaining cases involved referral services.

Twenty-one of the twenty-five cases (84%) indicated that some form of culturally appropriate helping had been implemented. These files indicated having an elder as the

primary resource for the client and that a cultural support worker was involved in the delivery of services.

Nine of the fifteen family support files (60%) indicated that both conventional and Native traditional teachings were utilized as the main interventive approach. These files indicated that the clients were receiving teachings on the sweat-lodge, sweet-grass, pipe ceremonies, sacred circle meetings and some other significant Native activities such as attending a Native festival. These same files indicated having conventional and theoretical frameworks of helping methods such as social work, psychology, sociology and counselling. Four of the fifteen files (27%) indicated that the method of service involved only conventional helping perspectives. Two files (13%) did not have any indication as to what type of helping perspective was being implemented.

Seven of the ten family violence files (70%) involved clients in common-law relationships. Nine of the ten family violence files (90%) suggested that counselling interventions were being completed with the clients.

All family violence files indicated the involvement of Native traditional interventions. These files also indicated the involvement of an elder as a resource speaker and as a supportive counsellor. Group counselling sessions were implemented using traditional ceremonies and teachings such as sweet-grass, the Medicine Wheel and specific teachings on the value of respect.

The family violence files also indicated that the clients were taught the significance of the sweat-lodge which was a major component of a teaching mechanism. Most of the files indicated the the clients have a theoretical understanding or have some practical experience with the sweat-lodge.

All family violence files indicated that teachings on the values of respect, patience, sharing and caring and non-violent behaviours were being taught either by internal staff members or elders from the community. The files indicated that the elders were used to reinforce the teachings of the staff. Six of the ten family violence files (60%) indicated the use of both conventional and Native traditional teachings as the main helping method.

In summary, this chapter provided information resulting from the student's data collection procedures, consisting primarily of interviews conducted with the agency's direct service workers, clients, connoisseurs and administrators. Information derived from the documentation review was summarized in the final section of this chapter. The next chapter addresses the implications of these findings and includes an evaluation of the practicum.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter describes the implications of findings from this evaluation-focused practicum in relation to Native people and social work practice. It also highlights the significant role Native human service agencies will play in the future and the expectations of Native communities across the nation regarding service delivery.

This chapter also deals with the student's learning process and educational benefits of the practicum and summarizes the efforts made to evaluate the student's performance during the practicum.

6.2 Observations and Implications of Findings

The most noticeable quality of the Native agency reviewed in this practicum was the value of informality which was reflected by both staff and environment. Agency staff including management were almost indistinguishable in their appearance from the clients they served. Everyone within the agency seemed to interact informally without a sense of intimidation or competition. Although staff occupied positions with varying degrees of responsibility, there seemed to be no distinct behaviors that segregated or

hindered their interpersonal working relationships to any great degree. For example, although the Executive Director holds a position of high status within the agency, he is approachable and available to other staff as well as clients for assistance. The student noticed that even the street people who came in for respite had the opportunity to interact with the brass of the agency.

The second noticeable quality of the agency was the value of respect. The student observed that staff of the Centre displayed a genuine sense of respect for their clients. The workers displayed this value in their attitudes and behaviors, referring to their clients as family and treating them as equals. The agency encourages the principle of respect from the perspective of Native teachings. It is the Native traditional view that all humanity as well as all creation must be respected. The importance of this value was expressed by all staff members, clients and cultural resource people the student encountered.

A unique element of this agency was the fact that it is staffed by all Native people. Since it is the agency's desire to administer programs and services which reflect Native culture, it stands to reason that the Centre would hire Native people with the assumption that the agency would deliver services that are consistent with Native traditional perspectives. In addition, because the agency possesses an all Native staff, it improves the receptivity of the Native

clients to receiving assistance.

6.3 Future Roles of Native Human Services

Historically, Native human service agencies were merely token organizations that accomplished little for the Native client. This practicum experience revealed that the establishment of this agency was a result of the unified Native voice which articulated the need for culturally relevant programs and services. Similar organizations already exist and are likely to expand as Native people continue to collaborate in their endeavors to develop services that reflect their needs and lifestyles. As this trend continues, more of the non-Native population will take notice of the leadership taken by Native people to abolish the culturally inappropriate services delivered to Native people. Of particular importance is the fact that Native people are now taking the initiative when it comes to the development of programs and services for Native people.

It is also true that that the establishment of new Native organizations will create the need for professionally trained Native workers who will be sensitive to Native traditions and values. Schools of Social Work will be required to develop curriculum that is conducive to and reflective of Native culture. Overall, the human services field will have to make significant changes in the manner in which it administers services to the Native population. For

example, the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre encourages the use of Native cultural practice as its main source of helping.

Native human agencies will continue to develop as legitimate organizations that deliver high quality human services consistent with Native cultural values. These agencies are likely to be staffed by Native people who understand and reflect Native values and are sensitive to the Native client.

Finally, Native organizations such as Ma Mawi Chi Itata which have a generic service mandate at present will likely begin to specialize to deliver services to specific target populations within the Native community.

With the call for appropriate services that are relevant to and consistent with Native concerns, Native communities across the nation will continue to demand services that meet their practical needs. Native populations nationally as well as locally will seek high levels of interventive services from Native and non-Native agencies that produce positive results in individual lives as well as in their communities. For example, services that are offered at the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre are successful because they have been designed to meet the relevant needs of Native people in a sensitive manner. Research is needed in organizations such as these in order to understand the administrative structure and functioning of such organizations as well as to learn what specific practices are being implemented at the recipient

level.

6.4 Student Learning

Examining culturally appropriate helping in a Native setting was a valuable opportunity for the student because it increased his understanding of what constitutes effective Native helping practices. Throughout the practicum, the student had the opportunity to grapple with relevant questions concerning culturally appropriate helping practices. For example, the student was able to address whether or not the agency was providing services that were culturally unique and if the programs and services of this agency offered appropriate and consistent helping practices originating from Native traditional ways. The student discovered that the agency was in fact very unique because it was staffed completely by Native people and relied heavily on Native traditional perspectives in the conceptualization, development and implementation of its programs and services. It was discovered that elders and cultural teachers played a prominent role in the organization by their input of wisdom concerning Native traditional teachings. The findings from this practicum produced many answers for the student's professional and personal development. At the same time it resulted in more questions which require more study in the area of culturally appropriate helping practices.

This practicum placement allowed the student to learn

and understand his culture through formal study. While this placement demanded high academic standards of research and evaluation methods, the student was able to learn more about his culture in a fundamental way by becoming a part of the environment in which the study took place. The informality of the agency setting made the application of research methods less strenuous and the "Nativity" of the agency environment encouraged the student's ability to grasp and understand unfamiliar concepts of the Native traditional culture.

The practicum presented a great challenge to the student because literature on the subject of culturally appropriate practices with Native people was very limited and research was fragmented. However, the student was able to acquire sufficient data to implement this practicum through the assistance of his Faculty Advisor and practicum committee members who were resourceful in providing significant materials and counsel throughout the practicum. Also, while the placement gave the student an opportunity to develop skills and knowledge in the area of research and evaluation, the student appreciated the opportunity to learn more about how to conduct culturally appropriate research within a Native environment. For example, at the outset of the study, the student was unaware of the appropriate manner in which to consult an elder for information. The student learned that it is necessary to offer tobacco to an elder to receive

consultation and instruction followed by presenting a token gift of appreciation. This has great significance in that it is the proper manner in which one shows respect of the position of elder and reverence to the Creator.

Finally, the student felt that the overall experience of the practicum benefited him in developing a deeper understanding and appreciation of his own culture and of the relationship between Native people and the larger society.

6.5 Student Evaluation of the Practicum

The nature of this practicum experience was that of a participatory observational study in which the student became a part of the agency environment for approximately three months. The practicum experience required the student to implement data collection methods in various locations within the agency. Although the student had one supervisor who became a part of his practicum committee, there was still very little opportunity to be directly monitored by this supervisor for evaluative purposes. Because of the nature of this placement, it did not allow for any one person or group to accurately measure the success of the student's practicum. However, the student had regular contact with his Faculty Advisor who was very instrumental in assisting the student to conceptualize, design and implement the participatory observational study. During each phase of the practicum, the student received support and counsel from his Faculty

Advisor, allowing the student's efforts to be properly guided. For example, the student and his Faculty Advisor decided that the best approach to take was to implement a participatory observational type of practicum allowing the student maximum involvement in the agency while being non-intrusive. The student's Faculty Advisor was also able to assist in designing data collection procedures, evaluation instruments and analysis. The practicum was designed to evaluate unique Native helping practices focusing on the practical aspects of Native traditional culture.

The student along with his practicum committee decided that the student's accomplishments be measured by the degree to which the practicum objectives were completed. As stated in Chapter 3, the student's primary goal was to record through participatory observation significant and unique practices of Native traditional helping within a Native cultural environment and verifying some of these unique approaches by relating them to recent literature and experts within the Native culture.

The student was able to successfully become a part of this Native agency and record significant and unique helping practices of Native people within the context of a Native helping environment. Some of these unique Native helping techniques included the use of sweet-grass and the sweat lodge as part of the interventive service for clients. The incorporation of teachings by the elders and cultural

teachers was also a significant part of the interventive services as elders were used for support and counsel.

The student was also able to gather literature which guided and contributed towards the rationale and development of the study. The sources gathered were limited in application because they focused primarily on issues and concerns of American Indians. The student discovered that research in the area of culturally appropriate helping practices with Native people in Canada is very fragmented and realized that there is a significant need for thorough research in this area. The literature was advantageous for the student in that it stated that there is a significant need to understand ethnic minorities such as Native people and that services rendered to such groups must be tailored to fit their needs and perspectives rather than relying on mainstream methods of helping.

In addition, it was possible for the student to have personal contact and discussion with Native experts such as elders and cultural teachers in order to verify some of the present helping practices that exist within this agency. The elders and cultural teachers were able to assist the student by informally sharing personal experiences and traditional teachings that related to what the student observed within the agency. The student concluded that the present helping practices of the agency reflected Native traditional methods of intervention as described by these Native experts.

In summary, this practicum experience regarding culturally appropriate helping practices was fulfilling and challenging for the student's professional and personal life. It is the student's hope that this practicum will encourage more study to benefit the establishment of more culturally relevant services for Native people.

NOTES

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APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM

Study of Appropriate and Unique Native Helping Practices

1. I, _____, hereby consent to take part in the exploratory observational research study concerning the recording of significant and unique practices of Native traditional helping styles. I have been notified that the main purpose of this study is to provide necessary information for the student's completion of a Practicum Report leading to a Masters of Social Work Degree.
2. I understand that as a participant my right to privacy will be maintained, that responses will remain personally confidential, and that results will be reported in aggregate form only.
3. I have been informed that general results from this research will be compiled in a final document that will be available through the Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba.
4. I have been informed that I may contact Roma Fisher and his practicum committee about any questions regarding this research study.
5. I have been informed that my participation is voluntary and that I may have full access to any information disclosed in this interview.
6. I have received a copy of this consent form.

Dated: _____

Signature

Dated: _____

Signature

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE DELIVERY WORKERS

1. This section of questions deals with the experiences and some behaviors of the service delivery worker.

- 1 A. What is your current position with the agency?
- 1 B. What exactly do you do on your job?
- 1 C. How long have you been working at your present position?
- 1 D. Why is your job so important for your clients?
- 1 E. Think about an outstanding case experience you have had in the last 2 to 4 weeks.
 - i) What is significant about this case?
 - ii) Describe the important details.
 - iii) How are you continuing to deal with the case?
- 1 F. Describe a typical Native client and your initial interaction.
- 1 G. What do you do to make them feel comfortable?
- 1 H. Can you describe the use of Native cultural traditions, beliefs and values within your current working position?
- 1 I. Does the "Indian way" aid or assist you in feeling good about what you do on your job? In what way?
- 1 J. What types of practices on your job are strongly associated with Native ways? What practices are not? Give examples.
- 1 K. What is most conflicting about your present practice in relation to Indian ways?
- 1 L. Resulting from your working experience with Native people, what are the most significant facts about current Native cultural issues.
- 1 M. As a Native person, does working on this job make you feel positive about your cultural heritage?
- 1 N. Do you feel more sensitive or aware about Native helping

practices since working at this job?

- 1 O. Does your position enhance your awareness of Native culture and major concerns of Native people?
- 1 P. What do you most dislike about the current Native child and family services system?
- 1 Q. If you could change any aspect of your job, what would you change?

2. This section of questions deals mainly with the opinions and beliefs of the service delivery worker regarding Native operated agencies.

- 2 A. What is your opinion of Native operated agencies?
- 2 B. Do you believe that Native agencies truly reflect Native cultural ways?
- 2 C. Are Native agencies succeeding in their endeavour to deliver appropriate programs and services to the Native client?
- 2 D. Can you name two successful Native agencies?
- 2 E. What do you hear the surrounding Native community say about this agency?

Discussion Regarding the Advantages and Disadvantages of Native Operated Child Welfare Agencies

- 2 F. What are some of the advantages/disadvantages of a Native operated child welfare agency?
 - i) In your opinion, what is the advantage/disadvantage of having spiritual activities or ceremonies such as sweet grass, pipe and prayer incorporated in your line of work.
 - ii) Do you feel these spiritual activities help you/hinder you and your clients within the intervention?
 - iii) In your opinion, what is the most useful/least useful Native value in connection to your interventive approach?

- 2 G. Is there a difference between spiritual and cultural programs?
- 2 H. What do you think is the best practice of the "Indian way" that helps you feel positive about your work and clients?
- 2 I. Do you have any negative feelings about the Indian way of practice on your job?
- 2 J. What is the most common perception of Native clients within the conventional child welfare system? ie. non-Native family and children's services.
- 2 K. Do you view the current Native child and family services system as being Native oriented in its practices or is it too much influenced by non-Native agencies?
- 2 L. If you could change one significant practice in advancing Native child welfare services, what would you change?
- 2 M. From your perspective, do you see any future positive changes for Native people and the child and family services system? What in particular?

3. This section of questions deals with the service delivery worker's level of knowledge relating to Indian ways of helping within the context of this program or service.

- 3 A. What is your current knowledge regarding culturally sensitive helping practices with Native people? How was this knowledge acquired?
- 3 B. What is distinctly a unique Native practice in your methods of helping Indian families?
- 3 C. Can you name two significant methods of Native helping practice?
- 3 D. Are you consciously aware of practicing culturally appropriate helping techniques that are inherently Native?
- 3 E. Can you name two situations in which you would consciously apply a culturally appropriate helping technique?
- 3 F. What do the following terms mean to you in relation to your current practice?

- i) The Indian Way
- ii) Culturally Sensitive Practice
- iii) Culturally Appropriate Practice
- iv) Unique Native Approaches

- 3 G. Name two instances when you would use the Indian way of operation.
- 3 H. What are some unique Native approaches of helping?
- 3 I. Are these unique Native approaches really different from the non-Native styles of helping?
- 3 J. What is difficult about applying the Indian way on your job? Discuss some hinderances.

4. This section of questions deals with the sensory world of the service delivery worker. It allows the interviewer to enter the world of the interviewee. Questions relate to the five senses, ie. sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch.

- 4 A. Describe a typical day within your agency.
- 4 B. How would you rate your overall level of job satisfaction within this agency?

Very unsatisfied _____
Unsatisfied _____
Somewhat Satisfied _____
Satisfied _____
Very Satisfied _____

5. Demographic Data of Family Support Worker

1. Sex A. Male _____
 B. Female _____
2. Age _____
3. Marital Status A. Single _____
 B. Married _____
 C. Divorced _____
 D. Separated _____
 E. Other _____
4. How long have you been at your present job?

- 112

Other (please explain) _____

11. What is your current working knowledge base that is significantly practiced when intervening in your client's life?

- A. Formal training _____
 - B. Personal experience _____
 - C. The Native ways _____
 - D. All the above _____
 - E. None of the above _____
 - F. Other _____
- _____

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

1. This section of questions deals with the experiences of management regarding the administration of programs and policy development of the agency's services.

- 1 A. What is your current position with this agency?
- 1 B. What exactly does your position entail. (Explain your duties, responsibilities, etc.)
- 1 C. What is the most important aspect about your position in connection to developing appropriate cultural service delivery to Native people?
- 1 D. What has your experience been up to now regarding developing programs that are culturally sensitive?
- 1 E. What is unique about your experience working as a manager in this agency?
- 1 F. What directions has management taken to ensure that unique Native cultural programs are developed and provided for your service recipients?
- 1 G. What kinds of feedback do you frequently receive from people who work with you or under you regarding the delivery of appropriate and sensitive cultural programming?
- 1 H. What direction will management take in the future to ensure quality services are being provided in a manner that is culturally conducive for your clients?
- 1 I. What is the most positive (and negative) experience you have had in developing culturally appropriate services for Native people? (please explain)
- 1 J. What policy within your agency best describes the Indian way?

2. This section of questions deals mainly with the opinions and beliefs of the administrator.

- 2 A. What is your opinion of Native operated child and family service agencies?
- 2 B. Do you believe that these agencies truly reflect Native values and represent Native concerns?
- 2 C. Are Native agencies succeeding in the endeavour to deliver appropriate programs and services to the Native client?
- 2 D. Name two successful Native agencies and explain how and why they are succeeding.
- 2 E. What do you consider to be some downfalls of Native operated agencies?
- 2 F. What is the difference between spiritual and cultural practices within the context of Native services?
- 2 G. What is your opinion about incorporating the practice of spiritual activities or ceremonies such as sweet grass, pipe, prayers, etc. within the organization?
- 2 H. In your opinion, what is the most important Native value to incorporate within the service delivery practices?
- 2 I. What particular knowledge is being used by your staff to ensure Native ways are being practiced within your agency in relation to service delivery?
- 2 J. Why is there such a move in our society to deliver effective and appropriate cultural services? (Will it last? How long?)

3. This section of questions deals mainly with the administrator's feelings and thoughts of Native culture and the current methods of practice.

- 3 A. Can you describe the use of Native cultural traditions, beliefs and values within your current position?
- 3 B. Does the "Indian way" aid or assist you in feeling good about what you do in your position? In what way?
- 3 C. What do you think is the best practice of the "Indian way" that helps you feel positive about your work and clients?
- 3 D. Do you have any negative feelings about the Indian way of practice in your position?

- 3 E. As a Native person, does working in this agency make you feel positive about your cultural heritage?
- 3 F. Do you feel more sensitive or aware about Native helping practices since working in this agency?
- 3 G. What do you think is the most common perception of Native clients within the conventional child welfare system? ie. non-Native family and children's services.
- 3 H. Do you view the current Native child and family services system as being Native oriented in its practices or is it too much influenced by non-Native agencies?
- 3 I. What positive changes for Native people and the child and family services system do you see in the future?
- 3 J. What do you most dislike about the current Native child and family services system?

4. This section of questions deals with the administrator's level of knowledge relating to Indian ways of helping within the context of this program or service.

- 4 A. What is your current knowledge regarding culturally sensitive helping practices with Native people? How is this knowledge acquired?
- 4 B. Are all programs in your agency distinctly Native?
- 4 C. Can you name two significant methods of Native helping practices used most often by service delivery workers?
- 4 D. Are you consciously aware of developing culturally appropriate programs and services that are inherently Native?
- 4 E. What do the terms "Indian Way", "culturally sensitive practice", "culturally appropriate practice" and "unique Native approaches" mean in relation to your current practice?
- 4 F. Can you describe two policies of your agency which reflect the "Indian way"?
- 4 G. What are some unique Native approaches to helping?

- 4 H. Are these unique Native approaches really different from the non-Native styles of helping?
- 4 I. What is difficult about applying Indian methods of helping within the Native child and family services system?

5. Demographic Data of Administrator

1. Sex A. Male _____
 B. Female _____
2. Age _____
3. Marital Status A. Single _____
 B. Married _____
 C. Divorced _____
 D. Separated _____
 E. Other _____
4. How long have you been at your present job?
- A. Less than 1 year _____
 B. More than 2 years _____
 C. More than 3 years _____
 D. More than 5 years _____
5. What other positions have you had in this agency?
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
6. How long do you see yourself working for this agency?
- A. 1 year _____
 B. 2 years _____
 C. 3 years _____
 D. Other _____
7. What is your Native cultural heritage?
- A. Ojibway _____
 B. Cree _____
 C. Metis _____
 D. Inuit _____
 E. Other (please specify)

8. Would you classify yourself as having a solid understanding

of the Indian way of life?

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

9. What is your formal educational background?

- A. University Degree _____
- B. Community College Diploma _____
Certificate _____
- C. High School Graduate _____
- D. Junior High Graduate _____
- E. Primary School Graduate _____
- F. None of the above _____
- G. Other (please explain) _____

10. Do you follow the traditional way of life by practicing Native customs, beliefs and values that are inherently Native ceremonies?

Yes _____ No _____

Other (please explain) _____

11. What is your current working knowledge base that is significantly practiced when intervening in your client's life?

- A. Formal training _____
- B. Personal experience _____
- C. The Native ways _____
- D. All the above _____
- E. None of the above _____
- F. Other _____

APPENDIX 4: FAMILY FILE INSTRUMENT

1. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

I. TYPE OF FILE

1. A. Family Support _____

B. Family Violence _____

2. Community Residence _____

A. City _____ B. Rural _____ C. Reserve _____

3. Total Duration of off-reserve residence

Less than 1 month _____

1 - 2 months _____

3 - 6 months _____

7 - 12 months _____

More than 1 year _____

4. Family Composition

A. Married Couple _____ B. Common Law _____

C. Single Parent Family (Father Head) _____

D. Single Parent Family (Mother Head) _____

5. Aboriginal Status

A. Status Indian _____ B. Non-Status Indian _____

C. Metis _____ D. Not Applicable _____

6. Language Spoken (Dialect)

Cree _____

Ojibway _____

Soto _____

Dakota _____

Ojicree _____

Other (specify) _____

7. Reason for file open

1. Crisis _____

2. Continuing Counselling _____
3. Temporary Support _____
4. Referral Services _____ (other agencies)

8. Referral Source _____

9. Voluntary _____ Involuntary _____

II. SERVICES RECEIVED (check ones applicable)

- _____ Supportive Counselling (ie. Circle Meetings)
_____ Family Counselling
_____ Practical Assistance
_____ Referral to S.S. Professional
_____ Referral to Health Professional
_____ Referral to Psychological Professional
_____ Referral to Traditional Indian Helper (ie. Elder)
_____ Homemaker
_____ Parent Aide
_____ Respite Care
_____ Extended Family Intervention (ie. Customary Care)
_____ Repatriation
_____ Day Care
_____ Involuntary Placement (through court)
_____ Voluntary Placement
_____ Other (specify) _____

III. FILE RECORDING SOURCE

- _____ Intake Sheet
_____ Assessment Forms

- ____ Monthly Recording
- ____ Summary Recording Report
- ____ Closing Summary
- ____ Other (specify) _____

IV. QUESTIONS

1. Did these clients receive culturally appropriate services?
ie. Native Traditional Helper Counselling.

Yes ____ No ____

Explain _____

2. If not, did the file indicate that there may have been
some form of culturally appropriate helping involved?

Yes ____ No ____

Explain _____

3. Was there any Native traditional methods of intervention
involved?

sweet-grass ____ sweat lodge ____ circle meetings ____
cultural teachings ____ other _____

4. The files indicate a mixture of both conventional methods
of helping and Native traditional helping.

Yes ____ No ____

Explain _____

V. GENERAL COMMENTS ON FILE

APPENDIX 5: ANALYSIS FORMAT FOR SERVICE DELIVERY WORKERS

Experiences

A. Workers describe their positions at the Ma Mawi Chi Itata Centre.

1. Key terms and concepts most often used by workers when they describe the Native service intervention.

Totals

	a.	_____
_____	#	_____
	b.	_____
_____	#	_____
	c.	_____
_____	#	_____
	d.	_____
_____	#	_____
	e.	_____
_____	#	_____

Comments

A. 2. Workers describe their duties as:

Totals

_____	a.	Formal Approach #	_____
_____	b.	Informal Approach #	_____
	c.	Natural Combination of Both A and B	
_____	#		_____

Comments

A. 3. Workers describe their typical client as:

Totals

- a. Single Parent Family (female head)
_____ # _____
- b. Single Parent Family (male head)
_____ # _____
- c. Dual Parent Family
_____ # _____
- d. Childless Couple
_____ # _____
- e. Single Person (male or female)
_____ # _____
- f. Young Adult (teenager)
_____ # _____
- g. Youth (under 12)
_____ # _____
- h. Child (birth to 5)
_____ # _____

Comments

A. 4. How workers describe assisting the client feel comfortable by using:

Totals

- a. A Native Language (ie. Saulteaux, Cree, etc.)
_____ # _____

b. An Informal Discussion (ie. small talk)

_____ # _____

c. Only Listening (ie. focusing on client perspective)

_____ # _____

d. Silence (ie. no agenda)

_____ # _____

e. Humour (ie. joking, teasing)

_____ # _____

f. A Natural Activity (ie. visiting a family)

_____ # _____

g. Other _____

_____ # _____

Comments

- A. 5. Most workers believe that Native people have a unique spiritual relationship with the Creator and they are very conscious of the connection between the spiritual and natural worlds. How is this reflected in the practices of the workers?

Totals

_____ A. Sweet-grass # _____

_____ B. Daily prayer # _____

_____ C. Sweat-lodge # _____

_____ D. Elder counsel # _____

_____ E. Significant ceremonies # _____

_____ F. Other _____

_____ # _____

Comments

Knowledge

B. How workers describe culturally appropriate helping practices.

1. What workers mention as their main tool of intervention within the agency.

Totals

a. Native Teachings

_____ # _____

b. Conventional Helping Styles

_____ # _____

c. Combination of Native Teachings and
conventional helping styles. (eclectic)

_____ # _____

d. Other _____

_____ # _____

Comments

B. 2. What workers describe as the main resource for their Native clients.

Totals

a. Elders

_____ # _____

b. Traditional Teachers

_____ # _____

c. Internal Family Programs

_____ # _____

d. External Family Programs (ie. other agencies)

_____ # _____

e. Other

_____ # _____

Comments

B. 3. What culturally appropriate activities the worker brings to the helping relationship.

Totals

_____ a. Sweet-grass # _____

_____ b. Sweat-lodge # _____

_____ c. Sacred Circle Meetings # _____

_____ d. Elder Consultation # _____

_____ e. Cultural Teachings # _____

_____ f. Cultural Festivals # _____
(ie. pow wows)

_____ g. Other Ceremonies # _____

Comments

B. 4. What workers describe as behaviours strongly associated with the traditional Indian way of helping.

Totals

_____ a. Respecting the client (ie. unconditional acceptance)

_____ b. Listening to the client (ie. with your heart)

_____ c. Family focused (ie. needs of client)

_____ d. Non-interference (ie. freedom of client)

- e. Worker informality (ie. dress and manner)
 _____ # _____
- f. Using humour (ie. joking and teasing)
 _____ # _____
- g. Using silence (ie. no agenda)
 _____ # _____
- h. Other _____
 _____ # _____

Comments

- B. 5. How workers describe their level of knowledge pertaining to the traditional "Indian Ways".

Totals

- _____ a. High # _____
- _____ b. Medium # _____
- _____ c. Low # _____
- _____ d. Unsure # _____

Comments

Opinions

- C. Workers' opinions of the advantages of working in a Native oriented agency.

1. How workers describe the Native atmosphere of the agency as being helpful to the client-worker relationship.

Totals

- _____ a. Very Helpful # _____
- _____ b. Helpful # _____

_____ c. Not Very Helpful # _____

_____ d. Unknown # _____

Comments

- C. 2. How workers describe their level of cultural sensitivity regarding the needs of Native clients since working in a Native oriented environment.

Totals

_____ a. Greatly Increased # _____

_____ b. Somewhat Increased # _____

_____ c. Not Increased # _____

_____ d. Unknown # _____

Comments

- C. 3. How workers describe their level of learning about specific Native cultural teachings regarding helping practices since working in a Native oriented environment?

Totals

_____ a. High # _____

_____ b. Medium # _____

_____ c. Low # _____

_____ d. None # _____

_____ e. Unknown # _____

Comments

- C. 4. How workers describe their level of awareness regarding Native spirituality since working in a Native oriented environment.

Totals

_____ a. High # _____

_____ b. Medium # _____

- _____ c. Low # _____
- _____ d. None # _____
- _____ e. Unknown # _____

Comments

- C. 5. What workers describe as the most practical and useful Native value pertaining to helping Native clients.

Totals

- _____ a. Non-Interference # _____
- _____ b. Respect # _____
- _____ c. Caring and Sharing # _____
- _____ d. Faith (having faith in Creator and client)

- _____ e. Other _____

Comments

- C. 6. What do workers mention as a significant unique Native service offered by the agency?

Totals

- a. All Native Staff
ie. every staff member is of aboriginal descent, either Metis, Status, non-Status Indian.
_____ # _____
- b. Most staff members possess first hand knowledge of the Native culture and have the knowledge and skills to carry out their duties in a culturally sensitive manner.
_____ # _____

- c. Most staff members say that Natives servicing Natives brings an automatic reprieve to the helping relationship.
ie. having a brown face immediately brings closeness between client and worker.

_____ # _____

_____ d. Other _____

Comments

- C. 7. What do Workers state as being the three most significant culturally sensitive practices within the agency.

Totals

A. _____

_____ # _____

B. _____

_____ # _____

C. _____

_____ # _____

Comments

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____