

Stories From the North:
Filipino Internationally Educated Teachers and Their Work in Indigenous Communities in
Northern Manitoba

by
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Abstract

This study investigated the teaching and learning experiences of 10 Filipino internationally educated teachers (IETs) who decided to continue their careers as educators in Northern Manitoba. The participants (eight females, two males) trained and worked as teachers in the Philippines. The IETs took up residences and teaching assignments in remote and Indigenous communities—locales that have historically dealt with teacher shortages and interrupted education among Indigenous learners. The recertification process for IETs is often challenging and time-consuming, and many participants took on survival jobs to support themselves and their families financially. The benefits and successes the IETs experienced in Indigenous communities are analyzed through stories and photos, which communicate the way many IETs forged strong relationships and uncovered similar cultural values between Indigenous and Filipino people. The challenges the participants experienced are also examined, including how some teachers endured skepticism from Indigenous community members and isolating conditions in schools. Despite being relatively small, the Filipino educational diaspora in Northern Manitoba does a credible job in supporting newcomer teachers and providing leadership and advocacy. This support parallels the supports received by Filipino IETs from Indigenous teachers, administrators, and Elders. The relationship between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples is often nuanced, so this case study offers a unique perspective on a partnership that offers many benefits, such as advancing reconciliation, reducing teacher shortages, and mitigating interrupted education. The final portion of the study shares recommendations that were derived from the results, including an emphasis on the importance of orientation programming for immigrant teachers and a call to teach in the North—a remarkable place full of opportunities for internationally and domestically trained teachers. The key findings

of the study are that, with the proper support, IETs can advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples by providing continuous, high-quality education in Indigenous communities.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In this introductory chapter I offer an overview of my exploratory case study involving Filipino internationally educated teachers (IETs) and their experiences in Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba. The chapter begins by outlining the research problem, my personal narrative, my experiences as a student, teacher, and university instructor, and how these experiences connect to the research topic. I provide contextual information about the phenomenon of Filipino teachers working in Northern Manitoba, scholarship regarding IETs in Manitoba, and information about the University of Manitoba's former Academic and Professional Bridging Program for IETs. The latter sections of the chapter include my researcher positioning, the research objectives, research questions, and the significance of the study. The introductory chapter serves as a foundation for the research and explores important themes that will be covered more explicitly in the succeeding chapters.

Research Problem

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers seeking employment in Manitoba often pursued positions in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, given the scarcity of vacancies in more metropolitan areas such as Winnipeg and Brandon. While residing and teaching in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) communities can be challenging, some teachers recognize meaningful opportunities in these contexts. In this dissertation, I examine the experiences of Filipino IETs who completed their teacher recertification requirements and, at the time of my data generation, resided and taught in several of Manitoba's northern Indigenous communities and reserves. My primary research query was to examine the professional and personal integration experiences of Filipino IETs and to uncover what makes these northern communities the teaching workplaces and homes of choice for a sizeable cadre of Filipino teachers. These

educators have welcomed the opportunity to reside and work in schools in Northern Manitoba's Indigenous communities. This is an underreported phenomenon deserving of attention.

The barriers IETs face in recertifying as teachers and the challenges they encounter once employed in the Canadian education system are evident. Research by Schmidt (2010) and Schmidt et al. (2010) has focused on systemic discrimination as a barrier to integrating IETs in Manitoba. Marom's (2017, 2019) studies have examined the recertification and capital conversion of IETs, focusing on the critical issues and perspectives of IETs in British Columbia. Schmidt and Block (2010) also examined the implications of ethnocultural and employment-equity policies for IETs. They found that many school divisions in Manitoba were lacking equity policies explicitly addressing internationally educated teachers, which limited further integration of IETs. Additionally, Kailasanathan (2013) explored the challenges of internationally educated teacher integration by fusing personal narratives and assessing the macrocosmic challenges faced by IETs, such as the difficulties of re-credentialing and the fact that provincial licensing bodies tend to label IETs as unprepared to enter the teaching force despite numerous years of teaching experience from abroad. The above research demonstrates an interest in IETs and the recertification process in the literature.

When I first began pondering a topic to explore for my PhD dissertation, I decided to examine the challenges IETs face in the Canadian education system. However, upon review, I discovered that the topic was saturated, and a more specific case study involving IETs would better contribute to the existing literature. My advisor informed me that very little, if any, research had been conducted on a particular group of Filipino IETs, many of whom had completed the Academic Professional Bridging Program at the University of Manitoba, who were employed by one of the largest school divisions in the province and resided and taught in

northern Indigenous communities. This topic resonated with me and synchronized with my interests in IETs, reconciliation between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples, and the diversification of the teaching force. I aim to contribute to the literature on IET integration and to galvanize further research on the integration of IETs in Indigenous communities, and on how internationally educated teachers can contribute to and learn from life on northern reserves.

My Narrative

Following my graduation from the Bachelor of Education (BEd) program at the University of Manitoba in 2008, I did not pursue teaching jobs in K–12 schools like most of my fellow teacher graduates. Though I performed well academically in the BEd courses I took, I began to feel perplexed as I realized I was not suited to be a K–12 classroom teacher. I had struggled during my practicums to connect with young learners and manage a classroom. My strong study habits and work ethic helped me excel academically but did little to help me perform in the classroom. I could plan engaging lessons, but I found myself requiring additional skills and discipline to deliver these lessons and manage a classroom of young learners effectively (Skelton, 2023). These experiences made me question my career choice, and as I neared the final semester of my studies, my goal was simply to get through the BEd program as best as I could.

Instead of applying for jobs in the K–12 school system following graduation, I scanned volunteer job postings in the newspaper. I came across an advertisement requesting volunteers to serve as classroom assistants in a program teaching English as an Additional Language (EAL) for adults. The elective courses I took for my education degree were in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), so this volunteer opportunity represented a relevant pursuit. I began volunteering in the EAL program in the summer of 2008 and was placed in a foundations-level

class. Greta,¹ the teacher who hosted me, was an experienced educator and well-respected within the program. I was fortunate to develop a good rapport with Greta (Skelton, 2023). This shared rapport, and Greta's enthusiasm and kindness, reignited my passion for education.

The adult students who attended Greta's class further fuelled my passion for teaching. Working with learners—from the looks on their faces to their words of thanks—can bring immense enjoyment and justify a teacher's efforts (Dillon & Maguire, 2011). The students in Greta's class taught me a level of humility that I had never experienced before as a teacher. The respect I received justified my time volunteering as a classroom assistant.

The learners in Greta's class were beginners to English and had minimal oral proficiency. Nevertheless, I assisted them as best I could by helping them with their computer skills, leading small group conversations, and circulating the class to help with their lessons. I recall helping students type on the computer for the first time and recite the alphabet—skills people who have had the opportunity to pursue formal education tend to take for granted. During my volunteer placement, I was always disappointed when the class finished for the evening. At this point, I realized I wanted to work in adult education and, more specifically, teach English to adult immigrants and refugees (Skelton, 2023). Some educators might feel guilty about abandoning their original career goals (Santoro, 2014); however, I did not feel ashamed about my decision to abandon my aim of becoming a K–12 teacher. I had never developed the passion required to work effectively with young learners. I realized that some educators are best suited to working with young learners, and others are best suited to working with adults.

During the summer of 2008, I completed the final courses I needed to qualify for a Certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language (CTESL). I was hired by the same EAL

¹ A pseudonym

program I had volunteered with—the Winnipeg School Division’s Adult EAL Program—in a full-time teaching position in the fall of 2008. I have happily been working with this program for the past 15 years. I have taught numerous courses throughout the program, including literacy, regular stream, and workplace English classes.² I have mentored numerous teacher candidates and service learners from local universities and welcomed several volunteers to serve as teaching assistants in my classroom. Whenever I meet a new volunteer, Greta comes to mind, and I try to show the new volunteer the same kindness she showed me over 15 years ago. The volunteer placement with Greta profoundly impacted my teaching career and was precisely the uplifting experience I needed as a struggling novice teacher.

In my current role as an adult EAL teacher with the Winnipeg School Division, I work with immigrants from a multitude of countries and refugees who come from marginalized backgrounds, including many who come from countries such as Afghanistan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Somalia, and South Sudan. These learners arrive in Canada and must work hard to access opportunities in Canadian society, including by learning a new language and upgrading their education and certifications to find employment (Garang, 2012). Newcomers in Canada may also experience implicit and explicit forms of discrimination (Carter et al., 2009; Cheinis & Sproule, 2008). Implicit discrimination is an adverse reaction to an individual or group of a different ethnicity and typically involves unconscious thoughts that lie beyond the perpetrator’s awareness (Castro, 2008). In Canada, refugees commonly face implicit discrimination in their

² Literacy classes are available to students who have less than 8 years of formal education in their language and can range from a foundations level to a Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) of 4. Regular Stream classes are available to students who have more than eight years of formal education in their own language and can range from CLB 1-8. Workplace English classes are available to both literacy and regular-stream students and teach learners about important workplace topics, such as how to access employment, workplace safety, and workplace culture.

search for affordable housing and in the employment process. Employers, for example, sometimes refrain from hiring newcomers from different cultural groups, thinking they may require help adjusting to the culture of a Canadian workplace and fitting in with other team members (Cheinis & Sproule, 2008). While not overt, implicit discrimination is no less harmful to refugees than explicit forms (Castro, 2008).

Explicit discrimination, on the other hand, is a more blatant form of prejudice. It is often intentional, overt, and exercised by individuals who endorse prejudicial attitudes toward racialized people, such as Filipinos (Castro, 2008). In a Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) study, 22 percent of the respondents indicated that their children experienced discrimination in schools daily (Carter et al., 2009). The study also determined that 25 percent of parents surveyed felt their children's school did not encourage their children to retain their cultural identity (Carter et al., 2009). This data suggests that schools have much work to do to promote the cultural identities of newcomers and ensure the school system is free of explicit discrimination.

The student body comprising the Winnipeg School Division's Adult EAL Program exemplifies Manitoba's cultural and linguistic diversity. As a first step toward relating appropriately to their students, EAL teachers should adopt critical stances, including acknowledging the privilege they possess (Schmidt, 2015b). Working in this EAL program piqued my interest in refugee learners and the challenges and successes they experience in their new homeland. It resulted in me pursuing and completing a Master of Arts in Peace and Conflict Studies in 2017. My thesis explored the stories of resilient Bhutanese refugees, focusing on their expulsion from Bhutan, their lives in refugee camps in Nepal, and their final journeys to Winnipeg. The thesis resulted in four primary research findings: (a) employment programming

and practicums can assist refugee newcomers in finding work; (b) programming can assist older refugee newcomers in transitioning into the community; (c) support is required in language classes to help refugee students who have learning disabilities; and (d) programming is required to assist refugees arriving in Canada with significant levels of trauma (see Skelton, 2017).

Writing this thesis was a beneficial career experience for me and thrust me forward in my academic pursuits related to refugee resettlement and the experiences of immigrant professionals.

My teaching experience with newcomers and my research on refugees, which I completed as part of my master's program, has helped me understand the concept of privilege and the importance of navigating the power I possess as a White individual. This understanding helped me transition from the "initial contact" stage of Helms's (1995) identity statuses that characterize a White individual's response to racial situations to the "pseudo-independence" stage. The pseudo-independence stage is "marked by an intellectual understanding of the unfairness of racism as a system of advantage and recognition of the need to assume personal responsibility for dismantling it" (Lawrence & Tatum, 1998, p. 2). While I have a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of privilege because of my teaching experiences and graduate work in education, I still have a lot to learn in terms of the many nuances of privilege, including White fragility. DiAngelo (2018) defines White fragility as a set of unexamined assumptions that elicit many emotions and behaviours when questioned. DiAngelo (2018) offers advice in regards to White fragility that my fellow educators and I must grapple with, including the need to abandon the notion that experienced educators are free of racism, that an experienced educator's understanding of racism is ever complete, and that people with good intentions cannot be racist. An educator's learning journey is never complete, and, as a privileged individual, I have more to learn to ensure that I engage my students and research participants in a socially productive

manner. In other words, the lessons and research I conduct must benefit my students and participants to be impactful.

By completing graduate work in education, I understand that I come from a privileged background. White privilege is what McIntosh (1997) likens to having an invisible knapsack and what Bridges (2019) terms “unassailable” (p. 456), meaning that White privilege is subject to denial but not easily understood. White people reap the benefits of unjust structures that marginalize underprivileged communities, including the maintaining of White solidarity, the trivializing of racism, and the allocating of more resources to White people (DiAngelo, 2018). As a White, privileged individual, I have reaped many of these benefits and unconsciously can “ignore things that other people have no choice but to struggle with every day” (Combs, 2019, p. 61). In other words, White privilege has afforded me many benefits that refugees typically do not receive. For example, I do not have to worry about the police stopping, arresting, and incarcerating me (Dunham & Lawford-Smith, 2017). I do not have to fear discrimination in the hiring process because of my race. I also do not have to fret about receiving inadequate healthcare or being denied education (Dunham & Lawford-Smith, 2017). These examples are a modest sampling of the benefits I receive because of my skin colour.

Nevertheless, I do not typically reflect on these benefits afforded to me, because White privilege is often invisible. The assets associated with White privilege are usually oblivious to those who are advantaged (McIntosh, 1997). My cross-racial interactions with my students, who hail from a multitude of religious and cultural backgrounds, and my work with refugees have raised my awareness of privilege and the importance of dismantling barriers that exist for newcomers, including dismantling the barriers that exist for immigrant teachers. Intersectionality can dismantle these barriers and examine how power relations influence relationships and affect

the individual experiences of IETs (Collins & Bilge, 2016). By using intersectionality as an analytical framework, the opportunities and privileges or lack thereof afforded to IETs and their hierarchical status within the education system can be examined (Muirhead et al., 2020).

Intersectionality plays a vital role in this study and in dismantling the barriers experienced by IETs.

As an experienced EAL teacher, I have learned to be cognizant of the hardships IETs experience and to support them academically in their language studies so they can overcome these obstacles and pursue their professional goals. The obstacles include various recertification policies in Manitoba and the province's complex recertification process (Stephenson, 2020). The research also indicates that IETs face implicit discrimination within the education system regarding their names, accents, dress, religion, and food choices (Block, 2012; Sangalang, 2022; Schmidt, 2010). To create an education system that values diversity and is free of systemic racism, these obstacles need addressing.

After 15 years of teaching experience, I realize my narrative is not a fixed entity but an endless story open to possibilities (Dubnewick et al., 2018). My teaching career as an adult EAL teacher has informed me about newcomers' struggles and successes. I have learned that newcomers experience many hardships, including learning a new language, finding employment, and adjusting to culture shock. A lack of credential recognition, poverty, minimal access to affordable housing, and discrimination are additional challenges newcomers must endure as they adjust to their new lives (McLean, 2013). My experiences have versed me in the numerous success stories of newcomers, including many of my immigrant and refugee students who have gained fluency in English and found employment in their chosen fields, such as in the education field as teachers. Many of my refugee students have also overcome traumatic experiences

because of their resiliency and learned English despite limited formal schooling. These success stories instilled hope in me, and they represent some of the most rewarding moments of my career as an educator.

IETs that enter the teaching profession in Manitoba may benefit from some of the lessons I have learned in my career, especially regarding teaching refugee students. Manitoba has seen a rise in refugee claimants since the 2016 Syrian Civil War and the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. Approximately 1,200 Syrians resettled in Manitoba as part of the National Syrian Refugee Resettlement Initiative (Immigrate Manitoba, 2016), and roughly 29,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the province since the invasion in Ukraine began (Woelk, 2024). Refugee learners exhibiting post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) often have difficulty functioning in a classroom due to the unfamiliar language and the time necessary to adjust to a new academic environment. Refugees sometimes attend school sporadically, lack focus throughout lessons, and exhibit emotional distress (Skelton, 2017). While clinically trained professionals with advanced therapeutic skills and credentials play a critical role in mitigating PTSD, classroom teachers have an equally important role (Bath & Seita, 2018). Bath and Seita (2018) note that caring teachers can provide learners with a safe environment, facilitate meaningful classroom connections, and help learners develop coping mechanisms. Through trauma-informed pedagogical practices, IETs can learn to create consistent routines in the classroom, build relationships with learners, and teach students how to express feelings appropriately (Reddig & VanLone, 2024). Some IETs already arrive in Manitoba with well-developed practices and extensive experience in these areas.

Trauma-informed pedagogy, as described above, is an approach that takes into consideration the vast impacts of trauma and plans for the recovery, through various pathways,

of those learners suffering from traumatic experiences. A trauma-informed educator typically understands the signs and symptoms of trauma and responds appropriately through established practices and procedures (Harrison et al., 2023). At the heart of trauma-informed pedagogy is the goal of not re-traumatizing the affected individual. Trauma-informed pedagogy also includes being well-versed in conflict resolution and decision-making that benefits the social and emotional well-being of students who have endured traumatic experiences (Harrison et al., 2023; Reddig & VanLone, 2024). Harrison et al. (2023) note the extensive link between trauma and poor student engagement and performance, absenteeism, and increased suspension and dropout rates. Due to the nature of increasing global conflicts and the detrimental effects trauma has on affected individuals, all teachers, including IETs, must be well-versed in trauma-informed pedagogy.

Connection to Internationally Educated Teachers

I first became interested in the experiences of IETs after completing a term position as a lead teacher of EAL instruction at the Immigrant Centre of Manitoba³. In this position, I mentored novice EAL teachers—many of whom were IETs beginning careers as EAL teachers in the province. Some former colleagues recounted challenging teaching experiences in a number of the city’s English-language centres. Despite extensive qualifications, including CTESL certification, advanced English proficiency, and a solid understanding of second language pedagogy, these IETs shared problematic occurrences. Some told of students complaining about their teaching practices and accents. Others told me of having their competency questioned by program directors. A few even shared how they were disrespected and rebelled against because

³ The Immigrant Centre of Manitoba is a federally funded settlement agency that provides various services to newcomers in the province. The Immigrant Centre provides employment services, nutrition training, translation, English conversation circles, citizenship classes, and driver education training (Immigrant Centre, 2019).

they were not native speakers of English. The cumulative set of negative occurrences made for challenging teaching experiences for these IETs.

The challenges these colleagues of mine faced are commonly represented in IET literature. Schmidt's (2010) research determined that IETs often face racial discrimination based on colleagues' perceptions of accents and foreignness. Cho's (2010) research shares how participants' competencies were questioned based on their accents and unfamiliarity with certain cultural practices, and Janusch (2015) reports how IETs in her study were disregarded and rebelled against because of their accents and immigrant status. The challenging experiences of my former colleagues resonated with me. It was one of the motivating factors that propelled me to seek additional employment opportunities in adult education and at teacher training programs where I could mentor and advocate for IETs.

Most of my work with IETs has come at the University of Winnipeg, where I have taught courses in second language education, educational psychology, school system procedures and policies, social studies curricula, and supporting refugee youth pedagogy to IETs, including several who have originated from the Philippines. IETs face several hurdles to recertifying as teachers, including some less obvious challenges. I recall one IET in my class who, besides taking courses to recertify as a teacher, had to work two jobs in the service industry to support their family and afford the high post-secondary tuition costs. Another IET was working a full-time job as an educational assistant to support their family in Canada and their parents living abroad, and still another IET was taking a full courseload while raising two small children as a single parent. While certifying to become an educator is challenging for IETs and native-born teacher candidates alike, IETs typically have more family, parental, and financial commitments (Kailasanathan, 2013). This ensures that the certification process is doubly challenging for IETs.

Connection to Teaching in Northern Indigenous Communities

When I graduated from the University of Manitoba with a teaching degree in the spring of 2008, and before I accepted the term position with the Winnipeg School Division's Adult EAL Program in the fall, I applied for a teaching job with one of the largest geographical school divisions in Manitoba, which has schools located throughout Northern Manitoba. After graduation, I found it difficult to obtain employment in Winnipeg, which is why I'd decided to apply for a teaching position in Northern Manitoba. Term positions for first-year educators were scarce in the city, and even substitute teaching jobs were challenging to secure. Fortunately, I acquired an interview for a term teaching position with one of the division's schools—the Minegoziibe Anishinabe School in Pine Creek First Nation. My parents were not thrilled with the idea of their eldest son living and teaching up North. They thought it would be too challenging to adapt to life on a remote Indigenous reserve, and the isolation would be unbearable for an outsider. Despite my parents' apprehension, I attended the interview in Pine Creek and considered accepting the term position. However, after consulting with my family and engaging in reflection, I declined the position and applied for teaching jobs closer to Winnipeg.

The fact that I contemplated accepting a teaching position in Pine Creek is not unique. There are several reasons teacher candidates accept positions in northern reserve schools and Indigenous communities for a short duration; however, a major contributing factor is the many opportunities available for qualified teachers because of significant job shortages (Monkman, 2017). In Manitoba, northern and rural school divisions have historically had more difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified teachers than urban school divisions (Macintosh, 2023a; Théberge, 2002). In 2017, federal Indigenous Relations Minister Carolyn Bennett indicated that many reserve schools in Northern Manitoba were significantly understaffed, and teaching

vacancies were abundant. For example, the Shamattawa First Nation School was forced to close in 2017 due to a lack of teachers, which meant approximately 200 youth had no schooling (Monkman, 2017). The scarcity of full-time employment in larger urban centres in Manitoba, such as Winnipeg and Brandon, before the COVID-19 pandemic meant teacher graduates were often pushed to seek employment in more rural and remote locales, such as in First Nations schools.

Teacher shortages, however, have hampered the K–12 school system in Manitoba post pandemic. Teaching vacancies in many rural and Indigenous communities have resulted in employers filling job openings with substitute teachers and educational assistants (Macintosh, 2023a). While teacher shortages tend to affect all divisions throughout the province, they especially hamper Indigenous communities, which experience the brunt of teacher shortfalls (Macintosh, 2023a; Monkman, 2017). While recently graduated teachers may take term positions on Indigenous reserves in times of job shortage, there is a tendency for these teachers to depart to more urban settings after a short duration (Burleigh, 2016). This cycle often has exploitative implications for Indigenous communities that host the teachers. Mueller et al. (2011) note that teacher retention is critical because retention closely links with a teacher's sense of efficacy. Self-efficacy is "a teacher's belief that he or she can reach even difficult students to help them learn" (Woolfolk, 2019, p. 5). Teachers with an elevated sense of efficacy generally work harder and are more dedicated to the profession because they believe in themselves and their learners. These teachers are more likely to persist in challenging teaching environments, are less likely to experience burnout, and generally report higher levels of job satisfaction (Woolfolk, 2019). Indigenous communities need help retaining this type of educator.

With many Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba reporting significant teacher shortages and with retention closely linked with a teacher's sense of efficacy, some departing educators have presumably not been satisfied with working in Indigenous communities (Monkman, 2017; Mueller et al., 2011). Teacher retention is critical to Indigenous communities because trusting relationships, based on mutual respect and understanding, can help achieve reconciliation (Mueller et al., 2011; Preston et al., 2017; Skelton, 2022). In Indigenous pedagogy, relationships are at the heart of teaching, and respectful and cordial relationships are crucial for appropriate learning (Burleigh, 2016). If novice teachers depart after only a term or two, strong relationships cannot develop, and much-needed connections cannot be made between the teacher and their students and between teachers and the Indigenous communities in which they are hosted (Burleigh, 2016; Mueller et al., 2011).

The impact of settler colonialism is noticeable on many Indigenous reserves. Non-Indigenous educators such as recent teacher graduates and IETs have essential roles to play in dismantling settler colonialism as a discursive frame when working in these reserves. Indigenous communities have experienced exploitation and destruction at the hands of White settlers, so it is vital that teachers understand this history and do not replicate harmful colonial practices in host communities (Kapesh, 2020). Kapesh (2020) argues that educators should refrain from teaching Indigenous Peoples to prioritize White people's way of life and should instead recognize and value Indigenous culture and language. Kapesh (2020) acknowledges the appropriateness of earning a livelihood in these communities.

However, she appeals to non-Indigenous people to abide by the rules of Indigenous society, leave communities in peace when departing, and understand that Indigenous communities are self-governed and self-sustaining. It is important to emphasize that Indigenous

communities had thrived for thousands of years before the exploitation of White settlers and do not require restoration by non-Indigenous inhabitants.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people are well-represented in Canada and, in particular, in Northern Manitoba. Cree communities make up the majority of FNMI communities in Northern Manitoba, with approximately 23 Cree communities dispersed across the northern part of the province (Reynar & Matties, 2019). The majority of IET participants indicated that the communities in which they lived and taught were Cree. In Cree society, fishing and hunting are important communal practices (Reynar & Matties, 2019). The Cree are a deeply spiritual group and typically consider all aspects of life important, such as the land, water, plants, animals, and fellow humans. Ceremonies and celebrations are a standard part of Cree life, and many Cree people place great importance on family, storytelling, and the passing down of generational wisdom (Reynar & Matties, 2019). IETs who accept teaching positions in Cree communities in the North need to be aware of these important customs and traditions as they work toward reconciliation with FNMI groups.

Stability in the teaching force is crucial in First Nations communities, as trusting relationships are vital between teachers and students, teachers and parents, and the communities in which the teachers are hosted (Burleigh, 2016; Mueller et al., 2011). Therefore, it becomes imperative that the relations between these Filipino IETs and Indigenous communities are positive. My study explores how the Filipino IETs have adapted to new surroundings, culturally adjusted to a new way of life, and continued their careers as educators in the remoteness of Manitoba's North. I have also sought to understand how Indigenous communities and the IETs define positive relations, what the IETs' contributions have been in these communities, and how

Indigenous educational priorities are recognized and honoured in these intercultural relationships.

Filipino Teachers Working in the North

Filipino IETs comprise one of the largest contingents of IETs who immigrate to Manitoba. There is only a smaller contingent of Filipino IETs, however, who have immigrated to the province, have completed their teacher recertification requirements, and are currently teaching among the province's northern Indigenous communities. The Filipino IETs working in Northern Manitoba nonetheless function as a sizeable contingent,⁴ given that the group members derive from a similar cultural and linguistic background and often support each other while residing and teaching up North.⁵

The Meadowbrook School Division⁶ employs many of the Filipino IETs who have ventured up North. This division has schools located throughout Northern Manitoba, including in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities (Meadowbrook School Division, n.d.). Incorporated in 1965, Meadowbrook School Division is the largest school division in Manitoba by geographic area and comprises approximately 75 percent of the province's territory. The division is responsible for administering several schools throughout the province's northern area, including in communities only accessible by boat, air, rail, and winter ice roads (Meadowbrook

⁴ To my knowledge, no data exists on the number of Filipino teachers working in Northern Manitoba. However, one of the Filipino IET participants, Dolly, indicated that roughly 100-plus Filipino teachers are working in the North (Dolly, personal communication, September 23, 2023).

⁵ The Filipinos are a diverse group of people. Many Filipinos possess Malay (Austronesian) roots. Due to colonization, trading, and immigration, Filipinos also have Chinese, American, and Spanish bloodlines. Catholic Christianity is the dominant religion (83%), followed by Protestant Christianity (5%) and Islam (4.5%) (Embassy of the Philippines, 2013). Tagalog is the official language of the country, but there are more than 110 dialects. The major groups include the Ilocanos (North region), Tagalogs (Central region), Visayans (Central Island region), and Muslims (Mindanao region) (Embassy of the Philippines, 2013).

⁶ A pseudonym

School Division, n.d.). This exemplifies the diverse range of communities that span the Meadowbrook School Division.

Some Filipino IETs who reside up North also teach for a school system under Indigenous control—the Rolling Hills School System.⁷ Incorporated in 2017, this school system is the first school board in Canada designed by Indigenous people for Indigenous students (Rolling Hills School System, n.d.). Rolling Hills is a fulfilled vision of Indigenous leadership to take back control of First Nations education. The board is responsible for 10 First Nations schools and the education of approximately 2,000 students in various communities. The school system aims to “improve academic standards, and increase student outcomes, including retention, completion and graduation rates” of Indigenous learners (as cited in Rolling Hills School System, n.d., para. 1). Both Meadowbrook School Division and the Rolling Hills School System play pivotal roles in First Nations education in Manitoba and in providing meaningful teaching opportunities for Filipino IETs.

Internationally Educated Teachers in Manitoba

The recertification process for IETs in Manitoba has typically been time-consuming and has been criticized by second-language education scholars (see Marom, 2017, 2019; Schmidt, 2010). Schmidt (2010) notes that a disconnect has historically existed between the federal government’s goal of recruiting professionally trained workers to the country and the arduous recertification requirements of provincial teaching licensing bodies, such as the Manitoba Professional Certification Unit. The fact that the federal government has traditionally encouraged immigration but has done little to curtail the onerous recertification process has resulted in many Filipino IETs being unable to continue in the teaching profession. Calls to revise the provincial

⁷ A pseudonym

government policy regarding teacher recertification were heeded in 2024 when Manitoba amended teacher certification requirements for new recruits and IETs (Government of Manitoba, 2024b). These modifications aim to increase the number of employable IETs in the province.

Prior to 2024, the Government of Manitoba had extensive criteria for eligibility as a teacher in the province. Like other IETs who arrived in Manitoba, Filipino IETs endured several hurdles before recertifying as teachers and searching for employment in the education sector (Sangalang, 2022). The external assessment body that evaluates teacher credentials, Pathways to Teach Canada, charges \$450.00 to complete a credential assessment (Pathways to Teach Canada, n.d.). Following this initial assessment, prospective IETs had their credentials evaluated by Manitoba's Professional Certification Unit. The evaluation process was costly, and many Filipino IETs enrolled in additional post-secondary courses to complete certification requirements in Canadian history, Indigenous education, and Teaching English as an Additional Language (TEAL) (Stephenson, 2020). Teacher credential assessment is costly in Canada, which may prohibit IETs from obtaining their teaching credentials.

The historical nature of schooling in the Philippines has disadvantaged IETs who applied for recertification in Manitoba. Before 2012, high school graduates in the Philippines received a high school diploma after completing Grade 10. In 2012, secondary schooling in the Philippines was expanded to include two additional years, so Filipinos now graduate after completing Grade 12 (Government of Alberta, n.d.). IETs who graduated before 2012 in the Philippines were disadvantaged when applying for certification in Manitoba, as the recertification board expected prospective applicants to have completed 12 years of elementary and secondary schooling. While this change in policy in the Philippines increased the education offered to future IETs, it created a hardship for Filipino graduates with a Grade 10 education.

Despite possibly possessing extensive teaching experience from their homelands, the recruitment and hiring process often labels IETs as novice educators in Canada (Marom, 2019). This characterization puts Filipino IETs, who may have acquired extensive and valuable international teaching experience, at a disadvantage in the selection process compared with their Canadian-born counterparts. Marom (2019) explains that IETs typically receive less preference in the hiring process, given the erroneous assumption that they possess minimal professional capital compared to Canadian-born and native-English-speaking teachers. The recertification process in provinces like Manitoba has tended to favour Western-acquired capital and diminishes the experiences of Filipino educators (Marom, 2019). This means Filipino IETs with internationally acquired credentials and teaching experiences may be deemed less desirable in hiring than graduates from teacher training programs like the ones offered at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba.

The teacher candidates who complete teacher training at these post-secondary institutions typically possess only practicum-related teaching experience. Despite this, these graduates also possess Western-acquired capital and are typically assumed to be preferable in the selection process to IETs (Marom, 2019). IETs are often erroneously viewed as possessing less knowledge and skills, less ability to partake in collaborative learning networks, and less ability to exercise professional agency than Canadian-born and native-English-speaking teachers (Nolan & Molla, 2017). This deficit perspective imposed on IETs serves as a detriment to their employability.

In 2024, Manitoba Education amended its teacher certification requirements to better align with those of other Canadian jurisdictions. An admission was made that the province had more stringent certification requirements than other provinces and territories (Government of Manitoba, 2024b). As a result, post-secondary institutions in the province had been rejecting a

sizeable proportion of prospective teacher applicants yearly because they did not possess adequate teachables (Macintosh, 2024). For example, roughly 30 percent of prospective teacher applicants had been rejected annually by the University of Manitoba's teacher-training program (Macintosh, 2024). A modification was therefore made to eliminate the major and minor teachables for the early/middle and senior years, and the breadth requirements for the early/middle years.

The previous requisites made it challenging for graduates of undergraduate degree programs to enter after-degree teacher training programs in Manitoba, as certain majors and minors were not accepted (Government of Manitoba, 2024b). For example, psychology was not accepted as a teachable major, only as a teachable minor. Tracy Schmidt, the Minister of Education, stated that the regulatory amendments would streamline certification for IETs who may not have met the requirements to become teachers in the province (Macintosh, 2024). In promoting the amendments, Schmidt said, "We think these changes are going to really be able to help us and help divisions staff up their schools. We think it's going to increase diversity, reduce barriers, and, ultimately, help support students" (as cited in Macintosh, 2024, para. 4). These policy modifications have streamlined IET recertification and may help alleviate teaching shortages in the province.

Academic and Professional Bridging Program for IETs

Launched in 2005, the Academic and Professional Bridging Program (IET Program) was designed by and implemented in the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education and funded by Manitoba Labour and Immigration (Dunfield, 2011). Many Filipino IETs now residing and working in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba completed the 16-month program, which was later condensed to 12 months. Besides the Philippines, participants came from

countries such as Egypt, India, Nigeria, and Ukraine (Schmidt & Janusch, 2016). The program involved four cohorts of 36 participants in total and supported IETs in completing recertification requirements to become certified teachers as determined by the province's Professional Certification Unit (Dunfield, 2011; Schmidt & Janusch, 2016). The program was successful, with an estimated 90 percent of graduates hired in school divisions throughout the province to teach various K–12 subjects, including in Winnipeg and rural, northern, and Indigenous communities (Schmidt & Janusch, 2016). Programs such as the Academic and Professional Bridging Program are instrumental in integrating more IETs into the school system and diversifying a homogenous teaching force.

The Manitoba Association of School Superintendents (MASS) and the Seven Oaks School Division supported the Academic Professional Bridging program for IETs (Dunfield, 2011). Clea Schmidt, the former IET Program co-coordinator, was quoted as saying, “The hiring of teachers straight out of the IET program demonstrates that more school division hiring personnel are looking to diversify the teaching force better to reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of student populations” (as cited in Dunfield, 2011, para. 5). Historically, the teaching force in Manitoba has been homogenous—a teaching force in which White male administrators and White female teachers remain the norm (Martin, 2016). In two school divisions in the province, the Seven Oaks School Division and the Pembina Trails School Division, 20 to 28 percent of learners are English language learners (Pembina Trails School Division, 2020; Seven Oaks School Division, 2019). However, the provincial school system only employs an estimated five percent of teachers who identify as racialized (Stephenson, 2020). In the Winnipeg School Division, approximately 25 percent of the student body identifies as Indigenous; however, Indigenous educators comprise only nine percent of the provincial teaching force (Stephenson,

2020). These statistics demonstrate a lack of diversity in Manitoba's teaching force. Professional bridging programs, such as the IET Program, are necessary for increasing the racial diversity of the teaching force and bridging these gaps.

Despite the IET Program's success and some school divisions' commitment to hiring IETs to increase the racial diversity of the teaching force, government funding for the program ceased during the 2011–2012 school year. Specialized and targeted programming for IETs was discontinued following the cessation of provincial funding (Dunfield, 2011), making it more challenging for IETs to access the financial and academic support needed to recertify as educators in Manitoba. The stoppage of the IET Program also complicated efforts to diversify the province's teaching force, with equity implications for IETs and the communities they serve.

With the discontinuation of the IET Program, IETs now must recertify alongside Bachelor of Education and Post-Baccalaureate Diploma in Education (PBDE) students—some who may be over 20 to 30 years younger. This situation makes for interesting class dynamics, among other issues. From my experience as a university instructor, I have often observed self-segregation in the classroom, with IETs and teacher candidates sitting apart and interacting only periodically with one another. Another challenge is that BEd courses are typically available during the day to allow teacher candidates to complete coursework during the evenings or work part-time jobs. While this schedule accommodates teacher candidates, it is less flexible for IETs, who may have family and work commitments that make attending daytime courses difficult if not prohibitive.

IETs who recertify alongside PBDE students take PBDE coursework that caters to practicing teachers in Manitoba. This coursework tends to lack intercultural and international focus. The Academic and Professional Bridging Program provided much-needed mentorship,

flexibility, and programming that integrated international and intercultural curricula for prospective IETs (Dunfield, 2011). Its discontinuation was a loss to the IET community and meant foreign-trained educators, such as Filipino IETs, now receive less support as they recertify as teachers in Manitoba.

Researcher Positioning

I approach this study of a group of Filipino IETs from the position of both an educator and a student researcher. Teaching has always been a significant aspect of my life. My mom was an educator, so even before I entered university, I was familiar with the responsibilities of a teacher and the demands of the job. I recall my mom spending countless hours planning for her classes, grading assignments, and supervising extra-curricular activities after school. Teaching demands a lot of time, effort, and energy, but it was gratifying for my mom and, in turn, became very rewarding for me.

I decided to become a teacher because I valued the possibility of connecting with learners and assisting them in their educational journeys. During my Bachelor of Education program at the University of Manitoba, I began to take courses to complete a CTESL certificate. The courses that I took in this program were the most enjoyable ones I had taken throughout my post-secondary studies. The instructors who taught in the CTESL program at the University of Manitoba were engaging and passionate about the subject matter. This enthusiasm resonated with me and is the primary reason I decided to pursue a career in EAL.

In 2018, I successfully applied to the PhD program in Education at the University of Manitoba. I chose to complete a doctorate for my love of education and research and my long-term goal of obtaining a professorship. I was aware of the commitment and the numerous challenges of completing a doctorate, including the time commitment, financial constraints, and

intrinsic motivation necessary to complete a second graduate degree. Despite the challenges, I possess the determination and work ethic to complete a doctorate.

My work as an EAL teacher and university instructor has allowed me to contemplate my privilege of being a White, male, English as a first language educator. As a White educator, I am in contact with IETs and hold a position of power over them as a university instructor and teacher educator, even if I desire to mitigate this power. Addressing my power is an ethical necessity when conducting research with IETs. Researchers should acknowledge their position of power and outline the power dynamics to create a welcoming and non-intimidating research environment. This was imperative in ensuring that the IET participants felt confident to share their beliefs, ideas, and knowledge with me as the researcher (Maxwell, 2017). I addressed the power-over relationship in recruitment documents and with potential participants in preliminary meetings and interviews. On the recruitment documents, I acknowledged that the involvement of the participants was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. I also compensated the participants with a gift card to show that their participation was appreciated and not something to be taken for granted. During the interviews, I facilitated open dialogue and discussion. This approach allowed the participants to share experiences more freely if the commentary they wished to share did not align with one of the research questions. A list of free counselling services was also provided to the participants as part of my trauma-informed research, which is an approach that prioritizes physical and psychological safety, trustworthiness, collaboration, mutuality, and inclusivity (McChesney, 2025) I employed these tactics and adhered to this approach to mitigate the power-over relationship and to ensure a successful study.

As an educator, I care about the future success of the IET participants and mitigating the power differential between the researcher and participants. Pennington et al. (2012) reason that

this sense of caring tends to be far removed from the formal educational experiences of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) individuals. For example, I can prepare IETs to communicate successfully in a job interview, and I might feel helpless if they do not find employment based on the colour of their skin or their lack of Canadian work experience. This sense of helplessness still positions me over the IETs and does not acknowledge the much more serious impact on the IETs themselves when they are excluded from employment. Nevertheless, based on my experiences in education and my desire to improve the opportunities for IETs who arrive in Manitoba, I am in an excellent position to conduct this necessary research. For example, I can act as an ally and challenge the instances of hiring discrimination that take place in workplaces such as my own. I can do this by analyzing hiring policies and initiating conversations on the importance of racially diverse hiring practices.

There is a debate in the popular activist discourse regarding whether privileged individuals can be allies of those with less privilege (see Dueck-Read, 2016; Sumerau et al., 2018; Sumerau et al., 2021). Some argue that an allyship can only be forged between privileged individuals and marginalized parties if the latter benefit from the partnership (Sumerau et al., 2021). Dueck-Read's (2016) research on the social justice movement occurring on the American-Mexican border supports this assertion. Dueck-Read (2016) found that tokenism, lack of participation from BIPOC members, and the silencing of Indigenous perspectives were inherent within the social justice movement. She determined that BIPOC people often receive differential treatment and are rarely consulted for their expertise during social activism. This example supports the insistence that privileged individuals have much work to do in mitigating the power-over relationship and engaging successfully with less privileged allies during activist work.

Despite the inherent challenges, I concur with Sumerau et al. (2021) that privileged individuals can forge allyship with those of less privilege if they challenge the oppression that exists in society, rather than seeking moral recognition by conducting the necessary work (Sumerau et al., 2018). Boulding (2001) notes that keen observation, good listening skills, and empathy are necessary for the peacebuilding movement. In other words, allies must take an empathetic approach and not engage in social activism for guilt or to placate one's White saviour complex. In my research, I had to be cognizant of making a meaningful impact on hiring practices and ensuring qualified IETs gain employment in more significant numbers to complement the racial diversity of the province's student body. The Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle (WIEC) in its *State of Equity in Education Report* estimates approximately nine percent of teachers in the provincial teaching force identify as Indigenous, which pales in comparison to the roughly 27 percent of Indigenous students that comprise the student body (WIEC, 2023). A gap also exists among BIPOC students and teachers in Manitoba, with some school divisions reporting a 40 to 45 percent divide between the number of BIPOC students and teachers (Stephenson, 2020). Therefore, this study aimed to make an impact on altering stagnant and non-inclusive hiring policies and employed a critical theoretical lens to accomplish that goal.

As a White settler scholar, it is essential to acknowledge the privilege that I possess and avoid defaulting to a White perspective when conducting research work that focuses on immigrant teachers and their work with Indigenous Peoples. Throughout much of Canada's history, Indigenous learners have been subject to marginalization and forcible integration (Henderson, 2023). Despite noble intentions, White researchers should be cognizant of exploring issues that affect BIPOC people without advancing causes for these individuals in meaningful ways (Tuck, 2018). White scholars should acknowledge and cite Indigenous and racialized

scholars when conducting research that directly affects BIPOC people. To meet these aims, I have included key works by BIPOC scholars in this study. I have cited work from Indigenous researchers such as Battiste (2017), St. Denis (2007, 2011), and Dion (2016). These Indigenous scholars explored themes directly related to this study, such as decolonizing education (see Battiste, 2017), reconciliation (see Dion, 2016), and anti-racist education (see St. Denis, 2007, 2011). I have also cited research from racialized scholars and educators, such as Abawi (2021b), Dalayoan (see Dalayoan et al., 2008; Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010), and Magsino (see Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010). These scholars explored the integration of Filipinos in Manitoba (Dalayoan et al., 2008; Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010) and the underrepresentation of racialized teachers in the education system (Abawi, 2021b). It is vital to include the scholarly work of Indigenous and racialized scholars to ensure diverse perspectives are given credible space within academia.

Research Objectives and Questions

In this study, I explored the teaching and learning experiences of Filipino IETs who continued their careers as educators in northern Indigenous reserves and communities in Manitoba. I interviewed Filipino IETs from various communities rather than focusing on only one or two communities. In total, I interviewed participants from eight communities. Two of these communities are designated as First Nations reserves, and their schools are part of the Rolling Hills School System. The other six communities are towns with large contingents of Indigenous people, and their schools are part of the Meadowbrook School Division. The fact that I interviewed participants from various communities and reserves and both public and Indigenous-operated schools allowed for greater access to potential participants.

Throughout the study, I examined both the challenges and successes that Filipino educators experienced. I sought to explore three guiding questions:

1. How do Filipino IETs experience residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba? How do IETs experience being welcomed in Indigenous communities?
2. What opportunities are there for IETs in northern Indigenous communities? What challenges have Filipino IETs experienced? What strategies have they used to adapt to life in northern communities?
3. How does the Filipino diaspora support the professional and personal successes of IETs in the North? How have Indigenous leaders and teachers supported immigrant teachers? Do IETs feel a sense of belonging in the North?

Significance of the Study

This study unearthed some of the challenges that Filipino IETs have experienced by living and teaching in Indigenous communities, such as isolation and adjusting to a different way of life. By uncovering some of the challenges that IETs experience in Indigenous communities, I also learned of some of the strategies the new teachers use to thrive in a new way of life, adapt to an unfamiliar northern locale, and approach an education system that differs from the education system in the Philippines and the ones found in more urban settings. For example, many of the IETs mentioned how forging strong relationships with community members and partaking in spiritual and recreational activities were common approaches to mitigate isolation. Ultimately, these strategies helped to mitigate the challenges of living in the North.

Filipino migration and integration in Manitoba are commonly researched topics, with several studies found in the literature. The research has focused on the experiences of Filipino immigrants in Manitoba (see Allard, 2015; Malek, 2019), the experiences of internationally educated Filipino healthcare workers (see Dennehy, 2013; Novek, 2011), the adaptation

experiences of Filipino migrant youth (see Campbell, 1991; Sagenes, 2015), and the experiences of Filipino seniors and their adaptation process (see Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010). A few studies have even appeared on the experiences of Filipino IETs who have migrated to the province (see Elliott, 1990; Kailasanathan, 2013; Sangalang, 2022). This project may be one of the first studies on the experiences of internationally educated Filipino teachers who choose to reside and continue their careers as educators in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba.

Conclusion

This introductory chapter has provided an overview of several critical aspects of the research study on Filipino IETs residing and continuing their careers as educators in Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba. I provided a personal narrative of my educational and teaching background to explain my interest in this study and to justify its rationale. Contextual information on Filipino teachers working in the North and the challenges faced by IETs in Manitoba was provided to orient the readers. I offered pertinent information to help readers understand the complex process IETs must undergo to recertify and find employment and why some IETs, such as Filipinos, have decided to accept teaching positions in remote locations in the province.

This section also contained my position as a researcher and some considerations I needed to be cognizant of to conduct an impactful study and work collaboratively with my research participants. Mitigating the power-over relationships between myself and my participants was crucial in conducting a successful study given that I am a White, male, English as a first language researcher and educator. By mitigating the power-over relationship in recruitment documents and developing a strong researcher-participant relationship during preliminary meetings and interviews, I was able to forge connections and make the participants feel at ease

and willing to share their experiences. In this section, I also presented my research objectives and the significance of this study in academia. This study is likely one of the first research studies on the impact of Filipino IETs in Indigenous communities. As such, the results can be interpreted to assess whether IETs feel well supported in such settings and can be encouraged to take up teaching positions to fill vacancies and facilitate valuable partnerships in these Indigenous communities.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review addresses foundational research and gaps in the scholarship underpinning my research into the phenomenon of Filipino IETs residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba. I begin with an overview of Filipino immigration to Manitoba, including the issues facing the first wave of Filipino migrants who arrived during the 1950s and 1960s, the push and pull factors regarding Filipino migration, and the challenges presented to Filipino immigrants upon arrival in the province. The Filipino Diaspora in Manitoba section examines the group's tangible and intangible assets. An overview of the discrimination that Filipinos have experienced in Manitoba and the research previously conducted regarding Filipino teachers accompanies the first section. The employment experiences of IETs in Canada and globally and IET research internationally conclude the first section of the literature review.

The second portion of the literature review focuses on newcomers' needs as they relate to Indigenous issues. An overview of the history of marginalization perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples by the Canadian federal government concerning settler-colonial practices supplements this review. The section concludes by exploring the role of IETs within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's 94 Calls to Action—a series of actions promoting reconciliation among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The contextual information provided in the chapter is imperative to understand why the theoretical ideas of critical race theory and intersectionality frame the study.

Filipino Immigration to Manitoba

The province of Manitoba has a well-documented history of Filipino immigration. Filipino immigration essentially began in the 1950s and 1960s with the arrival of many Filipino female nurses and healthcare workers who arrived from the United States to work at hospitals in

Winnipeg (Allard, 2015; Bautista, 2012; Dennehy, 2013; Elliott, 1990; Novek, 2011). Many who came had expiring American visas and were qualified to fill healthcare positions in medical facilities such as at the Misericordia Hospital (Marshall, 2014). Gradually, an increase of Filipino migrants began arriving in Manitoba from the United States and directly from the Philippines to work as nurses, physicians, teachers, laboratory technicians, and domestic workers (Allard, 2015; Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010; Novek, 2011). Post-war labour markets in Canada were favourable, and economic and political conditions in the Philippines were regressing in the 1960s (Malek, 2019). This resulted in Filipino migrants seeking employment opportunities beyond the United States.

Asian immigration to Manitoba increased exponentially in the 1960s and 1970s. The province's population increased rapidly during this time, and service-related jobs were in high demand (Sagenes, 2015). The 1960s and 1970s saw a significant influx of Filipino immigrants, primarily unmarried women, whom the federal and provincial governments had recruited. These women arrived in Manitoba to work as labourers in the garment industry (Buduhan, 1972; Dennehy, 2013). Garment workers and other labourers arrived from the Philippines and other countries such as South Korea, Italy, and Vietnam to work in textile factories (Novek, 2011; Sagenes, 2015). From the late 1970s to the late 1980s, a large wave of Filipino seniors began arriving in the province due to the implementation of the Family Reunification Policy in 1978. This policy resulted in hundreds of elderly Filipinos arriving in Manitoba to join their adult children (Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010).

Many of the migrants from the Philippines established firm roots in Manitoba. This settlement pattern initiated a chain migration in which other family members of the workers began arriving in more significant numbers, including spouses, children, parents, and siblings

(Novek, 2011). The earliest Filipino immigrants to Manitoba arrived primarily through government, employer, and family sponsorship (Dalayoan et al., 2008). Political instability and economic upheaval in the Philippines during the later stages of the Ferdinand Marcos regime⁸ resulted in thousands of Filipinos departing their homeland to search for employment and economic prosperity abroad (Dalayoan et al., 2008; Overholt, 1986). Manitoba provided the economic prosperity Filipinos sought during uncertain economic times in the Philippines.

Underdevelopment, poverty, and unemployment are typically the leading causes of Filipino immigration, as Filipinos regularly depart their homeland for opportunities in nations such as Canada (Novek, 2011). Nagasaka (2015) estimates that by 2012, over 10 million Filipinos were living and working abroad, which is roughly 10 percent of the country's population. Filipino nurses represent the largest group of internationally educated nurses working abroad. These nurses seek employment outside of the Philippines because of the country's poor working conditions, low salaries, minimal opportunities for advancement, and unstable economic conditions (Dennehy, 2013). Insufficient jobs and low salaries are push factors that result in many Filipinos, such as nurses, choosing to work abroad (Lorenzo et al., 2007). The Philippines has one of the highest proportions of its citizens living below the poverty line in Asia, with an estimated 33 percent of the population reported to be living below the poverty line (World Bank, 2019). Canada's economic and political stability and access to employment with higher wages contribute to Filipinos venturing to the country to begin new lives, including IETs (Dennehy, 2013; Lorenzo et al., 2007; Sagenes, 2015).

⁸ Ferdinand Marcos was a former dictator and president of the Philippines from 1965 to 1986. He mainly ruled under martial law until he was deposed in 1986. His reign initially brought economic prosperity to the country, but the later stages of his reign were economically and politically unstable and marked by corruption (Overholt, 1986).

As a host province, Manitoba presented several challenges for the first waves of Filipino immigrants. Like other newcomers, Filipino newcomers needed time to adjust to the province's cold climate and the city of Winnipeg's unfamiliar transportation system. Learning to take public transport was necessary, as many Filipino migrants could not afford the down payment on a vehicle (Dalayoan et al., 2008). Credential recognition was among the Filipino immigrants' most significant challenges upon arrival. A lack of Canadian work experience and credentials resulted in many Filipinos accepting positions they were overqualified for. Some registered for courses and training to upgrade their skills to obtain local credentials and re-enter their previous professions (Sagenes, 2015). Even though the Manitoba government desired skilled migrant workers like the Filipinos, they put up barriers that prevented them from timely recertification.

Newcomers to Canada face strenuous credential recognition processes upon arrival. The first waves of Filipino migrants, who arrived in Manitoba during the 1950s, were not immune to the process. And while the experiences of Filipino migrants have changed over time, credential recognition remains a significant barrier for newcomers to Canada today. Canadian employers have typically hesitated to recognize foreign credentials and international work experience (Cheinis & Sproule, 2008). Many Canadian occupations, such as teaching, have strict regulations, which mean potential applicants must pass rigorous examinations and training to recertify in their chosen fields. Recertification exams are costly, especially for newcomers like Filipinos who may be on a fixed budget (Cheinis & Sproule, 2008). These examinations can be difficult for newcomers with limited English ability. Even once certified, Canadian employers are sometimes unwilling to hire newcomers like Filipinos who may possess language abilities that are lower than those expected to fulfill job requirements (Cheinis & Sproule, 2008). There

are many obstacles Canadian society puts in place to limit the participation of skilled migrant workers.

The Philippines is currently the number one source of immigrants arriving in Manitoba. In 2021, an estimated 27.3 percent of immigrants to the province came from the Philippines, which was followed by immigrants from India (12.5 percent), the United Kingdom (4.3 percent), and China (4.0 percent) (Statistics Canada, 2021c). One of the reasons for the continuously high immigration from the Philippines is the partnership between the Government of Manitoba and the Philippine Government's Department of Labour and Employment (Novek, 2011). Both governments have a memorandum in place that regulates labour migration and expedites the approval of Filipinos selected for migration and employment in Manitoba. In 2010, the partnership resulted in the recruitment and relocation of approximately 100 nurses from the Philippines to work in personal care homes throughout rural Manitoba (Novek, 2011). A recent recruitment effort by the Manitoba government in 2023 resulted in approximately 300 healthcare workers from the Philippines, including nurses and healthcare aides, accepting job offers to work in the Manitoba healthcare system (Froese, 2023). These recruitments have boosted the province's economy and strengthened the healthcare system.

Another reason for the high number of migrants who arrive in Manitoba from the Philippines is the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), which was established in 1998. Potential migrants would use the program to apply directly to the province for permanent residency (Marshall, 2014; Novek, 2011). The program supported migrants with employable skills and the ability to settle successfully within the province, such as temporary foreign workers from the Philippines, who are typically well-educated but underemployed (Marshall, 2014; Novek, 2011). The program significantly increased immigration to Manitoba, with an estimated 30 percent of

applicants arriving from the Philippines (Novek, 2011). In 2012, the federal government took over the administration of the PNP in Manitoba and British Columbia. The change was made to bring the two provinces in line with the other provinces and territories and to streamline immigration services across the country (*Manitoba angry*, 2012). Settlement services and language training, which Manitoba had to that point administered, were also repatriated to the federal government to administer. The change to the administration of the PNP was met with dismay by the Manitoba government, which felt that immigrants would choose to migrate to other Canadian provinces if the PNP were administered federally (*Manitoba angry*, 2012). In 2024, 9,500 newcomers arrived in Manitoba through the PNP, indicating the thriving nature of the program (Dyck, 2025). However, in 2025, the federal government announced a reduction in immigrant quotas nationally. Manitoba received 4,750 spots (Dyck, 2025)—a significant reduction from previous years.

The Filipino Diaspora in Manitoba

The Filipino community is strongly represented in Manitoba. Based on the 2021 projections, an estimated 94,315 Filipinos live in the province (Statistics Canada, 2021a). While Toronto receives the greatest number of Filipino immigrants per year among Canadian cities, Winnipeg possesses the greatest percentage of Filipino migrants based on population per capita, estimated to be 8.7 percent (Statistics Canada, 2021b). Filipinos comprise the most numerically significant visible minority living in Winnipeg at roughly 36 percent (Manuel, 2017). Besides Winnipeg, Filipinos are highly represented in other Manitoba communities, such as Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Steinbach, Dauphin, Neepawa, and Russell (Marshall, 2014). Filipinos reside throughout Manitoba and contribute significantly to the province's economy.

While Filipino migrants must adapt to a different social and economic landscape in Manitoba, the group shares many cultural commonalities with native Manitobans, including proficiency in the official languages of English and French (primarily English), significant involvement in the labour force, and a devout following of the Catholic faith (Manuel, 2017; Vachon & Toews, 2008). Because of their devotion to Christianity, Filipinos have historically received greater acceptance upon arrival in Manitoba than other newcomers who do not embrace Christianity, such as the Japanese and Chinese immigrants (Marshall, 2014). Catholic organizations and churches tend to be highly involved in sponsoring Filipino migrants and helping the group form connections within the local community (Marshall, 2014). These ties are vital in the group's integration into mainstream society.

Filipinos tend to embody certain essential values that have contributed to their successful integration into Manitoban society. Dalayoan and Magsino (2010) gathered first-hand accounts of the lived experiences of Filipinos living in Manitoba and noted from interviews and observations that Filipinos are often praised in the workforce for their excellent work ethic, cooperation, perseverance, and hospitality—beneficial values in the employment sector. Literature reviews by Manuel (2017) and Vachon and Toews (2008) suggest that Filipinos are also more educated than the average newcomer. They are more likely to possess a university degree and less likely to have lower than a Grade 9 education, which has helped ease their transition into Manitoban society (Manuel, 2017; Vachon & Toews, 2008). Because of these shared commonalities, Manuel's (2017) research indicates that Filipinos are sometimes labelled as "ideal immigrants" and "citizens of the world" by Western societies.

Nevertheless, the ideal immigrant stereotype, while positive on the surface, tends to undermine the difficulties that Filipinos can face. Positioning Filipinos as the "model minority"

group can create tensions among Asians, people of colour, and working-class Whites. Asians like Filipinos tend to be praised for their intellectual ability, especially in subjects such as mathematics and science (Ruiz et al., 2023). Asians who fail to achieve unrealistic intellectual standards are hampered by the “model minority” stereotype (Lee, 2015). Filipinos, like other immigrant groups, also face challenges with integration upon immigration. Some Filipinos are not able to recertify in their chosen careers, like other newcomers, and accept employment in manual occupations before they can recertify in their chosen fields (Cheinis & Sproule, 2015; Dalayoan et al., 2008; Sagenes, 2015). Positioning Filipinos as ideal immigrants suggests the adjustment process is seamless and painless, which is rarely the case.

Manitoba’s Filipino diaspora has helped ease the transition and lessened the anxiety of newer generations of Filipinos who migrate to the province and experience racial discrimination and a dissimilar social and economic environment. The Filipino community’s resilience, communal unity, and strong familial support system have contributed to the group’s ability to integrate successfully into Manitoban society and establish new connections (Bautista & Udarbe, 2001; Marshall, 2014; Salazar, 1993). Campbell (1991) describes Filipinos as profoundly patriotic, emotional, and spirited. She notes that many enjoy socialization, music, and family cohesion. The family unit is essential to Filipino culture, making Filipinos a tight-knit community (Campbell, 1991; Salazar, 1993). According to Dalayoan and Magsino (2010), the concept of family is “central to Filipino well-being” (p. 37). As a result, Filipinos tend to make great sacrifices for the betterment of their families.

In Filipino culture, the family unit consists of parents, children, grandparents, relatives, and close friends (Campbell, 1991; Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010). Filipinos often view children as gifts from God, so parents tend to make sacrifices to improve their future and work tirelessly to

support their children and the family unit (Campbell, 1991; Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010). This sacrifice was evident during the 1960s and 1970s when many single Filipino women immigrated to Manitoba and worked tirelessly in the garment industry to send money home to support their parents and younger siblings (Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010). Filipinos are often dedicated to their country of origin due to their sense of national duty. However, the chance to give children new opportunities in nations such as Canada entices many migrants away from the Philippines (Pauls, 2023). This phenomenon exemplifies the sacrifice many Filipinos make for the betterment of their children's future.

Educational attainment is a priority among many in the Filipino culture. Filipino parents typically expect their children to be diligent in their educational studies (Salazar, 1993). Filipinos place great emphasis on education, for they believe it relates to increased social and economic mobility. As a result, it is common for Filipino parents to work tirelessly and take on debt to afford quality education for their children, especially at the post-secondary level (Salazar, 1993). This demonstrates the importance Filipinos typically place on educational attainment.

Filipinos also tend to value familial loyalty, harmony, and unity, and they place importance on kin relationships and familial networks to deter isolation and exclusion (Chaturvedi, 2005; Salazar, 1993). With a strong sense of bounded solidarity, or what Chaturvedi (2005) describes as a sense of "we-ness," Filipinos tend to believe strongly in the need for reciprocity within the Filipino community, which is defined as the mutual exchange of assistance, whether solicited or not (Salazar, 1993). Filipinos have integrated rather successfully into Manitoban society through this compassion for kin, family cohesion, and reciprocity (Chaturvedi, 2005; Marshall, 2015).

Despite numerous regional languages and dialects in the Philippines, the Filipino migrants who immigrate to Manitoba unite by communicating in either English or Tagalog—the official language of the Philippines (Marshall, 2014). Filipinos also tend to embrace multiculturalism, which has contributed to the group’s ability to adapt to Manitoban society, including by pursuing active involvement in cultural groups and initiatives such as Winnipeg’s Folklorama festival.⁹ Filipinos embrace multiculturalism because of their “Bayanihan” spirit, which prioritizes communal unity (Marshall, 2014). This spirit and the group’s Christian faith have allowed Filipinos to overcome many of the hurdles that come with living abroad and develop strong roots and connections in order to thrive and prosper in Manitoban society (Marshall, 2015).

Despite these positive aspects, as with Asians living throughout North American society, Filipinos have experienced discrimination and xenophobia (i.e., anti-Asian hate) in Manitoba. In 2017, racial graffiti and slurs referring to people of Filipino, Korean, and Vietnamese ethnicity appeared on the welcome sign and various public buildings in the town of Neepawa (Macdonell, 2017). Immigration from South Korea and the Philippines had brought an estimated 1,000 immigrants to Neepawa by that time, with the majority finding employment in the agricultural industry (Macdonell, 2017). This influx in immigration provided Neepawa with an economic uplift (Macdonell, 2017). The racial incident, nevertheless, was disconcerting from a human rights perspective more so than an economic one, as immigrants are not simply economic assets.

⁹ Folklorama is a two-week cultural event that occurs annually in August in Winnipeg, Manitoba. It is the largest and longest-running multicultural festival in the world. During the festival, visitors can visit numerous pavilions set up throughout the city to experience traditional food, entertainment, and heritage from many cultural groups (Peers, 2017). The Filipino pavilion, Pearl of the Orient, allows visitors to see folk dances, eat traditional Filipino food (e.g., pancit, okoy, barbecue pork skewers), and drink traditional beverages (e.g., tapioca punch, beer). Visitors are encouraged to observe Filipino artifacts and experience Filipino hospitality (Folklorama, 2019).

Racial discrimination is a concern for Asian immigrants residing in Manitoba, including Filipinos. Carter et al. (2009) conducted a study with 150 former PNP applicants and their spouses and found that discrimination was a significant stressor for the participants, who included immigrants of Asian descent. Approximately 18 percent of the participants of the PNP study indicated that Manitobans need to be more welcoming of newcomers, and roughly 14 percent felt Manitobans should be more cognizant when it comes to tolerating cultural differences. Many participants also felt that Manitobans should be more patient with newcomers who are learning English and possess non-Western-accented speech (Carter et al., 2009). As Filipinos represent Manitoba's largest group of immigrants by source country, presumably a large percentage of respondents to the PNP survey were of Filipino descent (Novek, 2011). The data indicates that many Asian immigrants feel racial discrimination is a concern in Manitoba and that the province needs to do more in terms of welcoming and accepting newcomers of Asian heritage like the Filipinos.

A large-scale study by Lam et al. (2022) examined racism, bias, and discrimination in Manitoba. The researchers interviewed and collected data and lived experiences from over 500 racialized respondents, including Asian participants. Approximately 84 percent of the participants indicated that racism was prevalent within their everyday lives, including in workplaces, the healthcare system, and the justice system (Lam et al., 2022). Respondents reported dealing with racial comments, stereotyping, generalizations, and assimilation. Some respondents also admitted to making racial comments themselves to other racialized individuals (Lam et al., 2022). Lam's (2021b) study on newcomers' experiences in Brandon, Manitoba, supports the findings by Carter et al. (2009) and Lam et al. (2022). Lam (2021b) notes that the province's "Friendly Manitoba" motto misconstrues the real-life experiences of newcomers, as

new immigrants in Brandon are often stuck in low-paying jobs and told they must possess clear communication skills to access employment, which is often an arbitrary linguistic demand. Requiring standard accents and showing surprise when newcomers possess strong English skills were other concerns raised by Lam's (2021b) participants. While newcomers provide communities like Brandon and Neepawa with economic uplift, the racial discrimination they experience often diverges from the "Friendly Manitoba" aphorism.

More research needs to be conducted on the employment experiences of IETs from the Philippines working in Manitoba schools. Several studies have focused on the experiences of IETs in Manitoba (see Block, 2012; Schmidt et al., 2010), and some studies have included the personal narratives of Filipino IETs (see Block, 2012; Kailasanathan, 2013; Sangalang, 2022). Nonetheless, very few studies have substantively explored the experiences of Filipino IETs in Manitoba, despite Filipinos comprising the world's third-largest immigrant group by source country—trailing only China and India (Ulla, 2018). Elliott (1990), who explored the career experiences of Filipino-educated teachers in Manitoba, authored one notable study. This study offered insights into the career expectations of the teachers, their experiences with recertification, and the progress of their careers since becoming certified (Elliott, 1990). The study revealed that several Filipino IETs went through a lengthy and demanding recertification process and took on employment below their qualifications. Once certified, many participants accepted teaching positions in northern and rural locales, forcing them to be apart from their spouses and children for extended periods (Elliott, 1990). The study revealed the challenging nature of living apart from one's family while working as a teacher.

Elliott's (1990) study determined that there was trepidation among the Filipino IETs regarding the Manitoba certification board's failure to recognize Filipino-acquired teaching

credentials. The participants indicated that the credentialization process was arbitrary in assessing and recognizing internationally acquired credentials, even though all the participants had completed a four-year or five-year university teaching degree. It is also important to note that approximately 90 percent of the participants had completed their degrees at internationally recognized institutions. These institutions were recognized by the International Association of Universities (Elliott, 1990). Despite the standing of these post-secondary institutions, the province of Manitoba neglected to recognize many of the teachers' credentials. The amendment in teacher certification by Manitoba Education in 2024 to focus less on teachable requirements was implemented to make recertification less stringent for immigrant teachers.

While published over 30 years ago, Elliott's (1990) research stands as the earliest and one of the few studies focused on Filipino IETs. It is still relevant today, as many of the challenges remain the same for IETs who attempt to recertify as teachers in Manitoba. A more recent study by Sangalang (2022) determined that IETs had difficulties re-credentialing in Manitoba. Sangalang's (2022) study found that many IETs are frustrated with recertifying again, meeting language proficiency requirements, and enrolling in post-secondary coursework to re-qualify. This study also indicated that Filipino-trained educators needed help to obtain official documentation from their respective universities in the Philippines to provide to the certification unit in Manitoba. Marom (2017) notes that regulatory bodies such as Manitoba's teacher rectification unit often request original documentation, such as teaching certificates and post-secondary transcripts. These bodies are skeptical of accepting photocopied documentation and tend to request original copies of certificates and transcripts for fear of forgery (Marom, 2017). These requests are often unattainable for IETs, especially for those teachers who graduated over 20 years ago and for those who graduated from post-secondary institutions in countries like the

Philippines, where attempting to obtain original documentation is often futile (Marom, 2017; Skelton, 2020).

The Employment Experiences of IETs in Canada and Globally

Newcomers like internationally educated teachers often have difficulty accessing employment in their chosen fields in host countries like Canada. A lack of Canadian-related work experience, difficulty in credential recognition, and a perceived bias toward hiring immigrants hamper newcomers in the employment process (Cheinis & Sproule, 2008; ESDC, 2014). Cheinis and Sproule (2008) acknowledge that employers sometimes refrain from hiring newcomers, assuming they will have difficulty adjusting to Canadian work culture and fitting in with Canadian-born colleagues. Sethi (2015) determined that issues with employment integration often hamper newcomers despite elevated levels of education, skills, and English language proficiency. This speaks to the naïve assumption that newcomers will have difficulty adapting to a Canadian workplace (Cheinis & Sproule, 2008). Research also indicates that immigrants face challenges in accessing the training and academic bridging opportunities to recertify in professional occupations such as teaching, despite being able to excel in such programming (Sethi, 2015). Sethi (2015) notes that the inability to access transportation and affordable childcare are obstacles faced by many newcomers. These barriers prevent immigrant professionals from recertifying and accessing employment in their chosen careers and push them to accept survival-type employment.

The difficulty that newcomers have in accessing employment in host countries is an international phenomenon, not one solely attributable to Canadian society. Newcomers often lack perceived credibility and are deemed replaceable commodities in the labour force in host European societies (Fernando, 2024; Smyth & Kum, 2010). Fernando (2024) notes that

newcomers to the United Kingdom (UK), for example, often need to reposition themselves and negotiate a suitable fit to secure employment. Newcomers must reposition themselves, as their credentials are sometimes devalued in host societies like the UK. This devaluing often results in reduced earnings for newcomers in UK society (Fernando, 2024).

Similarly, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), immigrant teachers face challenges in securing employment. There is a preference among English language institutions in the UAE that teachers be recruited from Western countries and that migrant teachers identify as White instead of racialized (Manik, 2023). Manik (2023) points out that teachers of non-White identity in the UAE typically experience higher levels of discrimination compared to their White-passing counterparts. Similar racial preferences are evident in Ireland (Mc Daid, 2023). Mc Daid (2023) notes that parents in Ireland, for example, sometimes prefer that their children are taught by native-born teachers instead of foreign-trained educators, as there is an assumption among Irish parents that foreign-trained teachers are less proficient than native-born teachers. This erroneous assumption affects the employability of migrant teachers in Irish society (Mc Daid, 2023). Fewer professional networks, cultural differences, and linguistic discrimination all contribute to the employment challenges that newcomers, like migrant teachers, face in host societies (Manik, 2023; Mc Daid, 2023; Smyth & Kum, 2010). The challenges that newcomers face in accessing employment in international contexts mirror the difficulties they face in Canadian society.

Students who prefer teachers with Western-accented speech further marginalize IETs who do not speak English as a native language (Boyd, 2003; Buckingham, 2014). Research by Boyd (2003) and Buckingham (2014) found that students tend to favour teachers with Western-accented speech and disfavour educators with non-Western-accented speech. Buckingham's (2014) research showed how students studying EAL in Oman, for example, preferred IETs with

American, British, and Canadian accents and were dissatisfied with teachers who possessed South Asian and African accents. These biases can be economically harmful and exemplify the multiple barriers that hinder the employment of immigrant teachers. Ingersoll (2014) notes that many Canadian teachers who teach abroad work for private educational institutions. These schools employ a significant percentage of White educators and male administrators (Ingersoll, 2014). Private international schools also tend to utilize a Western curriculum embedded in Whiteness (Ingersoll, 2014), which privileges the White IETs that arrive from Western school systems and disfavours non-White educators. White IETs are afforded many privileges because of their race in international educational environments.

The existence of systemic racism in the Canadian education system further marginalizes IETs. Block (2012) notes that IETs experience discrimination based on their accents, names, and food preferences. Schmidt (2010) adds that IETs face discrimination based on their immigration status, clothing choices, and foreignness. Schmidt (2010) also reports instances in which administrators chastised IETs for wearing traditional clothing. These administrators used “a dress code violation” as an excuse to target IETs who donned non-Western apparel. In Cho’s (2010) research, collaborating teachers chastised racialized pre-service educators for a perceived lack of cultural competence and non-Western speech. These pre-service educators were also questioned about how they could obtain employment as teachers in the school system with such deficiencies (Cho, 2010). These instances of discrimination are demotivating and typically result in IETs questioning their future careers in Canada’s school system.

IET Research Internationally

Like their counterparts in Canada, IETs who resettle in Europe face significant barriers to recertifying as teachers. Terhart (2022) notes how IETs who pursue credentials in Germany face

obstacles, including regulatory issues and an unfamiliar school system. IETs are often encouraged by the hope of recertifying and continuing in their chosen profession (Proyer et al., 2022; Terhart, 2022). Nevertheless, this sense of optimism is frequently accompanied by immense pressure as IETs struggle to provide better financial futures for themselves, their families, and future generations (Terhart, 2022). Proyer et al.'s (2022) study was a participatory investigation of IETs with refugee backgrounds who had settled in Austria and were pursuing teacher recertification. To meet the financial constraints of resettlement, these IETs took on auxiliary employment while engaging in time-consuming, academically intensive recertification (Proyer et al., 2022). Proyer et al. (2022) also made note of the “hope” that IETs possess in the initial stages of their resettlement and recertification journeys in Austria. This sense of hope is often short-lived, as IETs are thrust into ongoing limbo as they adjust to language barriers, a lack of formal recognition, and many administrative hurdles to continuing in the teaching profession (Proyer et al., 2022; Terhart, 2022). Taken together, the above research demonstrates how structural barriers can turn early optimism into uncertainty for IETs re-entering the teaching profession.

Proyer et al. (2022) report that IETs in Austria are undervalued during the teacher recertification process. Personal experiences, professional competencies, and soft skills are given little priority in an Austrian recertification process, which is described as “inversive” and “intruding” (Proyer et al., 2022, p. 88). IETs are often evaluated on skills and aptitudes they lack instead of on the abilities they possess (Proyer et al., 2022). Mc Daid and Nowlan (2022) suggest that IETs in Ireland face similar circumstances if they do not possess certain Irish teaching virtues. As a result, some IETs self-eliminate from recertification rather than undergoing a time-

consuming and financially burdensome process (Mc Daid & Nowlan, 2022). These findings illuminate the deficit-focused recertification process in Ireland and Austria.

As in Canada, Germany, and Austria, the cultural capital that Irish IETs possess is often undervalued (Mc Daid, 2025; Mc Daid & Nowlan, 2022; Proyer et al., 2022; Terhart, 2022). Mc Daid and Nowlan (2022) argue that a restructuring of Irish teacher recertification is needed and that a more nuanced approach should prioritize soft skills and professional experience to counter deficit-oriented discourse surrounding immigrant teachers. Mc Daid (2025) notes that refugee teachers face a range of challenges when recertifying in Ireland. His study of Ukrainian refugee teachers resettling in Ireland found that formal assessments of qualifications and increased competition for employment prevented timely recertification. The inability to recertify in their profession has deleterious effects on a teacher's professional identity and ability to integrate into a new society (Mc Daid, 2025). Similarly, students cannot reap the benefits that a diverse range of teachers can offer, such as knowledge, experience, and skills, creating a sense of "social closure" among learners (Mc Daid, 2025). Mc Daid (2025) argues that increased financial and informational support can help IETs as they recertify, gain employment, and integrate into Irish society. Proyer et al. (2022) concur, arguing that IETs should be judged on the skills and subject expertise they possess rather than on their deficiencies. By doing so, the teaching workforce in Ireland and Austria could become more diversified, and learners could benefit from the diverse experiences and knowledge that IETs possess.

IETs face similar obstacles during the recertification process in Australia (Bense, 2015; Cruickshank, 2022). Bense (2015) conducted qualitative interviews with German IETs engaged in teacher recertification and found that a lack of support was preventing them from flourishing in the Australian school system. These teachers reported feeling immense isolation during the

recertification and hiring process. Bense (2015) acknowledges that very little priority is given to foreign teaching experiences in Australia and that more tailored bridging courses and mentorships are needed to best support IETs. Supportive peer networks, counsellors, and fostering meaningful connections were all suggested as ways to better support incoming immigrant teachers in Australia (Bense, 2015). Limited support and recognition hinder IET integration in the Australian school system.

Cruickshank's (2022) research reinforces the above concerns regarding the systemic barriers that prevent IETs from timely recertification and from accessing meaningful employment given their credentials and experiences in Australia. Cruickshank (2022) argues that education systems are not monolithic, meaning that educational institutions can be flexible in their teacher hiring and in the prioritization of aptitudes and experiences. He notes the irony that domestically trained teachers are often praised for acquiring foreign teaching experience, yet IETs are rarely praised for similar experience. The prioritization of domestic teaching candidates over IETs is a systemic obstacle that pushes IETs to the periphery in Australia, as they are in Canada, Ireland, Germany, and Austria.

Immigrant teachers in Australia often have difficulty accessing the labour market in large cities such as Perth, Adelaide, and Sydney (Collins & Reid, 2012). As in northern and rural Manitoba, job openings for IETs in Australia are more abundant in remote areas (Collins & Reid, 2012). Younger, recently certified teachers are often dissuaded from accepting positions in these locales, so school boards in more remote parts of Australia tend to hire immigrant teachers (Collins & Reid, 2012). Like their counterparts in Manitoba, IETs in Australia typically hold more advanced qualifications than recent teacher graduates (Collins & Reid, 2012; Rahman, 2024), suggesting that Western societies like Canada and Australia often exclude immigrant

teachers from larger labour markets and channel them into remote and rural regions of the country. From a critical-race standpoint, many determinants such as race, immigration status, the credentialization process, and White supremacy intersect to keep the teaching forces in Western urban areas predominantly White (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Cooper, 2016; Marom, 2019; Schmidt, 2015a). Critical race theory, a framework explored in the next chapter, can be employed to illustrate how this channelling keeps the teaching forces in Western urban areas predominantly White, pushing IETs to teach in more marginalized, underserved communities.

Canada's History of Marginalizing BIPOC People

While Canada has a well-documented history of marginalization perpetuated against BIPOC people, the country tends to position itself as a multicultural and racially diverse society that embraces positive encounters among cultural groups. Brosseau and Dewing (2018) point out that Canadians generally express support for the type of society in which different cultural groups interact positively. Statistics released by the Environics Institute for Survey Research indicate that the percentage of Canadians who viewed multiculturalism as a critical component of Canadian identity increased from 37 percent in 1997 to 54 percent in 2015 (Brosseau & Dewing, 2018). The number of people surveyed who felt immigration levels were too high in Canada decreased to 37 percent in 2016 from 61 percent in 1977 (Brosseau & Dewing, 2018). These statistics demonstrate the positivity that Canadians tend to have for multiculturalism and immigration.

While the survey above indicates support for the ideals of multiculturalism and immigration, a racially accepting society is not the status quo in Canada. Systemic racism is widespread and affects the lives of BIPOC people in numerous ways. Douglas et al. (2022) note how BIPOC individuals have suffered numerous injustices through colonization and

enslavement. The lingering effects of these colonial legacies continue to affect BIPOC people in terms of access to education, impoverishment, incarceration, and poor health outcomes (Douglas et al., 2022). These problematic effects can be traced to the fact that most cities in Canada have historical ties to colonial racism (Yoon et al., 2023). Residential segregation defines population centres in Canada, including the city of Winnipeg. Neighbourhoods are primarily divided along racial, ethnic, and social lines, with affluent neighbourhoods significantly represented by Whites and inner-city and poorer neighbourhoods often represented by BIPOC people (Yoon et al., 2023). This racial segregation suggests that Canada's position as a country that embraces multiculturalism and racial diversity is more principle than practice.

Systemic racism and structural violence are difficult to eradicate because they are deeply entrenched within Canadian society and in the cultural fabric of many institutions (Agocs & Jain, 2001; Dilts, 2012). Systemic racism and structural violence exist in the country's police force, the prison system, the justice system, sporting organizations, and the education system. They tend to occur more frequently against BIPOC people than White, settler-born Canadians (Macionis & Gerber, 2004; Skelton, 2025). According to Johan Galtung (1969, as cited in Dilts, 2012), structural violence embeds itself within societal institutions. This phenomenon has persisted over time and across generations due to the invisibility of the phenomenon (Dilts, 2012).

Canada is often labeled a diverse and immigrant-friendly nation (Macionis & Gerber, 2004); however, anti-immigrant sentiment has risen sharply in Canada recently and was especially accentuated during the COVID-19 pandemic. A federal government plan to increase the number of permanent residents arriving in 2025, which would have doubled the number of permanent residents accepted in 2025, was met with scrutiny and resulted in the federal

government forgoing the initiative (Al Mallees, 2024). Immigration targets and international student numbers have also been drastically cut. The federal government defended the decision by referencing the housing-shortage crisis and claiming that the country's population growth, mainly through temporary and permanent residency, had exacerbated the issue (Al Mallees, 2024). Critics have defended and denounced the cuts to immigration numbers (Al Mallees, 2024; Froese, 2025). Skuterud (2024, as cited in Al Mallees, 2024) believes that Canada's heavy reliance on temporary immigration, mainly international students and foreign workers, is ineffective in mitigating the country's economic problems. Other critics, such as Wilkinson (2025, as cited in Froese, 2025) claim the cuts are short-sighted. Wilkinson believes Manitoba can absorb many more immigrants and that newcomers are needed to fill thousands of job vacancies in the province (as cited in Froese, 2025). Critics have proposed that increasing temporary and permanent immigration could variously aid and hinder the country's economy.

Indigenous Peoples have suffered numerous injustices throughout the country's history. These injustices include geographical displacement on behalf of early French and British settlers and the removal of Indigenous children from their homes during the Sixties Scoop (Driedger, 2003). The historical enactment of several Indian Acts by the federal government resulted in Indigenous Peoples relinquishing their lands for meager monetary reparations, inadequate housing on northern reserves, and misleading guarantees of social assistance (Driedger, 2003). Settler colonialism, as described by Driedger (2003), has resulted in numerous societal and historical injustices perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples.

Settler-colonial practices enacted by Western European civilization have disrupted and detached Indigenous Peoples from their traditional ways of life. Settler colonialism occurs when one state occupies and controls another through cultural, economic, and political dominance

(Byrne et al., 2018). This domination fractures relationships as the dominant state flexes its power over the less powerful state (Byrne et al., 2018). Settler colonialism consists of capitalist expansion and a process whereby the dominant group labels perceived primitive groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, as “others” (Tester, 2017). Spatial displacement, forced assimilation, and penal laws such as the Indian Act were strategies employed by settler colonialists to dominate Indigenous Peoples (Rahman et al., 2017). By restricting cultures, religions, and languages, settler colonialists turned Indigenous Peoples from self-governing and self-sustaining people into wards of the state (Rahman et al., 2017). By removing Indigenous Peoples from their traditional lands and assigning them to other spaces for settlement, settler colonialists generate industry and profit by occupying these stolen lands (Snelgrove et al., 2014; Steinman, 2020; Tester, 2017). Essentially, settler colonialism intends to eradicate Indigenous Peoples for the betterment of White settler progress.

Settler colonialism has had detrimental effects on Indigenous Peoples, as evidenced by atrocities such as the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop. When implementing critical race theory as a framework, it becomes evident that Indigenous students continue to feel the ill effects of settler colonialism (Writer, 2008). One such legacy of settler colonialism—the indelible legacy of residential schools—has inflicted Indigenous Peoples with intergenerational trauma. Several types of atrocities were committed in these institutions, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. The residential school system traumatized and marginalized Indigenous Peoples and disconnected them from their families, communities, languages, and spiritual teachings (Czyzewski, 2011). This trauma resulted in elevated levels of domestic violence and depression among Indigenous Peoples and lowered levels of self-esteem (Bradford et al., 2017; Czyzewski, 2011). As St. Denis (2007) indicates, Indigenous Peoples had their

family connections, languages, and spiritual teachings “shamed, beaten, and tortured out of them” (p. 1073). It is erroneous, therefore, to assert that some Indigenous Peoples lost facets of these valuable gifts through any fault of their own.

Residential schooling in Canada was not a unique colonial practice, as other countries have engaged in notorious abuses against marginalized people. In the Philippines, members of the Dumagat tribe have been “red-tagged” as communists and criminals if they oppose government-backed projects that threaten the environment (Cabico, 2023). Courts in the Philippines have charged Indigenous people with defamation and terrorism if they oppose government initiatives that threaten Indigenous lands. Human Rights Watch estimates that approximately 126 extrajudicial killings were ordered by former president Rodrigo Duterte against Indigenous people who were “red-tagged” (Cabico, 2023). The Philippines has used “red tagging” as a means to criminalize Indigenous defenders of the environment and seize traditional lands.

The remnants of settler colonialism are evident today, as Indigenous prisoners in Canada remain over-represented in prison populations, hindered by inequitable court systems, and maltreated by discriminatory police practices (Skelton, 2022). Tuck (2018) notes that academia tends to fetishize exploring these hardships and often implores Indigenous Peoples to describe their pain and difficult moments, as it makes for marketable research. Despite concerted efforts to redress the historical injustices, non-Indigenous Canadians tend to overlook the history of abuse and discount the country’s history of marginalization against its First Peoples (Czyzewski, 2011; Driedger, 2003; Skelton, 2022). Settler colonialism also tends to be overlooked, as it denies its existence by concealing its use of violence and genocide (Steinman, 2020). Without

properly addressing the history of maltreatment against the Indigenous population, the hurdles will be difficult to surmount. The legacy of marginalization, therefore, will continue unabated.

To veto settler colonialism as a discursive frame, it is necessary to right previous wrongdoings and acknowledge the injustices perpetuated against the Indigenous population. Transformative education is one way to go about rectifying these past injustices. Czyzewski (2011) believes transformative education can facilitate improved relations and address the history of maltreatment against Indigenous Peoples. The issue is that settler colonialism implicitly benefits non-Indigenous Canadians, so eradicating the remnants of colonial practices is challenging. Czyzewski (2011) feels truth-telling is one means to generate interest and assign responsibility for past injustices. Even though today's non-Indigenous Canadians were not responsible for implementing historical colonial practices, they must nonetheless unsettle these harmful practices and mend the fractured relations among the country's Indigenous population.

At the national level, efforts have been persistent to redress some of the historical injustices levelled against the country's Indigenous population. Grassroots movements, such as Idle No More, and formal avenues, like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) national inquiry, have been fundamental in initiating essential conversations (Alidina et al., 2020). These efforts bring awareness to the decolonization measures that need to be put in place to mend the relationships and improve the communication between Indigenous communities and governments across all levels, policy sectors, police forces, federal organizations, community organizations, and individuals (Alidina et al., 2020). The issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women, the toppling of colonial statues at the Manitoba Legislative Building in 2021, and the mass grave sites being found across the country indicate the need to rectify the injustices and improve the outlook of future generations of Indigenous Peoples.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples also requires implementation at various levels—locally, provincially, and federally. This is essential in bringing about societal change regarding Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations. The document, which came into effect in 2007 and was endorsed by the United Nations (UN), pertains to the global rights of Indigenous Peoples (Alidina et al., 2020). Its implementation is crucial in ensuring the individual and collective rights and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples are respected and protected.

At the local level, efforts are underway to facilitate reconciliation in the classroom with young Canadians. The Winnipeg School Division—the largest school division in Winnipeg—is making concerted efforts to infuse Indigenous perspectives into the provincial curriculum (Skelton, 2022). The division’s teachers have been initiating projects to teach children about the residential school system and familiarize learners with Indigenous culture and traditions. A mosaic art project by the administration and students at Winnipeg’s Gordon Bell High School is underway to help students learn about treaties and the importance of treaty acknowledgment (Skelton, 2022). Many schools also participate in Orange Shirt Day to commemorate survivors of residential schools and learn why some Indigenous Peoples remain traumatized by these institutions. Projects in outdoor education are also ongoing to help students learn about the importance of sustainability in Indigenous culture (Skelton, 2022). These initiatives in the Winnipeg School Division are a starting point for learning about the history of injustices against Indigenous Peoples and engaging students in the reconciliation process.

The Nuanced Relationship Between Newcomers and Indigenous Peoples

Winnipeg is home to one of the largest urban Indigenous populations in Canada, and the city is experiencing a rapidly increasing newcomer population. Approximately 237,190

Indigenous people resided in Manitoba in 2021 according to the census data, which placed the province first among provinces based on population per capita (Cram, 2022). In 2023, Manitoba welcomed 24,909 immigrants—an increase of approximately 14.9 percent from 2022 (Government of Manitoba, 2024a). Incoming newcomer populations to Manitoba are often unaware of the harms perpetrated against the Indigenous Peoples (Alidina et al., 2020). There is a need to rectify this unawareness and provide education so that newcomer communities are able to acknowledge the existence of intergenerational trauma. Alidina et al. (2020) note that community leaders and activists have engaged the two groups in conciliatory discussions and advised newcomer communities on the importance of reconciliatory and decolonization matters and the history of marginalization perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples. Despite concerted efforts, relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples remain tense (Alidina et al., 2020). This indicates that more conciliatory discussions and facilitative programming on Indigenous issues are required.

The relationship between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples tends to be tense and nuanced. The two sides have suffered from occurrences of discrimination, misinformation, and xenophobia (Alidina et al., 2020; Reynar & Matties, 2019). Indigenous Peoples sometimes exhibit xenophobic inclinations toward newcomers, and newcomers tend to replicate the detrimental stereotypes shown to Indigenous Peoples by non-Indigenous Canadians. It is harmful to default to the notion that unfamiliarity and ignorance on behalf of newcomer communities are the reasons for the strained relationship (Skelton, 2022). A closer examination of the relationship between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples can unearth the source of friction between the two parties.

Research by Alidina et al. (2020) indicates that improved strategies can mitigate the strained relationship between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples. Meaningful dialogue is necessary to alleviate the tensions between the two groups (Alidina et al., 2020; Reynar & Matties, 2019). Facilitators working to improve these relations should focus on the commonalities. For example, newcomers and Indigenous Peoples alike place great importance on traditions and cultural values. Newcomers and Indigenous Peoples also share similar challenges, namely experiences of racial discrimination and a history of colonization (Alidina et al., 2020). These commonalities could help mitigate the relations and bridge the divide between Indigenous Peoples and newcomer communities.

Many harmful narratives and multicultural frameworks inaccurately equate Indigenous Peoples with newcomers. This faulty comparison along multicultural lines may contribute to the strained relationship (Lawrence & Dua, 2005). This comparison is naïve, as it equates Indigenous Peoples with diverse ethnic groups and pits them against newcomers in competition for resources and power within the country (St. Denis, 2011). This comparison is problematic, as it excuses the fact that newcomers are settlers taking up residence on stolen Indigenous territory and unknowingly carrying on the colonial practices early European settlers instituted (Lawrence & Dua, 2005). A multicultural framework positions newcomers as innocent bystanders and negates newcomer groups' responsibility in mending the strained relationship with Indigenous Peoples (Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Skelton, 2022; St. Denis, 2011). It is vital, therefore, to transition from a multicultural framework to one that will more accurately address the persistence of colonial domination against Indigenous Peoples.

In 2019, a document titled *Indigenous People of Manitoba: A Guide for Newcomers* was created to educate newcomers regarding needs around Indigenous issues (see Reynar & Matties,

2019). The guide contains cultural information about the Indigenous Peoples of Manitoba, including an overview of the Cree, Dakota, Dene, Ojibway, Oji-Cree, and Métis Nations. It provides pertinent historical information, including the fact that Indigenous Peoples were the first peoples in Canada and had their lands stolen by early French and British settlers and the federal government (Reynar & Matties, 2019). The guide cautions newcomers to be wary of the inaccurate stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples and informs them of the troubled relationship that Indigenous Peoples have had with the federal government. The guide also informs readers of important events that have shaped the country's unfortunate history, including the Indian Act of 1876, the residential school system, the Sixties Scoop, and missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (Reynar & Matties, 2019). The guide suggests where newcomers can access learning opportunities regarding Indigenous history, such as at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the Manitoba Museum, and the Lower Fort Garry National Historic Site of Canada. The guide concludes by listing annual events newcomers can attend to learn more about Indigenous culture, including Aboriginal Day Live, Aboriginal Music Week, and the Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival. Although the resource guide is for newcomer communities, the information is pertinent to all Manitobans, who are morally obligated to build respectful relationships with the province's Indigenous Peoples (Reynar & Matties, 2019).

Newcomers need to be cognizant of the history of marginalization against Indigenous Peoples so they do not replicate the harm. Research by Byrne et al. (2018) found that structural violence continues to affect Indigenous Peoples, resulting in trauma and self-destructive behaviours. Newcomers share a history of colonialism with Indigenous Peoples, so they should be aware of the various harms committed against Indigenous groups. These harms include the denial of human rights, assimilation attempts, and the engagement of ethnocentrism, such as the

banning of Indigenous ceremonies and traditional languages, the removal of women from leadership positions, and the forced Christianization of children (Byrne et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2017). Settler colonialism continues to linger in Canadian society and has had devastating effects on Indigenous Peoples.

Another report authored by Adam and Hogue (2015) finds that both Indigenous and newcomer communities in Winnipeg possess negative perceptions and stereotypes of each other despite a shared history of colonialism. The study by Adam and Hogue (2015) involved 88 Indigenous and newcomer/refugee participants and possessed a mixture of respondents, including Elders, community leaders, adults, and youths. The youths interviewed admitted that a passive but occasionally aggressive relationship existed between Indigenous Peoples and newcomers/refugees. The two sides admit to interacting very little with one another at school but confessed that the negative perceptions they did hold derived from their parents and the media (Adam & Hogue, 2015). The adult participants held many of the same stereotypes as the youth respondents but noted that the two sides had little opportunity to engage with one another. Most of the adult participants revealed intense competition between the two sides regarding access to housing, employment, and services in the community (Adam & Hogue, 2015). This supports the assertion by St. Denis (2011) that newcomers and Indigenous Peoples compete for resources within the country. The Elders and community leaders surmised that tensions between the two groups were understandable, but they were committed to finding meaningful and practical solutions (Adam & Hogue, 2015). The report offered a unique glimpse into the nuanced relationship between Indigenous and newcomer/refugee groups.

The Adam and Hogue (2015) study added vital literature in the area of newcomers' needs around Indigenous issues. The report unearthed several barriers preventing Indigenous Peoples

and newcomers/refugees from meaningful interaction and proposed recommendations for the removal of these barriers. The proposed recommendations include the need for attitude changes on behalf of each side, the need for space to partake in dialogue, and increased exchanges through community programming (Adam & Hogue, 2015). The report's authors ceded that knowledge, sharing, and cultural exchanges are necessary to mend the relationship between Indigenous Peoples, newcomers, and refugee groups. In addition, the report proposed facilitative programming that can advance cultural awareness and the need for increased partnerships from organizations that represent both groups, such as partnerships between Indigenous and newcomer-serving organizations (Adam & Hogue, 2015). These endeavours are necessary to mend the relationship between Indigenous communities and newcomer populations.

Living and Teaching in Indigenous Communities

The Indigenous population in Canada is growing and represents a larger share of the Canadian population than in previous decades, although the rate of growth has slowed in recent years (Statistics Canada, 2022b). While the general well-being of Indigenous people has increased compared to previous decades, significant gaps exist between the well-being of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (OECD, 2020). The gap is evident in rural regions of the country and, most noticeably, on Indigenous reserves (OECD, 2020). As of 2016, approximately 60 percent of Indigenous people in Canada were living in rural areas (Statistics Canada, 2016). Filipino IETs who choose to reside in some of Manitoba's remote Indigenous communities find that these rural areas have less diversified economies, fewer educational opportunities, and limited services (OECD, 2016). Some of these communities are fly-in communities and only accessible by winter roads during the winter season. This remoteness often results in exorbitant transportation costs. All of these factors contribute to challenging living conditions in rural

Indigenous communities, including lower educational attainment rates, minimal access to labour markets, and poorer health outcomes (OECD, 2016).

The quality of education for Indigenous students has improved in the past 25 years. This improvement is the result of an increase in Indigenous-controlled community schools and a higher number of Indigenous teachers (Harper, 2000). The founding of the Manitoba First Nations School System in 2017 was an important initiative, as it allowed Indigenous Peoples to control schooling for Indigenous children (Manitoba First Nations School System, 2025).

Improved alternative education and administrative strategies and a renewed focus on encouraging the holistic improvements of Indigenous youth have contributed to a higher quality of education found on Indigenous reserves (Bell, 2004; Harper, 2000). Despite the improvements, Filipino IETs who choose to teach in some of these Indigenous communities may face a number of challenging circumstances, including a lack of federal funding, difficulty in obtaining culturally appropriate curricular resources, low graduation rates among adolescents, and high teacher turnover (Bell, 2004; Mendelson, 2008). These issues represent a sampling of the potential challenges for IETs who choose to live in these communities.

Canada's Constitution recognizes three groups of Indigenous Peoples: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI). FNMI Peoples maintain distinct languages, histories, spiritual beliefs, and traditional practices and comprise roughly five percent of the country's population according to the 2021 federal census (Statistics Canada, 2022a). IETs might belong to an Indigenous group themselves. Globally, Indigenous Peoples have historical ties with pre-colonial times before the emergence of settler societies (United Nations, n.d.). Indigenous Peoples have strong links to their Traditional Territories and possess distinct social, economic, and political systems.

Historically, Indigenous Peoples form non-dominant groups in society, such as the Torres Strait Islanders in Australia and the Navajo People in the United States (United Nations, n.d.).

Teachers like the IETs from the Philippines who work in Indigenous communities are likely to be challenged to broaden their social and cultural understanding of Indigenous issues in Canada. This task can be daunting, given the need for more support and mechanisms to facilitate such initiatives (Wotherspoon, 2006). Teachers who work in Indigenous communities might face systemic issues that prevent them from fostering educational growth among Indigenous students, including tensions between schools and communities and a variety of social problems afflicting Indigenous populations (Wotherspoon, 2006). These teachers may have to endure a lack of regard for schooling on behalf of some parents and community members. They may also need to prioritize their safety while living on Indigenous reserves (Wotherspoon, 2006). These issues are some of the noteworthy ones that Filipino IETs may grapple with if they choose to assume teaching positions in some of Manitoba's northern Indigenous communities.

While conditions on reserves are sometimes problematic, the detrimental effects that settler colonialism has had on the country's Indigenous population, coupled with the failures of the residential school system, have created a high level of systemic inequality. Many non-Indigenous Canadians and newcomers are oblivious to the country's Indigenous history, so it is essential to provide a nuanced picture of these Indigenous communities to avoid defaulting to a White perspective (Reynar & Matties, 2019). Filipino IETs who decide to reside and work in Indigenous reserves in Manitoba will find these communities highly diverse. Indigenous communities in Manitoba may feature as many as 50 distinct traditional languages (Reynar & Matties, 2019). Manitoba is home to approximately 23 different Cree communities, many dispersed throughout Northern Manitoba. In many of these communities, celebrations and

ceremonies with music and dance are culturally significant, and sharing sacred stories is an important community tradition (Reynar & Matties, 2019). These stories create intergenerational knowledge, and Elders pass them down to the younger generations so that the community's wisdom and resilience remain intact (Bradford et al., 2017; Reynar & Matties, 2019). Settler colonialism and residential schooling have disempowered Indigenous Peoples and resulted in traditional languages and cultures receiving little priority. As a result, Elders and leaders play pivotal roles in preserving the culture and language for the future generations of these communities (Bradford et al., 2017). By residing in Indigenous reserves in Manitoba, Filipino IETs are more likely to recognize the importance of cultural vibrancy and intergenerational knowledge.

The media has negatively represented Indigenous Peoples throughout Canadian history (Anderson & Robertson, 2011; Henry & Tator, 2002). Henry and Tator (2002) determined that the media tends to focus on negative stereotypes when reporting on Indigenous issues. Images of violence, poverty, and alcoholism are common depictions the media uses to portray Indigenous Peoples as inferior to White Canadians (Henry & Tator, 2002). From their research, Anderson and Robertson (2011) determined that the mainstream media often portrays Indigenous Peoples as depraved, stubborn, and unyielding when it comes to progress. These stereotypical portrayals have become so ingrained in society that teacher graduates and IETs have much unlearning to do before they are ready to assume teaching positions and contribute positively to Indigenous communities. Haig-Brown (2012) asserts that these educators should be afforded a thorough understanding of Indigenous history, such as land claims, Indian Acts, and treaties, and they should acknowledge that they are stepping foot on lands stolen from Indigenous Peoples by

settlers and the federal government. Through this understanding and acknowledgment, teachers can understand the issues that affect Indigenous Peoples in society today (Haig-Brown, 2012).

Since the TRC concluded in 2015, more progressive teacher education work has prepared teachers to work effectively with Indigenous learners. Korteweg and Fiddler (2018) determined that many teacher candidates typically enter the teaching profession with colonial mindsets and need professional development in Indigenous ways of knowing, pedagogy for reconciliation, and decentralizing settler perspectives (Korteweg & Fiddler, 2018). Teacher candidates tend to be overly confident in infusing Indigenous epistemologies into curricula. They tend to take a pan-Indigenous approach, believing that all Indigenous Peoples have similar cultures. Teacher candidates also tend to feel that bringing in Elders as guest speakers is the sole means to achieve reconciliatory aims (Korteweg & Fiddler, 2018). Conrad (2022) stresses that teachers can challenge settler mindsets and counter settler logics of misrepresentation and erasure by engaging students in Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives. The important relationship that Indigenous Peoples have with the land and their interactions within historical and current power structures is also vital knowledge for teachers to possess (Conrad, 2022).

Internationally Educated Teachers and the TRC's 94 Calls to Action

All educators in Manitoba, including IETs, have vital roles in addressing the troubled relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. If reconciliation aims to be successful, positive relations must be fostered going forward (Warrington, 2018). Harmful colonial practices such as residential schooling have had traumatizing effects on Indigenous Peoples. It is vital to create positive schooling experiences for the current and future generations of Indigenous Canadians (Preston et al., 2017; Skelton, 2022). Dion (2016) states that educators are integral in restoring “mutual respect between individuals from different cultural

backgrounds” (p. 472). Education once suppressed the cultures, languages, and worldviews of Indigenous Peoples, but Dion (2016) recognizes that education is a means to amend relationships and unsettle colonial practices. These colonial practices need to be unsettled, as they have demeaned Indigenous Peoples for multiple generations.

IETs, like all educators in Canada, have pivotal roles to play in mending relationships and providing positive schooling experiences for Indigenous Peoples. The TRC’s 94 Calls to Action outline the actions that need to be taken to achieve reconciliation and to facilitate positive schooling experiences for Indigenous Peoples going forward (Reynar & Matties, 2019). The TRC attempts to better the schooling experiences of Indigenous youth by eliminating the financial obstacles that prevent access to post-secondary education and bridging the gap in educational attainment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth (TRC, 2015). Seven of the 94 Calls to Action relate to the responsibilities that schools and classroom teachers, including IETs, can work toward to better the educational experiences of Indigenous Peoples. The two initiatives that relate directly to the responsibility of IETs include Calls 62 and 63. Call 62 asks teachers to “teach age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, treaties, and Indigenous people’s historical and contemporary contributions to Canada” (TRC, 2015). Call 63 advises teachers to “maintain an annual commitment to Indigenous education issues, including building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect” (TRC, 2015). While the federal government is a central actor in adhering to the 94 Calls to Action, schools and classroom teachers, including IETs, must carry out these calls and ensure they take precedence in the education system.

Classroom teachers like IETs are responsible for reconciliation and adhering to the TRC’s 94 Calls to Action. Teachers can help improve the relationship between Indigenous and

non-Indigenous people and meet the diverse needs of Indigenous youth within the classroom (Warrington, 2018). Teachers can do this by incorporating Indigenous perspectives within the curriculum and fostering an inclusive and diverse approach to instruction (Montero & Dénoimé-Welch, 2018; Skelton, 2022). Dion (2016) applauds this approach but acknowledges that Indigenous pedagogy is intricate, so non-Indigenous teachers must understand the nuances of Indigenous knowledge systems and practices. Montero and Dénoimé-Welch (2018) stress the importance of creating space within teaching to incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems and avoid the token approach that introduces Indigenous perspectives and epistemologies without delving deeper into specific practices, histories, and worldviews. Ultimately, Montero and Dénoimé-Welch (2018) feel that adhering to a decolonizing approach as outlined above will result in a more positive schooling experience for Indigenous youth.

Indigenous teachers do not have the sole responsibility for facilitating reconciliation in the classroom and incorporating Indigenous perspectives into curricula. While Indigenous educators play an essential role in these efforts, addressing the TRC's Calls to Action is not their collective responsibility (Skelton, 2022). IETs have an important role in reconciliation efforts and can assume some of the responsibility that tends to fall on the shoulders of Indigenous educators. IETs, for example, can and do stand up against racism, facilitate reconciliatory initiatives in the classroom, and seek mentorships with Indigenous educators who can share perspectives of Indigenous cultures, histories, and worldviews (Skelton, 2022). This knowledge-sharing is essential in the reconciliation process among Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. While IETs have a role to play and have excelled in this role, the dominant teaching force's role in the country's reconciliation efforts cannot be understated. Education-related initiatives comprise approximately one-fifth of the TRC's 94 Calls to Action (Siemens, 2017). As a result,

educators in K–12 school systems through to those in post-secondary institutions are responsible for developing curricula that facilitate reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

The dominant teaching force plays a major role in incorporating Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum and facilitating reconciliatory initiatives. IETs can and have also joined in anti-discrimination efforts. Dion (2016) argues that the teaching force needs to take the necessary steps to address settler colonialism instead of “helping” Indigenous educators to implement the 94 Calls to Action. There are several ways that teachers can meet the educational mandates of the TRC. They can do so by incorporating ancestral teachings into lessons and including the work of Indigenous Canadians, including musicians, filmmakers, authors, and visual artists (Dion, 2016). They can also partake and have partaken in initiatives such as the projects implemented by the Winnipeg School Division in various subjects, like music, history, and outdoor education. These projects are appropriate ways to get Indigenous students interested in their culture and for non-Indigenous students to appreciate and learn from a culture that differs from theirs (Skelton, 2022). Education once suppressed the culture of Indigenous Peoples, but various scholars recognize the importance of education for reconciliation going forward (see Aitken & Radford, 2018; Montero & Dénomme-Welch, 2018; Warrington, 2018). If reconciliation is possible between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, then education needs to be at the forefront of the movement.

Several settlement agencies and schools have been partaking in reconciliation initiatives since the TRC report to address the historical wrongs committed against Indigenous Peoples. While little research exists on IETs in Winnipeg participating in reconciliation initiatives, it can be assumed that, if employed in metro Winnipeg schools, IETs are joining other educators in this important work. In the Winnipeg School Division, schools and teachers regularly participate in

special events marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Teachers participate in special assemblies and ensure that Indigenous issues and perspectives are integrated into the curriculum through activities such as community walks, drumming, and artwork (Winnipeg School Division, 2024). At Red River College (RRC) Polytech, EAL teachers have begun incorporating Indigenous issues and perspectives into settlement language classes. Adult newcomers are introduced to topics such as the legacy of Louis Riel, treaties, residential schools, and the various systemic barriers that affect Indigenous Peoples (RRC Polytech, 2025). Teachers in the program also invite Elders to share lived experiences with the newcomer students (RRC Polytech, 2025). The above showcase some of the important work that all teachers, including IETs, are undertaking to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

All teachers, including IETs, play a pivotal role in the reconciliation process, especially as residential school denialism and harmful rhetoric of the system's "good intentions" surface in Canada. In 2017, Conservative Senator Lynn Beyak delivered a controversial speech in the Canadian Senate defending the aims of residential schooling (Carleton, 2021). Beyak dismissed the maltreatment perpetuated in the residential school system and called for more emphasis on the system's positive aspects. She also indicated that Indigenous children who attended the schools were victors instead of victims. Carleton (2021) argues that colonizers like Beyak tend to refute the atrocities committed in residential schools to legitimize their power and privilege. This denialism is an attack on Indigenous Peoples and undermines the TRC's reconciliatory efforts. In Manitoba, Alan Lagimodiere, the former Minister of Indigenous Relations, made similar harmful comments defending the purpose of residential schooling, stating, "The residential school system was designed to take Indigenous children and give them the kind of skills and abilities they would need to fit into society as it moved forward" (as cited in Petz,

2021, para. 4). The comments made by Beyak and Lagimodiere confirm the existence of residential school denialism. It is harmful rhetoric like residential school denialism that teachers should confront and educate learners about within the school system.

Conclusion

The literature review section of this thesis has explored some of the key themes underlying the research into the educational partnerships between Filipino IETs and Indigenous communities and reserves in Northern Manitoba. An overview of Filipino immigration provided readers with information on the first waves of Filipino migrants who settled in Manitoba, including internationally educated professionals and labourers in the province's garment industry (Allard, 2015; Bautista, 2012; Buduhan, 1972; Dennehy, 2013; Elliott, 1990; Malek, 2019; Novek, 2011; Sagenes, 2015). An overview of the Filipino diaspora in Manitoba showcased the tangible and intangible assets the group possesses, including the resiliency some Filipinos tend to possess, the group's educational values, and the mentoring that newly arrived Filipinos receive from the well-established Filipino community (Bautista & Udarbe, 2001; Campbell, 1991; Chaturvedi, 2005; Manuel, 2017; Marshall, 2014, 2015; Salazar, 1993; Vachon & Toews, 2008). A review of the literature also shows that little research has been conducted on Filipino IETs; however, there have been studies published focusing on internationally educated Filipino nurses (see Bautista, 2012; Dennehy, 2013; Novek, 2011), Filipino youth (see Campbell, 1991; Sagenes, 2015; Salazar, 1993), and Filipino seniors (see Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010). In my study I add to the literature regarding Filipino IETs and the experiences of IETs who choose to teach in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba.

The second part of the literature review focused on the relationships between newcomers in Manitoba and the province's Indigenous Peoples. The research indicates that newcomers

typically need more awareness of Indigenous issues and the history of marginalization perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples by the federal government, such as residential schooling (Adam & Hogue, 2015; Alidina et al., 2020; Reynar & Matties, 2019). Several studies focus on the nuanced and complex relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples. This research includes recommendations to improve the relationship going forward (see Adam & Hogue, 2015; Alidina et al., 2020; Reynar & Matties, 2019), such as creating more space to foster dialogue between the two sides and forging more partnerships between the newcomer- and Indigenous-serving organizations (see Adam & Hogue, 2015; Alidina et al., 2020). Increased dialogue and trusting partnerships are necessary to create amicable relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples.

The final part of the literature review detailed the role IETs play in establishing relationships with Indigenous students and communities and the role of these teachers in implementing the TRC's 94 Calls to Action (Dion, 2016; Montero & Dénommé-Welch, 2018; Reynar & Matties, 2019; Warrington, 2018). All non-Indigenous educators, including IETs, play a pivotal role in engaging learners about the residential school system and informing them about the harms committed against Indigenous Peoples. They must also teach students about Indigenous contributions to Canada and facilitate the notion of decolonizing education. This type of teaching prioritizes space for Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum (Montero & Dénommé-Welch, 2018; Skelton, 2022). This contextual review provided a comprehensive overview of the factors that inform the proposed research on Filipino IETs and their work in some of Northern Manitoba's Indigenous schools and communities.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I explore two theories that inform and guide this research project—critical race theory and intersectionality. In the first part of this theoretical section, I discuss the aims of critical race theory and the ability of the theory to scrutinize policy and deconstruct potential injustices within the education system. Like the aims of critical race theory, intersectionality can explore solutions to problems that afflict IETs, such as the Filipino IETs followed in this study. As an analytical framework, intersectionality can investigate how intersecting power relations can influence societal relationships and affect the individual experience (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Cooper, 2016). By employing critical race theory and intersectionality, I sought to explore the intersection of race, class, gender, and power in terms of racial and ethnic equality and propose meaningful solutions to the policies and systems in place that have led to the marginalization of IETs in Manitoba's school system.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) came to fruition as the civil rights movement in the United States (US) lost momentum and stalled during the early 1970s. Protests, marches, and appeals to the population's moral decency, effective strategies during the 1960s, were less impactful a decade later in the wake of a declining economy, the Vietnam War, and the activities of other protest movements (Delgado et al., 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1998). CRT, which questions the basis of the liberal order and demonstrates that race functions as a mainstay of hegemony, differs from civil rights discourse, which focuses on incrementalism and structured progress (Delgado et al., 2017; Heringer, 2023). The developers of CRT—academics, lawyers, and civil rights advocates—proposed that this new theory was needed to contest the subtle forms of racial discrimination that were taking place throughout the US following the civil rights movement

(Delgado et al., 2017). This new form of racism, while implicit, was no less harmful than the explicit form.

CRT traces to the work of two prominent scholars: Alan Freeman (White) and Derrick Bell (African American). Freeman, Bell, and other like-minded scholars were confounded that the strategies deemed effective during the civil rights movement (e.g., protests, marches, appeals) were less effective during the following decade (Delgado et al., 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Freeman, Bell, and their counterparts reasoned that new strategies were needed to combat the resistance to racial reform. As a result, the scholars established CRT to explain the connections and better establish the relationship among race, racism, and power and to combat the systemic racism that continued to infiltrate everyday society in the US after the civil rights movement ended (Delgado et al., 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Like other popular theories, such as feminist theory, culture theory, and queer theory, CRT has historically been classified as a critical theory that draws its philosophical principles from several disciplines, such as history, feminist studies, legal studies, sociology, economics, cultural studies, and political science (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Harris et al., 2015). The benefit of CRT is its broad scope and incorporation of various economic, historical, and emotional perspectives (Delgado et al., 2017). According to critical race theorists, systemic racism infiltrates the everyday life of Western societies, and despite the passing of civil rights legislation, White members of society reap the benefits of such legislation (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Krepski, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

For decades, CRT scholars have debunked a variety of goodwill gestures by White groups. Upon close examination, supremacy and affirmative action were behind many of these gestures (Heringer, 2023). While its stated intention is to increase the representation of under-

represented groups in the employment force, affirmative action can stigmatize the groups it tends to support. By prioritizing racial demographics, affirmative action can create a stigma of incompetence and self-doubt among racialized applicants (Leslie et al., 2014). By pushing for more diversity in the employment force, affirmative action policies offer greater benefits to White women than women of colour (Daniel, 2019). Upon review, affirmative action has been shown to result in adverse outcomes.

CRT posits that racism entrenches itself systemically within Western society. This systemic racism is evident in educational institutions and segregates BIPOC students. Research by Heringer (2023) determined that Black refugee students, for example, tend to feel unwelcome, ignored, and undermined in Manitoba classrooms. These students reported instances of racial discrimination and felt ridiculed because of a lack of English language proficiency. As a result, the group felt alienated and segregated within the classroom (Heringer, 2023).

The systems of power in place in Canada restrict the opportunities for individuals who portray differences in race and gender identity. For example, limits on gender expression in schools have been enacted in some Canadian provinces. In Alberta, students 15 years of age and younger require parental permission to change their names or pronouns, and the schools notify parents of students ages 16 to 17 if students change their names or pronouns (People for Education, 2024). In Saskatchewan, a new bill requires parental permission for students aged 16 and under who wish to change their names or pronouns (People for Education, 2024). Government policies on gender expression in Saskatchewan and Alberta prioritize parental opinion over children's rights and limit the autonomy of students to determine how they are identified. The established power systems punish those individuals who adhere to certain

expressions of identity. Race and gender identity exclusion, examined through a CRT lens, are means to maintain social hierarchies.

CRT recognizes that racism is systemically entrenched in policies, laws, and educational institutions that implicitly endorse racial inequalities (Gómez et al., 2025; Rimer, 2022; Schwartz, 2023). As a result, CRT has ignited a controversy in North America recently, as it threatens White privilege. In Canada, Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre vowed to eliminate “woke” ideology from the public service, military culture, and federally funded university research. Poilievre’s anti-DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) platform received significant pushback from unions such as the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (Ritchie, 2025). In the US, several jurisdictions have banned the teaching of colonization in history courses and concepts such as racial hierarchy, problematization of race, and White supremacy (Gómez et al., 2025). School boards have become battlegrounds, and teachers’ jobs are at risk if they debate the merits of CRT (Rimer, 2022; Schwartz, 2023). States such as Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi have passed legislation regulating how teachers approach and teach about racism, sexism, and systemic inequality. Teachers who broach these subjects using a CRT lens and administrators who conduct professional development with a CRT framework have received disciplinary action (Schwartz, 2023). These actions highlight the minefield and legality that educators must circumvent to include CRT in curricula and professional development.

Several conservative jurisdictions in the United States have launched a crusade against CRT. In Oklahoma, school districts have faced disciplinary action for violating the state’s ban on CRT (Schwartz, 2023). In Texas, school libraries have removed books dealing with racism, gender, and sexuality (Hixenbaugh, 2022). In Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis signed a bill in

April 2022 prohibiting the teaching that certain people are privileged or oppressed due to their race or sex (Schwartz, 2023). Schools and educators have faced challenges regarding curricula that adhere to a social justice framework, even in more liberal states without CRT legislation. In addition, flags and banners that support social justice causes have been banned (Schwartz, 2023). These actions demonstrate the pushback CRT has received in the US and the deprecation of racially diverse perspectives within school curricula.

CRT has experienced controversy in Canada, although not to the same degree as in the US. In Ontario, several school boards have received criticism for adopting pro-CRT stances (James & Shah, 2022). In the Waterloo Region District School Board, parents have expressed concern that specific lessons make their children feel ashamed and guilty because they are White (James & Shah, 2022). School officials and parents in the Durham Catholic School Board have brought forward concerns about language implemented in school policies, such as White supremacy and colonialism (James & Shah, 2022). In Southern Manitoba, there have been calls to defund public libraries due to certain books that are available for children to access on topics such as gender identity, sexual health, and queerness. Library staff members have been labelled as pedophiles and accused of promoting pornography by allowing children to access these books (Gowriluk, 2023). Conservative groups in Canada have used book banning and library defunding as tactics to exclude materials that cater to the LGBTQ+ community.

Right-wing ideologists in Canada deliberately reject CRT and argue that it creates division within schools by addressing racism and that the theory implicitly teaches White students to feel ashamed of their race. CRT critics also believe that universal approaches in education focusing on common humanity instead of privilege and oppression should take precedence (James & Shah, 2022). However, CRT does not theorize that White students need to

feel shame about their race. Instead, CRT theorizes that the dominant perspectives of certain races ignore the collective experiences of historically marginalized groups, such as Indigenous and racialized people (James & Shah, 2022). Onwuachi-Willig (2022, as cited in Rimer, 2022) confirms that CRT does not suggest an individual is oppressive or inherently racist due to their race alone. Instead, she argues that race is a social construction instead of biologically constructed, that colour blindness cannot alleviate racism, and that BIPOC people have a unique voice because of their experiences with racism (as cited in Rimer, 2022). BIPOC people, therefore, should be encouraged to share their narratives (Rimer, 2022; Solorzano, 1998; Yosso et al., 2009). IETs have not been immune to experiences with race and racism, so researchers must facilitate the sharing of IET stories to alleviate the systemic racism inherent in the education system.

Nevertheless, contention around CRT abounds as the theory attempts to unsettle the racial state and the hierarchy that it imposes (Omi & Winant, 2015). Gómez et al. (2025) argue that attacks on CRT result from a fear of racial reconciliation. Whites often fear losing their position at the top of North American society's hierarchical order. CRT often comes under attack by White elitists, as it names the agents responsible for upholding this hierarchy (Gómez et al., 2025). This correlates to the abundance of White administrators and officials in the education system. It is also relevant to a teaching force primarily comprised of White teachers and pre-service educators in schools and teacher-training programs. White supremacy and privilege are central to this preservation of hierarchy and of the non-racially-diverse makeup of the Canadian teaching force (Gómez et al., 2025).

I utilized CRT in this study for two primary purposes. The first reason to use CRT was to analyze Filipino IETs' experiences. Visible minority teachers, such as Filipino IETs, are often

underrepresented in schools across Winnipeg (Bahadoosingh, 2021). The statistics support this notion, as approximately five percent of the teaching force in Manitoba identifies as racialized (Stephenson, 2020). Racism is often ingrained in the very fabric of society and is legally, culturally, and psychologically entrenched within its structures and consciousness (Bahadoosingh, 2021). This phenomenon leads to racialized IETs like Filipinos facing precarious economic and employment conditions. The second purpose of using CRT was to examine the challenges faced by Indigenous communities and students who host Filipino IETs. Through a CRT lens, Indigenous Peoples have felt the ill effects of settler colonialism, including marginalization and forcible integration (Henderson, 2023). When exploring the experiences of Filipino IETs who are residing and teaching in northern communities, the devastating effects of marginalization and integration on Indigenous Peoples become evident. A lack of infrastructure, inadequate access to clean water, and insufficient health and education spending in the North result in Indigenous Peoples living in poverty and largely unable to access life necessities in a timely and affordable manner (Bradford et al., 2017; Cash, 2024; Muhajarine, 2024). I drew on CRT to examine the above phenomena.

The concept of Whiteness plays a significant role in this study. Whiteness is defined as a social identity versus a biological one and a condition that allocates loftier statuses and privileges to Whites as opposed to non-Whites in society (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Tyndall & Raza, 2024). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) state that Whiteness carries property-like benefits, namely the ability to access more esteemed educational institutions and the ability to exclude non-Whites from access. The effects of colonialism have exacerbated the power differential between Whites and non-Whites and posit Whiteness as standard and dominant (Tyndall & Raza, 2024). Whiteness affords Whites many structural advantages and unearned privileges within the

education system, notably job opportunities as teachers and administrators (Leonardo, 2004). Whites reap social, cultural, and economic privileges that are rarely afforded to BIPOC individuals (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). In the school system, these privileges result in Whites being overrepresented in gifted, honours, and advanced placement programs compared to their non-White counterparts (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Whiteness operates as an asset that yields many benefits to those who possess it.

In Manitoba, there is a significant discrepancy between the student population that identifies as racially diverse and the number of teachers with non-White backgrounds (Stephenson, 2020). Estimates indicate that roughly 70 percent of teachers in Manitoba identify as White females (Martin, 2016). This number is in stark contrast to the estimated nine percent of Indigenous teachers and five percent of racialized teachers that comprise the provincial teaching force (Stephenson, 2020). For newcomer teachers, such as the Filipino IETs of this study, the perpetuation of Whiteness makes it challenging to gain employment as teachers, especially in urban centres.

Manitoba is not the only province in Canada that suffers from a lack of teacher diversity. Saskatchewan, for example, employs a largely homogenous teaching force, with an estimated 90 percent of teachers identifying as White or White-passing (Vangool, 2020). Ontario also suffers from a lack of teacher diversity. An estimated 50 percent of Toronto residents are racialized, yet only 9 to 10 percent of teachers and 2 to 5 percent of administrators are racialized (Turner, 2015). Given the disparity between the numbers of racially diverse and non-diverse educators in many Canadian provinces, there are hints that inclusive hiring policies may be symbolic gestures of egalitarianism.

IETs and the Indigenous population in Canada have both faced varying levels of systemic racism. Indigenous populations have suffered numerous historical injustices, including having their languages, cultures, and dignities stripped away by the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop (Macionis & Gerber, 2004). IETs face systemic injustice in the nuances of hiring policies—policies that fail to deliver on mandates to increase the racial diversity of the teaching force. The implementation of CRT by scholars can help them better comprehend systemic racism in the country's education system. The theory has a firm reliance on lived experiences (Krepski, 2016; Mensah, 2019; Solorzano, 1998; Yosso et al., 2009), which means the voices and lived experiences of IETs and teachers from racially diverse backgrounds can provide us a better understanding of the systemic racism that infiltrates the school system. The Filipino IETs from this study should share their stories with other IETs and pre-service educators, leading to a better understanding and analysis of racial subordination (Yosso et al., 2009). This understanding can contest the systemic injustice that persists in the education system.

CRT relies strongly on lived experiences (Krepski, 2016; Solorzano, 1998; Yosso et al., 2009), so it is an appropriate theory to complement a research study incorporating semi-structured interviews and counter-storytelling. Whites have typically received little education on the topic of racism, which renders many unprepared and unwilling to engage with the topic (DiAngelo, 2018; Mensah, 2019). However, hearing about lived experiences (i.e., from people who have been affected by racism) might be one avenue to pursue as part of a more comprehensive strategy to combat this unwillingness and unpreparedness. Policymakers who might review this research would be better empowered to enact policies to ensure regulations are in place to combat this mistreatment, such as anti-racist policies. Sharing lived experiences is possible through multiple means, including storytelling, myths, parables, testimonials,

chronicles, biographies, and family histories (Krepski, 2016; Solorzano, 1998; Yosso et al., 2009). All these methods have the potential to educate others about racial subordination. BIPOC members of society, such as IETs, typically have valuable experiential knowledge to share (Yosso et al., 2009). This knowledge is crucial in the understanding and teaching of racial subordination.

The Filipino IETs in this study would have the ability to draw on their knowledge and experiences of Spanish and American colonialism of the Philippines to provide insights into the ethnic conflicts that continue to shape the country. Spain invaded the Philippines in 1565 and reigned over the archipelago for over 300 years. The Spanish colonizers inflicted their imperial structure on the island's inhabitants and reorganized the country's political, economic, social, and cultural structures (Elizalde, 2022). After the Spanish colonial reign ended in 1898, the United States government attempted to reorganize the internal structures of the government of the Philippines (Go, 2004). The Americans did so by training local Filipinos in government-serving roles and educating them on American-style governance. The Americans believed the Filipinos needed development, self-government, and liberty tutelage and engaged in benevolent assimilation to achieve their aims (Go, 2004). Settler colonialism had a profound impact on the Filipino people.

Ethnic conflicts continue to persist in the Philippines because of Spanish and American settler colonialism. An ethnic conflict in the Mindanao region (ranging from the 1960s to the present) between Muslim inhabitants and Christian settler groups and the state has resulted in approximately 120,000 deaths and the displacement of two million residents (Perez, 2021). The Filipino IETs who participated in this study came from a context shaped by settler-colonial practices and ethnic conflicts. Colonialism has systemically eroded and devalued Indigenous

people, languages, and land in the Philippines and Canada. While the context may be different, IETs can challenge the beliefs some people have about marginalized individuals and reject the systemic racism embedded within society (Kearns et al., 2018). Battiste (2017) argues that it is important for all teachers to share a positive narrative of Indigenous Peoples and the knowledges and values they possess. This sharing can facilitate a greater understanding and teaching of racial subordination.

Because systemic racism is a fixture in Western society and Whites benefit from its presence, systemic racism is difficult to eradicate (Delgado et al., 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1998). The entrenchment of racism in North American society means discriminatory acts receive little to no repercussions (Ladson-Billings, 1998). CRT scholars are committed to eradicating this type of racism and all forms of subordination. This includes class, gender, and sexual orientation subordination (Solorzano, 1998). Those who apply the theory typically seek social justice for those individuals who have been racially mistreated. Because CRT relies strongly on interdisciplinary perspectives, individual differences receive recognition, and researchers can consider the unique needs of those who have been mistreated (Solorzano, 1998). In addition to its commitment to eradicating racism and all forms of subordination, scholars who employ CRT aim to emancipate the oppressed class, advocate for personal freedoms, and restore equality in a democratic society (Cohen et al., 2000; Krepski, 2016).

CRT can also be used to advocate for social justice, analyze liberalism, eliminate racial oppression, and advance the deconstruction of repressive discourses (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solorzano, 1998). By analyzing liberalism, critical race theorists take issue with claims of neutrality and objectivity by arguing that such claims bolster racism and fail to consider the systemic inequities evident in society (Abrams & Moio, 2009). For example, a researcher who

employs CRT may find fault with a school division's inclusive hiring policy by arguing that while the policy is in place, other structural inequities exist in the division's application process, such as the requirement of Canadian references. This could make it difficult for IETs to gain employment.

The benefit of employing CRT is in how it offers scholars the ability to analyze the injustices that have been inflicted on racialized individuals, including many IETs. Based on a review of the literature, IETs face considerable challenges in the education system, and it is difficult for many to surmount these obstacles and find meaningful employment (Block, 2012; Marom, 2017; Schmidt, 2010; Schmidt & Block, 2012; Schmidt et al., 2010). The difficulties that IETs face are mainly due to language impediments (Block, 2012; Schmidt et al., 2010), systemic barriers (Block, 2012; Marom, 2017; Sangalang, 2022; Schmidt, 2010), and the discriminatory practices prevalent in the education system (Block, 2012; Schmidt, 2010; Schmidt & Block, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2010). All these barriers and impediments push IETs to the periphery of the hiring process.

By employing CRT, researchers can examine how specific policies and practices in the school system unconsciously discriminate against IETs and maintain an inequitable gap in the ratio of BIPOC students to teachers. For example, researchers could examine the application process that school divisions use in the hiring process, and they might discover that requests such as reference checks, letters of reference, and previous post-secondary transcripts implicitly push IETs to the periphery, as many teachers who have been internationally educated lack referees and letters of reference from Canadian employers. The post-secondary institutions IETs attended may also not be included on the list of universities that applicants can select from on the online application form. CRT, thereby, can help users analyze and deconstruct racial injustice and

scrutinize policies like the one in the example. Such policies place unreasonable demands on IETs during the hiring process and contribute to the insufficient number of immigrant teachers employed in the education system.

CRT assumes that race permeates all components of society and encourages using a structural approach to address the issues found in a diverse society (Ortiz & Jani, 2010), such as the insufficient number of IETs in the school system. Utilizing CRT allows researchers to better commit to social justice and prioritize counter-storytelling to augment marginalized voices (Hodler & Batts Maddox, 2021). Implementing CRT promotes the pursuit of internal changes in institutions such as schools, rather than merely expanding upon and modifying existing resources (Ortiz & Jani, 2010). In the school system, this equates to an overhaul of hiring policies to ensure that the racially diverse representation of teachers and the continual hiring of IETs receive precedence. This fulfillment is necessary on an ongoing basis, not simply in times of teacher shortage or as a means of symbolic representation.

CRT can be used to explain the challenges that Filipino IETs face, as well as their efforts to decolonize. The de-Westernization of traditional knowledge systems and the legitimization of Indigenous ways of knowing are essential for unsettling inequitable structures and colonial social relations (Meston et al., 2025; Mohamed et al., 2020; Pérez-Marín et al., 2024). CRT encourages the negating of power imbalances and inequitable impacts that settler colonialism has had on Indigenous Peoples (Mohamed et al., 2020; Perez-Marín et al., 2024). Alliances between marginalized groups, such as Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples, are key in suppressing settler colonialism as a discursive frame (Stewart & Thompson, 2023). Assimilation tactics once denigrated the vital nature of Indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies (Gahman & Legault, 2017). However, by showing meaningful interest in Indigenous ways of life and

embracing their worldviews, Filipino IETs can foreground the legitimacy of Indigenous cultural practices (Mohamed et al., 2020; Skelton, 2022). Stewart and Thompson (2023) highlight the importance of solidarity between BIPOC groups in the struggle for justice. IETs and Indigenous Peoples, for example, might share ancestral knowledge and engage in knowledge creation. These practices simultaneously deter White supremacy and colonial ideas (Stewart & Thompson, 2023), thus strengthening both groups.

CRT supports the use of counterspaces to counter White normative discourses (Luedke, 2023; Margherio et al., 2023). Counterspaces are supportive, identity-affirming sites where the experiences of BIPOC teachers can be validated and celebrated (Margherio et al., 2023) and where racially diverse teachers can share cultural knowledge and develop strategies to address racial microaggressions (Luedke, 2023). Through a CRT lens, the counterspaces that IETs and Indigenous teachers create in northern schools could help negate the deficit-oriented discourse that surrounds BIPOC people, and a more positive, affirming racial climate could then be established (Margherio et al., 2023). The relationships that Filipino IETs develop with Indigenous Peoples and fellow BIPOC teachers in rural and remote schools are vital to the flourishing of these counterspaces.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is an analytical framework first coined by Black feminist scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 (Carastathis, 2016; Cooper, 2016; Muirhead et al., 2020; Walby et al., 2012). The origins of intersectionality trace back to Black feminism and the Black feminist movement during the 1960s and 1970s, emphasizing the interconnections of ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and race (Muirhead et al., 2020). Crenshaw's work explored the experiences of Black women in the American labour market, and she used the concept of intersectionality to

examine how the connections between gender and race were not adequately understood (Walby et al., 2012). This resulted in the marginalization of Black females and their demeaning experiences in the labour market.

Kimberlé Crenshaw was critical of feminism and critical race theory, and she argued that the two theories failed to demonstrate how marginalization intersects. Feminist scholars primarily focused on the experiences of White women while pushing the experiences of Black and immigrant women to the periphery (Lam, 2021a). Crenshaw (1995) feels that multiple aspects of identity can combine to allow analysts to interpret the social world. For example, immigrant women face several barriers in acculturating into mainstream society and living independently outside the family home (Crenshaw, 1995). Language barriers often preclude immigrant women from accessing support services, and some feel threatened with deportation by abusive husbands (Crenshaw, 1995). Shelters usually prioritize access to clients who speak English as a first language and fail to extend services or offer multilingual resources to women who speak languages other than English (Crenshaw, 1995). All these barriers intersect with pre-existing vulnerabilities to disempower immigrant women of colour.

Civil rights movements in the US broadly explored Black men's trials and tribulations while sidelining Black females' experiences (Cole, 2009; Lam, 2021a). Black women, consequently, have experienced a double burden—they are discriminated against because of their gender and because of their race. Kimberlé Crenshaw's position was that no social discourse was available to address the nuances of the Black female experience and the marginalization of Black women within the social landscape (Lam, 2021a). Crenshaw argued that a new theory that addressed the interconnections between various dimensions of discrimination could address the

evolving and dynamic complexities of discrimination and multiple identities (Cole, 2009; Lam, 2021a).

The prevailing interpretation of intersectionality moves beyond the two dimensions of race and gender to investigate how intersecting power relations influence relationships across diverse societies and the individual experience (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Levon (2015) argues that the access, opportunities, and treatment individuals receive in life result from intertwined, intersecting systems of social categorization. Theorists who adopt the theory of intersectionality believe an individual's identity is composed of multiple intertwined elements (Levon, 2015; Muirhead et al., 2020). These elements can explain an individual's hierarchical status and their privilege or lack thereof. All these elements interconnect to create or limit one's opportunities in life (Muirhead et al., 2020). Black women, for example, face multiple forms of oppression because of their membership in a minority race (i.e., Black) and their gender (i.e., female). Black females who adhere to a marginalized sexual status (e.g., LGBTQ) and maintain low socio-economic statuses are further oppressed (Muirhead et al., 2020). The social identities that Black women represent operate at the micro level and intertwine with various macro-level structural factors, namely patriarchy, White supremacy, and poverty. The micro- and macro-level elements combine to produce inequities for Black females regarding education, health, and employment (Muirhead et al., 2020).

Intersectionality argues that society's ills, such as racial discrimination and gender inequality, cannot be separated and analyzed independently; these issues must be theorized together (Carastathis, 2016). Crenshaw (1995) asserts that feminist and anti-racist efforts to prioritize the experiences of racialized women often fail to acknowledge that racism and sexism readily intersect. Lorde (2000) argues that feminist theory fails to consider the varied experiences

of women of colour and often equates the experiences of these women with the experiences of White women. By doing so, racialized women are made vulnerable, and theorists show ignorance toward the essential differences among women (Lorde, 2000). This functionally separates women instead of uniting them in the fight for liberation (Crenshaw, 1995; Lorde, 2000).

The intersectionality framework can be implemented to analyze multiple structural identities. As Liu (2017) notes, it “provides an insightful capacity for understanding complexity in the world” (p. 222). Some structural identities with which to analyze to understand the world’s complexity include class, gender, race, sexuality, ability, ethnicity, and age (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Cooper, 2016). Intersectionality can help explain the complexities of everyday society and individuals. It can explain how the social constructs of race, gender, and class are interconnected and indiscrete entities whose connections in turn explain the complexities of the social world (Collins & Bilge, 2016). Intersections are often dynamic, not stable, or universal (Levon, 2015). This means that “social histories, interpersonal motivations, and local ideological expectations shape the imbrication of categories of experience in real-world empirical encounters” (Levon, 2015, p. 298). In other words, examining social history alone does not suffice to analyze one’s power or lack thereof; instead, researchers must consider all elements that lead to disempowerment, including race, gender, sexuality, and socio-economic status (Muirhead et al., 2020). The advantage of implementing intersectionality is that the theory can replace more exclusionary and essentialist theories in analyzing the connections between identity and power (Carastathis, 2016).

A primary benefit of intersectionality is that it can help researchers explore solutions to problems that inflict the marginalized members of society (Collins & Bilge, 2016). While IETs

should not be considered disenfranchised in terms of socio-economic status, they are typically marginalized within the Canadian education system. IETs, for example, face numerous challenges, including qualifications recognition, recertification, hiring, linguicism, and systemic racism in the school system. Efforts to support IETs may receive less funding and be given little priority in immigration policies and the labour market (Schmidt, 2015a), depending on prevailing political and economic priorities. Many IETs face discriminatory hiring policies and systemic barriers despite obtaining the qualifications to recertify as teachers in Canada (Schmidt, 2010). Some are more educated and possess superior qualifications to their White, middle-class, and native-English-speaking counterparts (Schmidt, 2015a). The IET experience has tended to be frustrating, as the noteworthy credentials and teaching experiences that many IETs possess are often pushed to the periphery and deemed unworthy (Marom, 2019; Schmidt, 2010).

The frustrating experience of IETs in Canada is an issue that researchers can tackle by employing intersectionality as an analytical tool to explore the strategies needed to create a more diverse and equitable teaching force (Collins & Bilge, 2016). The power relations of class, race, ability, ethnicity, and age, as noted by Collins and Bilge (2016) and Cooper (2016), create a divide and are evident in the racial composition of many provincial teaching forces in Canada—teachers that hail from White-privileged backgrounds versus those from BIPOC backgrounds. Maiangwa et al. (2022) note how the effects of colonialism tend to subordinate non-Whites while subsequently elevating the position of Whites and Whiteness as a societal norm. This elevation in superiority grants unearned privileges to Whites and restricts the opportunities for non-Whites. Hiring policies are typically in place to create inclusive teaching forces and negate the ill effects of colonialism; however, a divide exists, as IETs face numerous barriers to equitable employment, including those imposed by linguicism and systemic racism (Block, 2012; Marom,

2017; Schmidt et al., 2010). The effects of colonialism are noted as a factor in the subordination of IETs and restrict the opportunities available to these teachers.

A recent external audit by the largest school division in Manitoba—the Winnipeg School Division—revealed that employment inequities existed regarding hiring and promotions (see Turner Consulting Group, 2023). Most employee respondents indicated that personal networks and favouritism led to hiring and promotions, not merit. The audit determined that nepotism was a persistent problem within the division and that advancement was primarily relationship-based instead of merit-based (Macintosh, 2023b). Other respondents mentioned how non-native English speakers and candidates with non-Canadian accents had difficulty advancing within the division. The audit found procedural gaps within the hiring process and reported that increased efforts could mitigate the non-advancement of qualified Indigenous people and other marginalized groups (Macintosh, 2023b). The Winnipeg School Division’s audit results confirm that BIPOC teachers, such as IETs, face barriers to equitable employment.

Linguicism—discrimination based on language or dialect—permeates the education system in Canada (Nelson et al., 2016). This issue was prevalent in the Winnipeg School Division’s external audit. Language discrimination is another form of inequality that intersects, making it challenging for IETs to access employment (Schmidt et al., 2010). Block’s (2012) research determined that IETs experience discrimination because of their pronunciation and accents. If deemed non-proficient in these aptitudes, some administrators assume IETs lack literacy competence (Block, 2012). Marom (2017) indicates that administrators typically prefer to hire teachers with exemplary English skills and often equate individuals with strong English proficiency with ideal teacher candidates. This supposition marginalizes non-native-English-speaking IETs who might possess strong teaching skills and multilingual characteristics.

Intersectionality can help us analyze the multiple barriers IETs face, such as linguicism and systemic racism, and examine meaningful solutions to remedy such issues. For example, the Winnipeg School Division's external audit recommends several changes to current policies to achieve equitable employment among Indigenous and racially diverse educators (see Turner Consulting Group, 2023). The audit indicates a need to implement a conflict of interest policy on hiring matters, create a toolkit to help mitigate interviewer biases, and increase racial diversity on interview panels (Macintosh, 2023b). Mitigating interviewer biases and increasing the racial composition of interview panels are imperative measures to ensure the school system is robustly inclusive. BIPOC teachers do not equitably comprise teaching forces like the teaching force in Manitoba (Macintosh, 2023b; Stephenson, 2020). As a result, creating more equitable hiring policies is imperative as a matter of fairness. This is one step to ensure BIPOC teachers are included in more significant numbers.

By implementing intersectionality, the underrepresentation of teachers from racially diverse backgrounds, such as IETs, can receive scrutiny from scholars. The Filipino IETs participating in this study shared some of the burdens placed on IETs during the recertification process, which allows solutions to be brainstormed. Policymakers could then examine these solutions to ease the burden implicitly placed on IETs. This group of educators also shared how they have experienced discrimination in hiring because of their ethnicity and immigration status, gender, and age. An intersectional lens allows us to examine how individuals such as Filipino IETs have experienced multiple forms of marginalization, rather than isolating individual matters. All these factors are relatable in complex and intersecting ways to produce social disparity (Liu, 2017). Intersectionality allows for analyzing various phenomena (e.g., racism,

sexism, and ageism) in tandem instead of interpreting them as exclusive and non-relatable entities.

Intersectionality is beneficial to scholars examining the inequities IETs face in school systems throughout Canada. By employing intersectionality, researchers can evaluate the multiple elements that interconnect to oppress teachers from diverse backgrounds such as Filipino IETs. Research suggests that this approach is superior to a one-dimensional cultural approach, which tends to exclude particular groups from essential discussions on diversity and equity. A one-dimensional multicultural approach might assume that school systems marginalize all IETs similarly, and it would not focus on the unique identities and differences that various IET groups possess, including various life histories and epistemologies (Liu, 2017). For example, a cultural approach might conclude that a Filipino IET failed to receive a teaching position because of ethnic discrimination. This approach might not have considered additional factors that might have led to the teacher's non-hiring, such as gender, age, and socio-economic status.

The benefit of intersectionality is the theory's awareness and recognition of power, inequality, oppression, and social exclusion (Muirhead et al., 2020). Scholars who implement intersectionality will be able to offer a more comprehensive overview of the IET experience in Manitoba. In contrast, other models might focus on singular elements and prioritize them instead of factoring in the multiple elements that combine to limit IETs from gaining meaningful employment within the education system. Researchers who employ an intersectionality framework benefit, as the model factors in the complexity of the IET experience. The framework also considers all the interconnected factors that create a frustrating experience for IETs, such as power differential, social exclusion, and discrimination (Muirhead et al., 2020).

Conclusion

The chapter outlined two theories to support the research conducted with Filipino IETs residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba: critical race theory and intersectionality. There are numerous benefits to implementing these two theories in research on Filipino IETs. The strengths of CRT include its incorporation of lived experiences (Krepski, 2016; Mensah, 2019; Solorzano, 1998; Yosso et al., 2009), its conceptual challenge to eradicate racism, and its ability to help researchers analyze injustices (Solorzano, 1998). In this study, I am able to better explore the challenges IETs face by employing CRT. CRT also helps me scrutinize the policies and practices that implicitly discriminate against IETs in the school system. Like with CRT, I am able to use intersectionality to explore the challenges and inequities IETs face in the education system and examine the numerous elements that intertwine to disadvantage teachers from BIPOC backgrounds. Intersectionality and CRT are complementary and can be used in tandem to theorize the experiences of IETs and propose solutions to problems that prohibit IETs from gainful employment and equal treatment in Manitoba's education system.

A final reason to implement CRT and intersectionality as theoretical frameworks is to better understand the relationships between Indigenous communities and teachers in the Philippines. CRT can demonstrate how systemic inequities exist in Canada that similarly marginalize Indigenous Peoples and educators from immigrant backgrounds (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Heringer, 2023; Krepski, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Instead of analyzing these two groups separately, CRT can position them in tandem to uncover common systemic hurdles. While both groups have different histories and face different barriers, CRT can help us uncover how they navigate a Eurocentric colonial system. Similarly, intersectionality can be useful for examining the multiple identities that intersect to shape the relationships between newcomer

teachers and Indigenous Peoples (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Levon, 2015; Muirhead et al., 2020).

Instead of a parallel analysis, I am able to analyze the relations between Indigenous Peoples and IETs simultaneously to uncover similar barriers. Both groups might then be empowered to work in solidarity to advocate for meaningful change and to mitigate the oppressions that afflict marginalized individuals within society.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The proceeding chapter focuses on the methodology and methods I implemented in my research study with IETs from the Philippines who chose to reside and teach in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba. This was an exploratory case study of Filipinos who chose to live and teach in these communities rather than accept lower-paid substitute work and term-teaching positions in Winnipeg schools. Northern teaching assignments offered the Filipino teachers higher salaries and more stable employment. The first section of the chapter details the benefits of employing a qualitative methodological approach in conducting this research study (McMillan, 2016), including the ability to examine the multiple perspectives of Filipino IETs. A qualitative approach was chosen, as post-qualitative research defocuses knowledge while prioritizing ethics, knowledge, and ontology (Le Grange, 2018). According to Le Grange (2018), qualitative research has a transformative appeal and is a relevant approach to engaging with contemporary world challenges. This type of research can increase a researcher's power to act and propose meaningful solutions to problems afflicting marginalized groups (Le Grange, 2018), such as IETs.

In the first section of this chapter, I reveal my standpoint (my point of view), which is a necessary step given that I conducted this study with a group of immigrant teachers working in Indigenous communities. The following section of the chapter outlines the advantages of using a case study as a research method to examine a phenomenon in a real-life context (Yin, 1994). Photovoice and counter-stories are also used as methods within the case study methodology. Following an explanation of these methods, the chapter's Data Collection and Data Analysis sections are presented, including semi-structured interviews. The Data Analysis section outlines my various approaches to data analysis, including coding, categorizing, and concept mapping.

The final section of the chapter details the ethical issues I considered, including how I protected my participants' anonymity and confidentiality, and how my position of power was addressed and mitigated throughout the study.

A Qualitative Approach

A qualitative methodological approach is typically used in social sciences, health sciences, and education. It is a rigorous means through which to produce credible findings and conclusions (McMillan, 2016). A qualitative methodology permits researchers to present multiple realities when examining the perspectives of the research participants. This speaks to qualitative research's systematic nature (McMillan, 2016). Participants in qualitative research are often treated as unique individuals, yet they are also like most other individuals. In the literature, qualitative research has been described as a "grand collection of ways" to analyze a particular phenomenon and is depicted as interpretive, experiential, and situational (Stake, 2010). By engaging in qualitative research, researchers can achieve the goal of better understanding the experiences of humans. This is imperative, as a qualitative methodology favours a humanistic and interpretative approach (Jackson et al., 2007).

As this study examines the experiences of Filipino IETs who reside and teach in Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba, I determined that a qualitative research methodology was most suitable. A qualitative methodology offers a more "personal" approach to the project than a quantitative approach, which would tend to offer more statistical interpretation (Bandyopadhyay, 2015). Qualitative research allows the researcher to research individual experiences and gather collective knowledge (McMillan, 2016). A limited number of studies have been conducted on the experiences of Filipino IETs in Manitoba (see Elliott, 1990; Kailasanathan, 2013; Sangalang, 2022), and no studies to date have been published on the

experiences of Filipino IETs residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities in the province. As a result, this study has the potential to contribute essential collective knowledge from an under-researched group of teachers working in partnership with Indigenous communities and students.

Several characteristics of qualitative research made it a worthwhile type of methodology to implement for this research project. First, a qualitative approach permitted me to collect critical data directly from the source (McMillan, 2016)—in this case, directly from interviews with Filipino IETs. Qualitative research permits researchers like me to engage closely with the participants through interviews or by observing them in their natural settings (Bogdan & Biklen, 2012; McMillan, 2016). In-depth interviews allow me to earn the trust of the research participants by engaging them on a deeper and more personal level (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Gaining the participants' trust is imperative if quality research is to be carried out successfully (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

Second, a qualitative approach permits researchers to generate data that Bogdan and Biklen (2007) classify as “soft” data. Soft data is usually rich in description of people, places, and conversations and cannot be handled by statistical interpretation or a quantitative approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The research questions in qualitative research are open-ended and designed to investigate phenomena in all their complexity. For example, in this study, I asked the participants questions such as: As a teacher, how do you define success? What challenges have you faced by living and teaching in Indigenous communities? What strategies have you used to adapt to a different educational environment? (See Appendix C.) These questions allow researchers like me to unearth rich narrative descriptions (McMillan, 2016). In turn, these descriptions provided me a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

To unearth such rich narrative descriptions, it is vital to approach the participants with the idea that nothing they reveal is unimportant (McMillan, 2016). For example, RJ, one of the participants, shared some important aspects of his familial history, such as the fact that he comes from a family of teachers. While this fact may seem irrelevant to their work in Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba, it could have relevant implications for the research study in explaining why a Filipino IET like RJ became a teacher in the first place and decided to recertify as an educator in Manitoba. This type of narration is crucial in qualitative research.

A rich narrative description is vital to a more comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon under investigation (McMillan, 2016). These types of descriptions might include the setting and the emotions, thoughts, and behaviours of the participants. Such context is crucial in qualitative research, as it can be critically analyzed when exploring a phenomenon (McMillan, 2016). Stake (2010) argues that a description is rich or “thick” if it can provide various interconnected details. When interviewing the Filipino IETs, it was essential to ask them why they decided to become a teacher in the Philippines, the importance of continuing their careers in Manitoba, and what strategies they used to adapt to a new educational environment in Indigenous communities. All these details intersect and were necessary to facilitate understanding of the topic under investigation. These details speak to the rich description required in a qualitative study.

Bogdan and Biklen (2007) explain that researchers who engage in qualitative research must analyze data formulated in all its richness. This is necessary to unearth important excerpts from the participants in as close a form as possible to the original transcriptions. The written word is crucial in qualitative research, and quotations from the participants can describe critical situations and explain the participants’ views of the world (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Therefore,

it was necessary to transcribe the interviews as accurately as possible and analyze the narratives in detail when interviewing the Filipino IETs. It was imperative to produce transcripts that unearthed these rich descriptions (Stake, 2010). The interviews were conducted via Zoom in a semi-structured format with Filipino IETs from several Indigenous communities. This format was conducive given the geographical distance between the participants and to ensure the health and safety of the participants and the researcher post-COVID-19.

The third characteristic that speaks to the effectiveness of qualitative research is the perspectives of the research participants. McMillan (2016) argues that effective qualitative research depends on perspectives from the participants that are “rich, detailed, and abundant” (p. 308). In other words, researchers should strive for deeper insight instead of relying on their initial interpretations. It would be unwise to assume that a Filipino IET accepted a teaching position in a northern Indigenous community because they could not find a position in a more urban centre. Instead of making this erroneous assumption, it was necessary to engage the IET in discussing why they decided to accept a teaching position in the North. For example, I learned from Catherine, one of the participants, that she was enticed to accept a position in the North because of the encouragement of a former colleague teaching in the same community. Researchers should be wary of withholding the participants’ perspectives, because these perspectives are the most essential inclusion. Without these valuable interpretations, one’s research lacks the participants’ voices reverberating throughout (McMillan, 2016).

When conducting qualitative research, it is important not to judge the research subjects but to strive to better understand the participants’ world through their frame of reference (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). It is essential for researchers who employ a qualitative approach to understand how participants formulate specific perspectives. A qualitative approach allows

researchers to investigate the participants' behaviour and collect data through sustained contact (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), such as via the continual observation of IETs in their classrooms. Initially, I wanted to interview the Filipino IETs and observe them teaching in their classrooms. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, restricted researchers' access to face-to-face interviews and in-person observations in Indigenous communities. The distance to these communities from my home in Winnipeg also made travelling unfeasible. Relying on video communication software, such as Zoom, was the more prudent way to interview the Filipino IETs, as access to Indigenous communities was heavily restricted during the pandemic. Interviews via Zoom were also more convenient for teachers and researchers who lead busy lives and cannot easily schedule in-person interviews and observations. The use of photovoice was beneficial, as it allowed me to partially address and mitigate the issue of not being able to conduct observations in the Indigenous communities.

A qualitative methodological approach is particularly appropriate when researching the experiences of IETs, as this approach requires researchers to develop empathy. Klimecki et al. (2020) explain that an empathetic approach allows for increased understanding and argues that it is vital for researchers to be aware that discussing challenging experiences can trigger certain emotions among participants. For example, when the Filipino IETs discussed the challenges of living in a remote place and being away from their families, I needed to be aware that this topic could be sensitive. As a result, it was important to be empathetic by acknowledging the challenging experience but not dwelling too long on the topic.

A qualitative approach also pushes researchers to understand the various perspectives of their participants (Stake, 2010). Qualitative research involves questioning participants—in this case, Filipino IETs—about their teaching experiences. This allowed me to gather important

insights about what it is like to be an IET residing and teaching in a northern Indigenous community in Manitoba (Austin & Sutton, 2014). Most people, including most teachers, have not had the opportunity to live and work in a northern Indigenous community. As a result, the perspectives of the IET participants provide essential insights that contribute to the growing literature on the IET experience and how teachers adjust to residing and teaching in remote locales.

My Standpoint

As I conducted this study, I had to be cognizant of my standpoint—my outlook toward my research participants and my attitude toward issues in the field of education. Smith (1987) cautions males such as me to be aware that our experiences have historically been universally accepted and that males have garnered significant authority and persuasiveness due to the authority they have been given. She notes that male researchers must acknowledge the overuse of male instead of gender-neutral pronouns and the lack of female perspectives in intellectual and creative works (Smith, 1987). Acknowledging female BIPOC narratives is imperative in disrupting the persuasiveness of patriarchal and monolingual perspectives within academic research. Data from Ontario reveals that approximately 90 percent of school administrators identify as White and middle-class (Abawi, 2021b), so it is vital for researchers to uncover the barriers preventing BIPOC females from accessing higher-level positions within education. As eight of the ten participants I interviewed identified as female, sharing these experiences of racialized female teachers working in the North is vital.

Female educators from racialized backgrounds play vital roles in disrupting monolingual norms and curricula that prioritize White subjects. Sohn (2023, as cited in dos Santos & Sohn, 2023) recalls instances where she was rejected from pursuing her chosen profession in academia

and needed to work diligently to legitimize herself as an EAL teacher because of her BIPOC female identity. Sohn explains that her superiors informed her that her English needed to be improved to teach intermediate- and advanced-level EAL students. Sohn was compelled to routinely justify her position as a BIPOC female in academia despite experience with and educational degrees obtained from Western post-secondary institutions (dos Santos & Sohn, 2023). As I completed this study, I needed to be cognizant of the multiple barriers placed on female BIPOC educators within the education system and ensure these voices were given the recognition they deserve. Settler scholars must be aware of our privilege and power in academia and education. Tuck and Yang (2012) reveal that settler scholars who feign innocence are often relieved of guilt when confronted with the harms caused by settler colonialism and receive a boost in reputation when being sensitive to these harms. Instead, Tuck and Yang (2012) argue that settler scholars like me must be impatient with the lack of progress in decolonization and work towards unsettling settler innocence. As I completed the research study, the framework above comprised an essential component of my standpoint.

Case Studies

Case studies were used as a research method to investigate the phenomenon of Filipino IETs who reside and teach in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba. A case study is a detailed examination of a particular setting, an individual, a collection of documents, or a specific event in a bounded environment (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Yin, 1994). McMillan (2016) offers that a case study is an in-depth analysis of real-life entities, such as social groups, programs, and communities. A case study is preferable when the researcher has little control over transpiring events and when the phenomenon under investigation occurs in a real-life context (Yin, 1994). Instead of posing “how should” questions, researchers who implement case studies

are advised to pose “how do” questions to their participants (Punch, 2005). In the case of the Filipino IETs, instead of asking, “How should IETs experience working and living in Indigenous communities?” I asked, “How do IETs experience working and living in Indigenous communities?” This questioning places more value on systemic issues and places less focus on individual actors’ conduct.

Case studies are widely used in qualitative research and range from simplistic to complex depending on the phenomenon under investigation (Baskarada, 2014; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The benefit of implementing a case study is that the design process is flexible at the beginning of the study, meaning that researchers can choose from various people and places to research. A case study allowed me flexibility in the data collection stage as I decided where to proceed with the study, how to spend my time, who and who not to interview, and what topics needed further exploration (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). When collecting data for this study, for example, I concluded that I needed to further examine Filipino IETs’ relationship with administrators and their vital role in welcoming and acclimatizing IETs to schools in Indigenous communities. Because the design process was flexible, I was able to decide where to focus as the case study proceeded (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Despite the flexibility a case study provides, it is best implemented with guidelines to be most effective (Baskarada, 2014). Considering this point, I followed a number of crucial steps when executing this research methodology. When implementing a case study, the first stage is the foundation phase, an essential first step (Rashid et al., 2019). In the foundation phase, the researcher develops a critical stance and decides whether the case study adheres to a qualitative or quantitative approach. During this phase, it is important to implement a research paradigm to give the study a proper frame of reference (Rashid et al., 2019). A frame of reference allowed me

to interpret conclusions and develop critical findings. These findings assisted me in identifying and vocalizing perspectives and assumptions (Rashid et al., 2019). Following the foundation phase, a researcher implementing a case study can initiate a pre-field phase. During the pre-field phase, the researcher must ensure that a case study is a suitable method to employ for the phenomenon under investigation (Rashid et al., 2019).

In the case of this research study, I investigated the phenomenon of a particular group of educators (i.e., Filipino IETs) in a real-life context (i.e., northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba). I conducted research on an under-researched group of teachers in a unique setting, so a case study the preferable means to conduct such research. If Filipino IETs who are residing and working in Indigenous communities were a heavily researched phenomenon, a case study may have had less relevance and not contributed significantly to the literature on the topic. During the pre-field phase, it is important to develop protocols before the next phase is conducted. To do this, I developed research questions, chose a research method, and sought permission from the appropriate governing bodies to conduct the study. I also implemented ethical considerations and planned how data collection and analysis were conducted (Rashid et al., 2019).

The field phase follows the pre-field phase when implementing a case study. I needed to make meaningful connections and build rapport with the participants during this phase, which often ensures a smoother research process (Rashid et al., 2019). To accomplish this task, I emailed prospective participants to introduce myself and the project. If the respondents indicated an interest in participating in the project, I set up a meeting on Zoom or by phone to discuss the project in more detail and to answer questions. This initial connection and meeting helped develop the relationship between the participants and myself and put them at ease when I set up the official interview.

A case study typically involves the researcher conducting semi-structured interviews, observations, and document collection (Rashid et al., 2019). The variety of data generation methods adds to a study's breadth, rigor, and richness (Flick et al., 2004). During the field phase, data is collected, and a researcher may discard redundant ideas, develop new ideas, and modify the design of the study as they see fit (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The field phase is vital, as it is the stage where the researcher develops the focus of their case study, formulates essential questions, and transitions from "broad exploratory beginnings" to "more directed data collection and analysis" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 59). A reporting phase follows the field phase. In the present study, this meant transcribing the interviews and cross-checking my field notes. This phase also consisted of requesting feedback from the participants regarding their transcripts and revising them based on their feedback, as well as coding, categorizing, and revising (Rashid et al., 2019).

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the primary method in the case study approach used in this research. Semi-structured interviews are beneficial for conducting exploratory interviews (Magaldi & Berler, 2020) and interviewing participants for the first time (Munz, 2017). Magaldi and Berler (2020) explain that semi-structured interviews tend to follow a topical trajectory, and the interviewer adheres to a general pattern of questioning (e.g., questions about becoming a teacher, questions about recertification). When I first began planning this study, my goal was to conduct ethnographic interviews and observe IETs in their classrooms. Ethnographic interviews often involve meeting and developing relationships with community members before conducting interviews to ensure they are more impactful (Munz,

2017). The COVID-19 pandemic, however, altered my plans, leading me to switch to a semi-structured approach.

While ethnographic interviews provide researchers with considerable latitude and involve open-ended questions (Munz, 2017), semi-structured questioning can still delve deeply into participants' experiences (Ruslin et al., 2022). Nadeau (2019) notes that a semi-structured exchange allows participants to share their stories and results in more reflective, critical, and informed perspectives. Ruslin et al. (2022) suggest that researchers who engage in semi-structured interviews maintain a framework of themes they wish to discuss and compose an interview guide that complements the themes. Interviewers are also advised to maintain a balance of queries, including main questions, follow-up questions, and probes, while engaged in semi-structured questioning (Ruslin et al., 2022). When discussing how one adjusts to life in a northern Indigenous community, for example, a few Filipino IETs mentioned contacting fellow Filipino teachers and engaging in community-building. By following up with the participants, I learned that Filipinos enjoy singing karaoke together and sharing traditional food. A semi-structured approach, as noted, provides the control and latitude to conduct effective research.

Photovoice

As part of the case study, in addition to the semi-structured interviews, I used photovoice to explore the experiences of Filipino IETs residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba. Photovoice is often used in participatory action research settings and involves incorporating photographs and dialogue to showcase a community issue or concern (Young, 2017). It is a visual research method that can facilitate social change and empower those in vulnerable communities (Budig et al., 2018). Photovoice can help identify, represent, and improve upon the conditions in a community (Wang & Burris, 1997). For example, photovoice

might allow a researcher to identify specific concerns that Indigenous Elders, community members, or IETs bring forth to address the schooling experiences of Indigenous youth. In this study, many IETs took photographs of Indigenous youth participating in community outdoor recreation activities, such as fishing excursions and cookouts. By including these types of photographs and explaining the benefits of outdoor recreational activities, researchers like me can advocate for more funding for outdoor recreation in Indigenous communities. This type of research represents a step toward creating positive change within community and educational settings.

Any parties interested in incorporating advocacy and social change in their communities can implement photovoice (Wang & Burris, 1997). The Filipino IETs from this study, for example, took photos of their classrooms, educational resources, homes, and favourite community places. These photos foster an increased understanding of what it is like for an IET to reside and teach in a northern Indigenous community and of the strengths of the community. These images have the potential to raise concerns that need to be addressed going forward to encourage more IETs to take up residence and fill teacher vacancies in northern Indigenous communities. The goals of photovoice are threefold: to showcase a particular community's strengths and limitations, to facilitate critical dialogue through small and large group discussions regarding photos, and to connect with policymakers (Wang & Burris, 1997).

There were several benefits to implementing photovoice in my research. First, the method allowed me to use both visuals and dialogue to give voice to those wanting change and improvement in their communities (Wang & Burris, 1997; Young, 2017). The participatory element allowed the participants to take on the role of the researcher, which increases the credibility and relevance of the study (Young, 2017). Another benefit is that photovoice is

relatively simple to incorporate and can help a researcher understand the everyday experiences of individuals, generate a theory based on those experiences, and suggest a path moving forward (Young, 2017). For example, the Filipino IETs involved in this study took photos that represent their resiliency, which might explain how the group has adapted to a different educational environment and a new way of life. One area for improvement in implementing photovoice is that it might not be a suitable method for some researchers who prefer to be more in control of their study and disapprove of taking on the role of a facilitator (Young, 2017). As a researcher, I valued the active role my participants took in this study and saw the facilitator role during some phases as beneficial.

Photovoice offers several methodological opportunities and research possibilities (Novak, 2010; Woodgate et al., 2017). Woodgate et al. (2017) note that sharing photos builds context and enhances the researcher's setting. Photovoice differs from the traditional semi-structured interview and allows researchers to uncover potentially sensitive and difficult-to-verbalize discourse through photograph sharing and discussion (Woodgate et al., 2017). The method also allows for greater access to conscious and unconscious thoughts and the sharing of powerful metaphors and lived realities (Woodgate et al., 2017). For example, Filipino IETs might have difficulty verbalizing the beauty of Northern Manitoba when prompted by the researcher in an interview. Upon sharing photographs, however, Filipino IETs may find it more feasible to vocalize the beauty of Manitoba's northern region. Photovoice is advantageous because it shifts away from a researcher-dominated structure and grants participants greater power (Novak, 2010; Woodgate et al., 2017). By involving participants more directly in the research process, situations and lived experiences are revealed, thereby increasing disciplinary knowledge (Novak, 2010).

Counter-Stories

The literature on CRT proposes the sharing of counter-stories of racialized people to counter the majoritarian narratives of Whites that dominate educational discourse. The voices of teachers who have experienced discrimination in the school system and suffered from a lack of opportunities need to be heard, as such stories are valuable pedagogical tools that contest systemic racism (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002) and offer therapeutic and cathartic benefits (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Solorzano and Yosso (2002) contend that counter-storytelling brings marginalized voices to the forefront and can disrupt the dominant narratives of Whites, such as narratives that defend the altruistic intentions of the residential school system. Gómez et al. (2025) add that the counter-narratives of marginalized people are crucial in outing the problematic effects of White supremacy in the maintenance of racial hierarchy. This hierarchy pushes the experiences of racialized people and their historical sufferings under the White social order to the periphery (Gómez et al., 2025).

The sharing of counter-stories among Filipino IETs is important for several reasons. In Manitoba, a considerable gap exists in the ratio of students to teachers who identify as BIPOC (Stephenson, 2020). Various reasons exist for the discrepancy; however, by sharing the counter-stories of Filipino IETs, I can shine a spotlight on the operation of Manitoba's heavily criticized teacher recertification process before the province amended it in 2024 (Government of Manitoba, 2024b; Schmidt, 2010). The negative experiences that some IETs experienced in urban schools should also factor into the discrepancy (Block, 2012; Schmidt, 2010). Another vital reason for sharing the counter-stories of Filipino IETs is to combat the negative discourse surrounding Indigenous communities and people. Indigenous communities are often portrayed negatively by the mainstream media (Anderson & Robertson, 2011; Henry & Tator, 2002), and newcomer

communities themselves tend to replicate naïve stereotypes (Adam & Hogue, 2015). By sharing the experiences of Filipino IETs, a group that has welcomed living and teaching in Northern Manitoba, I can share a more positive discourse of Indigenous communities and people.

Data Collection

Accurate data collection was essential when undertaking this research investigation to ensure the research questions were answered robustly. To conduct this study with the group of Filipino IETs, I largely depended on informal semi-structured interviews and photovoice. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, it would have been ideal to conduct participant observations with the Filipino IETs and travel to some Indigenous communities to meet the teachers and observe them in their workplace settings. Given the uncertainty of the pandemic at the time I was designing the research and the potential restrictions of researchers entering Indigenous communities, I refrained from conducting participant observations. Instead, I used semi-structured Zoom interviews and photovoice as the primary data collection methods. During this time, the health and safety of everyone involved in the project were paramount, so all data was gathered remotely.

I conducted semi-structured interviews to generate critical data from the Filipino IETs. Conducting research with IETs is vital. Other regulated professions, such as nursing and engineering, have historically been impacted by labour shortages, meaning that internationally educated nurses and engineers do not often have difficulty accessing employment. This phenomenon was not the case for IETs before the COVID-19 pandemic, as there was often a discrepancy between the number of IETs in Manitoba versus the number of domestically trained teachers (Schmidt, 2010). Nevertheless, teaching is now experiencing significant shortages post-pandemic. Shortages are especially evident in rural and Indigenous communities, which often

rely on uncertified teachers and educational assistants to fill teaching vacancies (Macintosh, 2023a). The purpose of this study, therefore, was to investigate the phenomenon of Filipino IETs who have permanently settled and are working as teachers in northern Indigenous communities. An analysis of this partnership might encourage fellow educators to take up teaching positions in northern communities and mitigate teacher shortages.

I interviewed 10 Filipino IETs in total. Each participant, except for two interviewees, was interviewed twice—one main interview, and one follow-up interview to discuss the photographs. The main interviews lasted 60 to 90 minutes, and the follow-up interviews were approximately 20 to 30 minutes. I was unable to reach two participants to schedule a follow-up interview, and they did not participate in the photovoice activity. By interviewing 10 participants and conducting multiple interviews, I was more likely to achieve a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The semi-structured interviews allowed me to listen and understand the participants' viewpoints (Mills, 2011). The conversation style of interviewing served the purpose of the interviewer and the interviewees (Bhatta, 2024). This style allowed the interviewees to maintain control while sharing their personal stories.

Using a conversational approach, I had the flexibility and the ability to redirect the participants to speak about specific issues (Bhatta, 2024). For example, when interviewing the Filipino IETs, I could redirect them to speak about specific experiences that needed elaboration, such as their contributions to Indigenous communities. A conversational approach allowed me to add, delete, and modify questions as I saw fit. For example, two participants, Ripple and Mayette, discussed in significant detail how they supported incoming Filipino IETs as teaching principals. So, I did not need to ask them if they saw themselves as leaders in their schools and

communities as a follow-up question. By using a conversational approach, I could explore the participants' experiences in detail.

The photovoice component of the research study involved the participants taking photographs in their classrooms and community (see Appendix D). I asked the Filipino IETs to take approximately 10 to 15 photographs of essential things and places (see Appendix E). For example, the participants were directed to take photographs of their homes, classrooms, teaching resources, students' work, essential places in the community, and favourite places to relax. I encouraged the IETs to take photographs that were important to them. After they took the photographs, I asked the Filipino IETs to compose a summary about each photograph to identify the photograph (e.g., this is a picture of my teaching diploma) and to explain the significance of the photograph (e.g., I took a picture of my teaching diploma because becoming a teacher was one of my proudest accomplishments). During the follow-up interviews (see Appendix F), the participants shared their collected photographs and summaries and explained their significance. For example, some IETs shared photographs of cultural activities they were engaging with, such as beading, and explained the significance of the activity to them and the community members. In total, eight of the ten participants shared photos; two participants did not respond to requests to share photos, and one participant's photos could not be accessed due to technical reasons.

After the photovoice sharing was complete, I had approximately 90 to 100 photos. Some participants identified key photos during the follow-up interviews, and I included those photos in this dissertation. Other participants sent more photos than the requirement and did not identify key photos. Palibroda et al. (2009) indicate that researchers are given some latitude in selecting photos. In some circumstances, participants select the photos they want included in the project; the researcher may also decide which to include and exclude (Palibroda et al., 2009). Including

all photos in the document was not feasible, so I had to decide which to include and which to exclude from the final document. I chose visually appealing photos and those for which the participants provided detailed summaries. I excluded some photos because they were unclear; I also excluded others if they were duplicates or near duplicates of the chosen photos. I excluded some photos simply due to space constraints. I used a digital blurring technique to obscure faces, protecting the anonymity of participants, residents, and students in the communities. I included approximately 30 photos in the final document.

Regarding criteria, the participants had to have trained and worked as teachers in the Philippines and at the time of the research be employed as teachers in a northern Indigenous community. I attempted to find a gender balance and interview participants across the age spectrum (25 to 60 years old). Although I had hoped to find a gender balance, the number of female IETs that replied to my study recruitment (eight) outweighed the number of male participants (two). The number of females working in the education sector in Manitoba is approximately 67.5 percent (Government of Canada, 2023), so the fact that women were highly represented in my study parallels the high representation of females in the provincial teaching force.

Purposive sampling was used to identify and recruit Filipino IETs for the research study. Purposive sampling is a method in which the researcher chooses participants that will strengthen the researcher's analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2012). To find potential participants, I first emailed the president of the Manitoba Association of Filipino Teachers, Inc. (MAFTI) and was directed to four participants. I was also provided the contact information for a professor at the University of Manitoba who had previously worked as a superintendent in Northern Manitoba. This individual provided me with a contact person through whom I acquired four additional

participants. The final two participants were recruited through snowball sampling. The participants were chosen because they were expected to possess knowledge and experiences that were pertinent to my research.

Purposive sampling allows researchers to focus on a particular phenomenon—in this case, the experiences of Filipino IETs who reside and teach in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba (Robinson, 2014). Once the participants agreed to participate, I asked if they could forward my study advertisement to other Filipino teachers who they knew were residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities. The study advertisement (see Appendix A) described the study and included my contact information. Interested participants were asked to contact me directly. A brief meeting was then set up in which I provided additional information about the study and answered any participant questions. A consent form (see Appendix B) was shared and signed by all participants.

During the initial meeting with the potential study participants, I collected the necessary contact information and stored it in a locked filing cabinet in my home. My University of Manitoba email address was used in all correspondence with the participants. When I received an email from a participant, it was saved as a PDF document, and all identifiable information was anonymized using the licensed Adobe Acrobat Reader. This information was uploaded to the University of Manitoba's licensed MS Teams site. All transcriptions were recorded on a personal device and transcribed verbatim, minus the filler words and repetitions. All interview transcripts were similarly uploaded to the MS Teams site.

Each participant was provided a pseudonym of their choosing and was referred to by these pseudonyms throughout the data generating phase and in the interview transcripts. A copy of the transcript was sent to each participant for purposes of member checking. A list of the

participants' real names and assigned pseudonyms was kept in a locked filing cabinet in my locked office in my home. All audio recordings were safeguarded in this filing cabinet and deleted after the transcripts were finalized. All transcripts were deleted from the researcher's computer on January 31, 2025. The participants were given three weeks to specify any additions, deletions, or modifications to the transcripts and make final comments. The participants were told that if they did not respond to the researcher after three weeks, then that would indicate they were satisfied with the transcripts and consented to their use. The participants were told they could withdraw from the study at any point up until the data analysis phase, which was March 31, 2025.

Data Analysis

The data analysis portion of the study began after the data generation phase was completed. Data analysis took place in various phases. First, I reviewed the data, and I revisited the research questions so the study's objectives would remain central to my analysis (Stringer, 2014). Relevant and irrelevant data was reviewed and separated at this time. Second, the data was unitized. To do this, I examined the essential concepts, ideas, and experiences of Filipino IETs and categorized this information into relevant units of meaning (Stringer, 2014). It was essential for me to explore patterns, regularities, and critical issues relating to the topic and to narrow down possible themes to ensure feasibility and continued analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2012).

After interviewing the Filipino IETs, I used open coding to generate a list of possible themes for further analysis. Open coding helps researchers develop categories and broad thematic units for further analysis of data (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022). Developing categories and thematic units can be a complex task, as it takes considerable time to segment data into

meaningful units (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022). Given the constraints of a thesis, however, it was essential to narrow an exhaustive list of themes into a manageable, relevant sampling.

After unitizing the data, I sorted and coded it into related categories (Stringer, 2014). I used highlighters to code data from the transcripts, such as yellow for strategies the Filipino IETs use to overcome challenges in living in Indigenous communities and pink for important lessons they have learned by teaching Indigenous youth. Following this, I identified themes that the participants had in common (Stringer, 2014). For example, some Filipino IETs shared similar strategies for making connections and friendships in the local community. Lastly, I set up a system of categories and subcategories to illustrate a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon under investigation (Stringer, 2014). Some of the themes derived from open coding included recertification, survival jobs, applying for teaching positions, the challenges of living and teaching in northern Indigenous communities, the support offered by fellow Filipino teachers and administrators, and the support offered by Indigenous teachers, administrators, and community members.

Sub-themes within the larger themes were also identified based on how frequently commentary linking to the themes occurred during coding. Some sub-themes were eliminated during this stage, as quotes and commentary on those themes were minimal (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Other themes were collapsed into a singular theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For example, the support provided to Filipino IETs by the Filipino educational diaspora and Indigenous teachers and Elders was collapsed into a theme focused on advocacy and leadership in northern schools. While the commentary on these sub-themes was abundant, it was not sufficient to warrant two separate chapters. Similarly, the commentary on the benefits and challenges Filipino

IETs experience in northern schools was extensive, so these themes were broken down into two separate chapters (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Quotation identification and selection were also considered during the data analysis stage. Quotations can be used to illustrate the researcher's findings and to "bring the text to life" (Eldh et al., 2020, p. 4). According to Eldh et al. (2020), quotations can highlight a text's features and make it more appealing to readers. For example, when discussing the survival jobs Filipino IETs were forced to take on before the teacher recertification process was complete, I included quotes from various participants that highlighted the frustration many felt with the recertification process and the embarrassment some felt at taking minimum-wage jobs given their extensive education and experience. Without such quotations, the readers might be unable to decipher just how frustrating and overwhelming it is for IETs to requalify in their chosen profession. While quotation can bring life to a text, Eldh et al. (2020) caution researchers from including controversial remarks that have limited value. To adhere to this recommendation, I refrained from selecting quotes that did not add value to the analysis and were anomalies (Eldh et al., 2020). Therefore, I selected quotations to complement the thematic analysis rather than as illustrative additions that served little purpose.

Once the data was colour-coded, I used theoretical coding to link the data to the theories used to supplement the study: CRT and intersectionality. While theme selection was informed by data collected during the semi-structured interviews, CRT and intersectionality served as analytical frameworks for interpreting the results. By integrating these theoretical frames, I became sensitized to issues of racialization, systemic inequality, and power imbalances that affect Filipino IETs (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Rather than imposing CRT on the data, I let CRT inform the interpretation. Data that I could tie to theory were noted and integrated into the

analysis (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022). For example, when some of the female participants discussed their experiences of recertifying at an older age, I noted that I could situate these experiences within the intersectional elements that work against IETs, such as agism and gender discrimination (Crenshaw, 1995). This approach ensured that participants' lived experiences informed the findings, while the theoretical frameworks situated these narratives within broader systems of racial and systemic inequality.

By applying theoretical coding and a CRT lens, I sought data that addressed power imbalances, racial discrimination, and structural inequality (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Solorzano and Yosso (2002) assert that through a CRT lens "we must look to experiences with and responses to racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism in and out of schools as valid, appropriate, and necessary forms of data" (p. 37). In other words, it is vital to include the counter-stories of Filipino IETs living and working in Indigenous communities to avoid defaulting to majoritarian narratives that tend to dominate educational discourse (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). By sharing the experiences of Filipino IETs as they attempted to recertify in traditionally white school systems and experienced life and schooling in First Nations communities, we can learn of specific issues that may need to be rectified, the nuances of immigrant/Indigenous relations, and the successful nature of IETs taking on teaching positions in remote and northern communities.

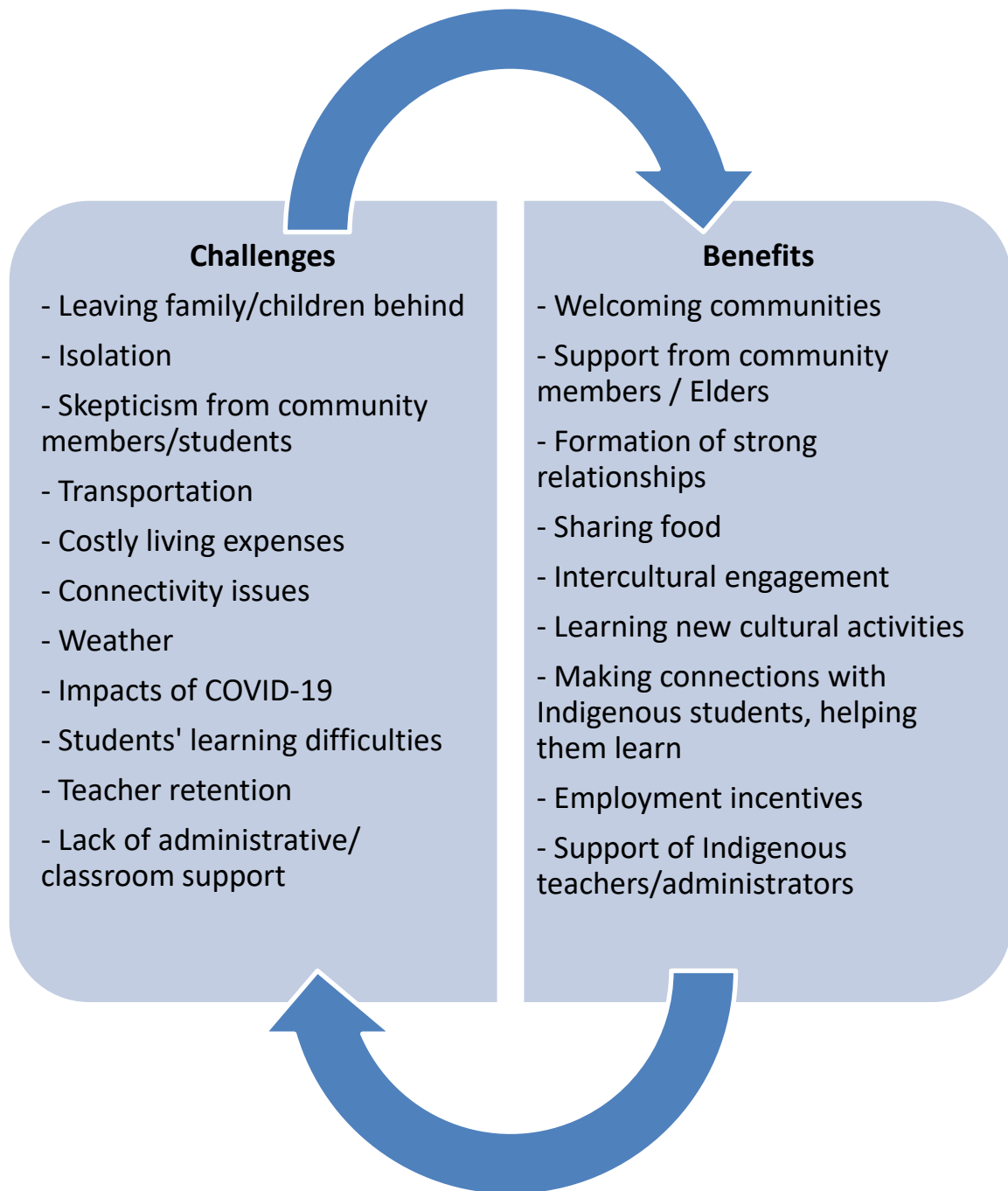
One final technique I implemented in the data analysis portion of the study was a concept map. A concept map can be used as a framework to enrich the data analysis, and according to Stringer (2014), it "helps participants find a way to pursue multiple holistic and inclusive strategies that assist people in dealing with the problems that affect their lives" (p. 153). A concept map also reveals common elements that emerge from the data collection phase (Stringer,

2014). For example, I determined that most Filipino IETs benefited from the connections they made with each other. Filipinos also tended to feel that their resiliency was strengthened by spending time with fellow Filipino teachers, engaging in social activities such as karaoke, dancing, and movie nights. Using a concept map, I addressed the issues and challenges the Filipino IETs identified with living and teaching in remote locales and solutions to mitigate the difficulties associated with residing in northern communities.

A concept map also provides the researcher with a visual showing how a situation's elements are interconnected to the phenomenon under investigation (Stringer, 2014). By implementing a concept map, I was able to show the participants and stakeholders possible solutions going forward regarding what needs to be done to continue supporting or better support internationally educated teachers who choose to reside permanently and teach in Indigenous communities. A summarized version of the concept map (Figure 1), including the challenges indicated and the strategies utilized, was sent to the participants following the completion of the study.

Figure 1

Concept Map: The Challenges and Benefits of Teaching and Living in the North



Ethical Issues

Considering ethical issues is of utmost importance when conducting a research study. The following section details some ethical issues that arose throughout my study and what tactics I employed to mitigate these issues. Negotiating and securing access was one of the first issues I addressed when commencing the research study (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). The study was conducted under the umbrella of the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Manitoba, which means that ethics approval was sought from the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board. A research ethics board (REB) form was completed and submitted to the board for approval before the study commenced.

The second issue I considered was ensuring that the participants reviewed and completed a consent form before the study began. The consent form contained a description of the study, the study's objectives, purpose, the involvement of the participants, and the compensation, benefits, and risks associated with participation in the study. How confidentiality was to be maintained and how the results were to be disseminated were also outlined in the consent form that the participants reviewed and signed (Stringer, 2014). The consent form made it clear to the participants that they could withdraw from the study without consequences (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Stringer, 2014). Once the participants reviewed and signed all the consent forms, I filed them in a secure filing cabinet in my locked office in my home for future reference or if the participants requested to view their completed forms (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

An essential ethical aspect that also must be considered is protecting the participants and respecting their confidentiality. To do this, I provided each Filipino IET with a pseudonym, or they were asked if they would like to choose a pseudonym for themselves (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). To maintain confidentiality, it was necessary to refrain from naming the research

locations to respect the privacy of the IETs, the students, and the community members; instead, each community, school, and division was given a pseudonym. This will prevent readers from pinpointing the research study's exact locations and identifying the communities and participants.

Acknowledging and addressing my position of power is another ethical concern that must be considered. Researchers must reveal their power over the participants and indicate how the power dynamics can be mitigated throughout the study. This is vital in creating a welcoming and hospitable environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their expertise, knowledge, and viewpoints with the researcher (Maxwell, 2017). I hold a certain amount of power over the participants, given that I am a graduate student at the University of Manitoba and have worked as a sessional instructor in a university setting. To address this position of power, I acknowledged the power-over relationship on the recruitment documents, indicated that participation is entirely voluntary, and reiterated to the participants that they could withdraw from the study at any time. There were no issues that arose throughout data generation.

Acting in good faith and maintaining integrity are additional measures I strived towards when conducting this study (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Stringer, 2014). These were achieved by following ethical procedures and not wavering from the protocol (Stringer, 2014). Maintaining a duty of care and not coercing the participants was also important. For example, when one of the participants, Ripple, informed me about how she cried when she first relocated to the North, I did not ask her to expand on this difficult moment due to its sensitivity. By acting in good faith, developing meaningful and trusting relationships with the participants was easier, ultimately leading to more effective research (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

Following the completion of the research study, it was essential to promptly disseminate the findings to the participants in the project. The Filipino IETs would likely be interested in learning how their residency and employment in Indigenous communities can impact the future hiring and settling of IETs who choose to resume their teaching careers in northern Indigenous schools. Administrators from these schools will also likely want to know how they can continue to assist or better support new teacher graduates and IETs who plan to teach in their communities. This information could lead to more impactful relationships and help educators better serve the students attending these schools. Following the completion of this thesis, a summary of the results was forwarded to the participants, some of whom are serving as administrators themselves. A further possibility is to have portions of this study published in an education journal, such as the *Canadian Journal of Education* or the *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*. Academic journals can reach a wide audience, so pursuing publication is worthwhile in these scholarly venues.

One limitation of photovoice I kept in mind when adhering to an ethical protocol was that some participants might be hesitant to take photos and be unwilling to participate (Young, 2017). In Islamic culture, for example, taking photographs of Muslim women is often not permitted, especially those who are unaccompanied. Some Amish groups may disapprove of photos being taken of their daily lives. When reviewing the photovoice method with the Filipino IETs, I ensured they were comfortable and willing to engage with this approach before proceeding with the study. If most of the participants had been uncomfortable or unwilling to engage with photovoice, then it would have been necessary to modify the research study's methodological aspect, such as using artifacts instead of photos. Most participants submitted photos, so the photovoice aspect of the study remained intact.

The emotional aspect of discussing personal experiences also needed to be considered during the interview process. Ethnographic interviews function well when researchers are striving for sensitivity, as they take on a semi-structured process and allow the researcher to bypass questions too sensitive to answer (Elmir et al., 2011). This process gave me the latitude and flexibility to ease the strain sometimes associated with discussing personal experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), such as departing one's home country, searching for employment, and adjusting to an unfamiliar society. A list of free counselling services was made available to the participants before the interviews began in case this process triggered the participants and they needed assistance.

Conclusion

The preceding chapter has detailed the methodology and methods that the researcher used to conduct the study with Filipino IETs teaching and residing in Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba. A qualitative methodological approach was preferable when implementing this study, as it allowed me to hear from multiple perspectives (McMillan, 2016), including from the Filipino IETs themselves. A case study was implemented, as it allowed me to investigate a phenomenon in a real-life context (Yin, 1994)—Filipino IETs recertifying as educators in Manitoba and taking up residence and teaching positions in northern Indigenous communities. Photovoice was also used to complement the semi-structured interviews I conducted with the Filipino IETs. Data generation and analysis took place in various stages and, as outlined in the chapter, consisted of semi-structured interviews, data coding, categorizing, and concept mapping. Finally, the ethical considerations in this chapter explained how I protected the anonymity of the participants and the strategies I implemented to mitigate the power differential between myself and the Filipino IETs in this trauma-informed research.

Chapter 5: The Research Participants

The following chapter offers an overview of the Filipino IETs¹⁰ participating in this study. A chart profiling each participant, including their current position, school, and community of residence, is found below to orient the reader (Table 1), as is an overview of their communities (Table 2). The participants selected a pseudonym or were provided one if they did not have a preference. This chapter also includes a brief biography of each participant, an overview of their decision to become a teacher in the Philippines, their rationale for migrating to Canada, and some brief information on their settlement challenges in Manitoba. A map of Manitoba is included (Figure 2) to give the readers a sense of how these communities are situated geographically. The chapter intends to orientate the reader to the participants and serve as a segue to exploring their recertification challenges and life and teaching in Indigenous communities.

¹⁰ For the purpose of this study, an internationally educated teacher (IET) is defined as a teacher who has completed their training in another country and is seeking employment as a licenced teacher in Manitoba (University of Winnipeg, n.d.).

Table 1*The Research Study Participants*

Participants	Current position¹¹	School	Community
Juan	Classroom teacher (Grades 3/4)	Beaver Hill School (public school)	Pelican Grove
Chloe	Guidance counsellor (K–12)	Applewood School (band-operated school)	Deerwood First Nation
Catherine	Classroom teacher (Grades 6–8)	Foresthill Community School (public school)	Honey Lake First Nation
Ripple	Teaching principal (K–8)	Timberwolf School (public school)	Eagle’s Creek
Mayette	Principal (K–12)	Turtle River Education Centre (public school)	Turtle River
Dolly	Resource teacher (K–9)	Arrow Creek School (public school)	Arrow Creek First Nation
Anchor	Teaching principal (K–12)	Foresthill Community School (public school)	Honey Lake First Nation
Suzanna	Lead teacher (Grades 1–3)	Arrow Creek School (public school)	Arrow Creek First Nation
RJ	Resource teacher (K–10)	North Shore Community School (public school)	North Shore

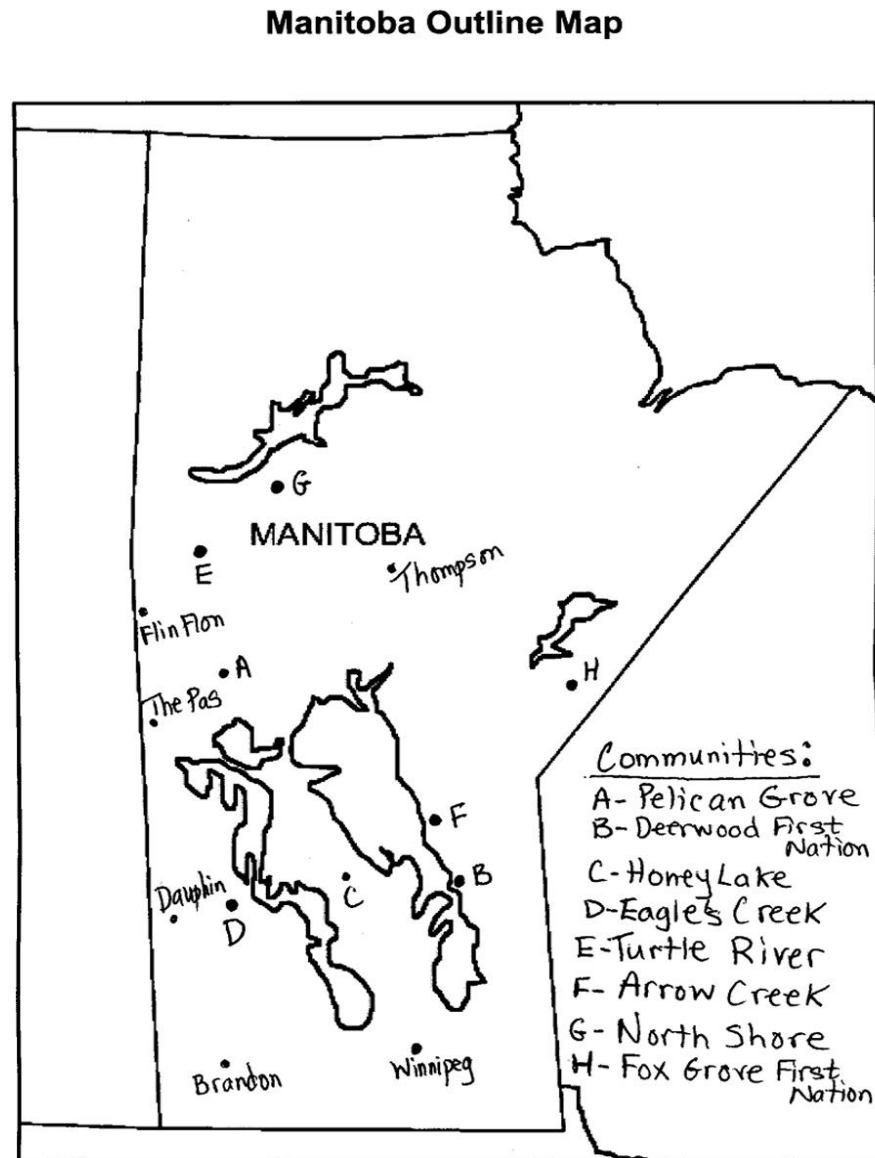
¹¹ **Classroom teachers** teach assigned courses by the principal and use curriculum approved by Manitoba Education. **Guidance counsellors** work with students so they can perform their best academically by providing the necessary preventative, developmental, and intervention counselling (Prairie Rose School Division, 2020). **Lead teachers** assist and guide teachers to develop and implement curriculum (Grace Cathedral, 2016). **Resource teachers** support teachers and students in the implementation of educational programming. **Principals** manage and provide leadership for the entire school and work with the school community to meet the mission and vision of the school division (Prairie Rose School Division, 2020). **Teaching principals** are dual-role educators who take on administrative and classroom teaching responsibilities. Teaching principals are more often found in remote and northern locations in Canada and work in schools with low enrollment (Newton & Wallin, 2013).

Minerva	Lead teacher (Grades 9–12)	Fox Grove School (band-operated school)	Fox Grove First Nation
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Table 2*Overview of Communities*¹²

Name	Type	Location	Distance from Winnipeg
Arrow Creek First Nation	First Nations community	Central Manitoba	200–300 km
Deerwood First Nation	First Nations community	Central Manitoba	200–300 km
Eagle's Creek	Community	Central Manitoba	300–400 km
Fox Grove First Nation	First Nations community	Northeastern Manitoba	1,000–1,200 km
Honey Lake First Nation	First Nations community	Central Manitoba	200–300 km
Pelican Grove	Community	Northwestern Manitoba	700–800 km
North Shore	Community	Northern Manitoba	1,000–1,200 km
Turtle River	Community	Northwestern Manitoba	1,000–1,200 km

¹² All communities are anonymized; information in the overview of communities' section was gathered from a Google search.

Figure 2*Map of Communities*

Juan

Juan has a different story of becoming a teacher than his Filipino IET counterparts. Unlike the other Filipino teachers interviewed for this study, Juan did not work as a teacher in the Philippines, although he has Filipino teaching credentials. He initially graduated from university with a Bachelor of Commercial Science specializing in finance and customer service. Juan commented on his work experience, saying, “Most of my work was in the finance field, so sales and customer service.”

After graduation, Juan spent nine years as a minister in his church, with duties including childcare and youth ministerial work with teenage and pre-teen youth. He elaborated on this experience with youth, explaining, “I began to work with teens and preteens and even in childcare. We have this kind of childcare ministry that watched kids way back from 1999 to 2008, so nine years.”

After his ministerial work, Juan moved on to work in a call centre for IBM. Juan immigrated to Canada in 2012.

After deciding to switch careers, Juan enrolled in an online teacher-training program in the Philippines in 2019. The program he registered for offered online education, so Juan did not have to return to the Philippines in person to attend classes. The program offered a mixture of asynchronous and synchronous classes. Juan found it beneficial to study this way, as he could retain his employment and residence in Winnipeg. After completing the online teacher training, Juan returned to the Philippines to complete the practicum component of the program. Juan planned to return to Winnipeg following the practicum, but COVID-19 struck, so he remained in the Philippines.

During COVID-19, Juan enrolled in a master's program in education at Central Luzon State University. For the thesis component of his degree, he conducted a study on IETs from the Philippines and their employment and socio-cultural challenges in Manitoba. After completing his master's, Juan returned to Manitoba to begin his teaching career. A friend advised Juan to apply for teaching positions outside of Winnipeg given the teaching shortages in many remote and rural locations. Juan was also enticed by the benefits that school divisions and band offices provided teachers and the fact that some schools hired teachers who were not yet certified. Juan explained:

What happened is that I worked in a band office school, not a school division. They have their own rules when it comes to hiring. As long as you are eligible to obtain your certification here in Manitoba, they will try to match what education is based on the classification of assignments.

At the time of the research Juan taught Grades 3 and 4 at the Beaver Hill School in Pelican Grove, Manitoba.

Chloe

Chloe immigrated to Canada in 2015 to join her three sisters living in Manitoba. Chloe's mom eventually joined her and her sisters, and the family settled together in Winnipeg. Chloe's two brothers continue to reside in the Philippines. Teaching was not Chloe's first career choice when she completed high school. Initially, she desired to work as a psychologist or guidance counsellor in psychology. Chloe was inspired to work in the psychology field by one of her professors: "My professor from the Philippines institution was a fantastic, inspiring woman."

While she was initially attracted to a career in psychology, Chloe completed courses in the education field and enjoyed the subject material. She recalled: "I just enjoyed it. I loved what

I was learning and all the activities that entailed learning and being in the program. Then, obviously, after graduating, I had to find a job.”

While she completed teacher certification in the Philippines, Chloe did not pursue teaching jobs after graduation like her fellow teacher graduates. Instead, she took a break from academics and pursued employment in different fields. After time away from the teaching profession, Chloe decided that teaching was her calling and ventured back into the field. She reasoned: “I decided to become a teacher because, hey, this is my calling and passion, so I had to grow with what I had planned.”

Chloe spent approximately eight to nine years teaching in the Philippines, mostly in middle-years positions. Many of her positions were in private schools for Grades 4 to 6. She also spent a few years teaching Grades 8 to 10. Chloe primarily taught subjects in the humanities, such as Asian history, world history, and economics.

Before departing the Philippines, Chloe applied for teacher recertification in Manitoba. The process took approximately eight months. After becoming certified, one of Chloe’s friends who worked as a teacher in the North encouraged her to apply. Chloe added:

A friend invited me [to apply],¹³ so I got an opportunity. I applied for a position and then not even a week after, they offered me a position and I went up North. The entire application [process] did not even take a week.

Chloe was the guidance counsellor at Applewood School in Deerwood First Nation, Manitoba, at the time of the research.

¹³ Square bracketed interpolations have been added throughout the document when necessary for clarification, such as when a pronoun or other reference is unclear.

Catherine

Like many of her fellow Filipino IETs, Catherine received extensive post-secondary education in the Philippines. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism. She then completed a Master's of Education and a Doctorate in education management. After graduation, Catherine received her teaching certification and worked at a large high school. The school where she was employed was the third largest in the Philippines, hosting approximately 13,000 students. As a high school teacher, Catherine taught primarily language arts, and because of her love of teaching, she completed two graduate degrees in education.

Catherine entered the teaching field because it was an important family profession. She stated, "I found my vocation as an educator because teaching runs in our blood."

Catherine and her husband immigrated to Canada in 2017. They decided to leave their home country because of the lack of opportunities and financial stability there. Catherine noted that the Philippines is a relatively impoverished country, and many migrants desire more financial security that a wealthier country like Canada provides:

Most of the people who are in third-world countries do not want to stay there, not just to access the greener pastures, but to get a privilege that is more beneficial, not just for themselves, but for the whole family. Aside from having my dreams when I was younger to be in Canada or to be in the United States, specifically in Canada, my calling was really to come here.

Despite Canada being her desired destination, settling in a new country was a humbling experience for Catherine. She was not certified as a teacher in Manitoba and had to endure the recertification process. Catherine did not possess a Bachelor of Education degree from the Philippines, although she was certified to teach in her home country. Upon landing, Catherine

needed to upgrade her degree from the Philippines, which required taking 15 additional online credits. Once Catherine updated her degree, she applied for teacher recertification in Manitoba and was granted a permanent teaching certificate after a few years.

Before officially certifying as a teacher, Catherine was encouraged to apply up North by a Filipino friend who was also working in Northern Manitoba. She appreciated her friend's advice, saying:

She was the one who opened the door for me. She was the one who told me that we have our school. It's a band-operated school. It's a reserve. She told me, "Come on, Catherine. You don't need to have your license to be hired. As long as you get interviewed and pass the interview, your certificate can follow."

At the time of the research Catherine taught Grades 6 to 8 at the Foresthill Community School in Honey Lake First Nation, Manitoba.

Ripple

A career in teaching was not Ripple's goal when she began her post-secondary education in the Philippines. Initially, she desired to become a physician, which resulted in her completing a Bachelor of Science degree in biology. However, the path to becoming a medical doctor in the Philippines was lengthy and costly in terms of tuition. Ripple decided to use her passion for the sciences to become a science teacher instead. She explained:

When I finished my degree [Bachelor of Science], it was just like, oh my goodness. Do we have money? In the Philippines, we do not have loans like here. So, okay, because there is a program in the Philippines where you can take 15 credits and take the [teaching] licensure exam once you have finished any bachelor's degree. So, that is the route I took, and I became a science teacher.

Ripple spent approximately 14 years teaching in the Philippines. She taught middle-years and senior-years students, primarily focusing on biology, chemistry, and physics. She also worked as a science coordinator after spending time as a classroom teacher. Ripple and her family decided to move to Canada to support family members living in the Philippines, such as her sister, who'd experienced a marital separation. She recalled: "So why not migrate so I can help my sister? I was like, okay, how does that look? My sister was on the verge of separation then, so I came [to Canada]."

Due to the unstable economy, many Filipinos like Ripple have left the Philippines in search of greater economic prosperity in nations such as Canada. Ripple gained entry to Manitoba through the province's nominee program and arrived in 1998 with her husband and two children. Ripple worked as a substitute teacher and held a few term teaching positions in various school divisions in Winnipeg. However, Ripple became tired of the instability of substitute work and term positions and desired more stable employment. Ripple browsed through the job postings on the Education Canada Network site and found multiple job offerings for work in Northern Manitoba. She applied and was offered a full-time position in a northern community approximately 800 kilometres from Winnipeg. Ripple was the teaching principal at Timberwolf School in Eagle's Lake, Manitoba, at the time of the study.

Mayette

Mayette arrived in Canada in 2007 with her family. She decided to leave the Philippines because of the country's poor economy and lack of government support. She justified her decision to migrate by saying,

In the Philippines, we are unlucky. We are unfortunate because we don't have benefits, a child tax, or social services. Families in the Philippines are poor. We don't get any money from the government, so it's more like survival of the fittest.

Before she migrated to Canada, Mayette had extensive experience in education and academia in the Philippines. In her home country, she worked as a university professor for 17 years and held the position of chairperson of the social sciences department. Before her professorship, she worked in a private school as a high school teacher. She also held several administrative roles besides working in education, including as the director of an agricultural museum. Once in Canada, Mayette enrolled at the University of Winnipeg to complete her recertification. Upon completion, she applied for various teaching positions but was not hired. Mayette had heard positive accounts about teaching work in Northern Manitoba, so she applied for teaching jobs in the Meadowbrook School Division and was hired.

At the time of the research Mayette was the principal of the Turtle River Education Centre in Turtle River, Manitoba. Before assuming the principal role, Mayette was a classroom teacher in the school. Turtle River is the only school Mayette has worked at in Northern Manitoba. Unlike some of her fellow Filipino IETs who have worked in various schools in the North, Mayette has chosen to remain in Turtle River. She deeply loves the community and is dedicated to the school and its students. She elaborated:

I've been here in Turtle River since 2008. I started as a high school teacher, but now I'm the principal. This is going to be my 15th year in Turtle River. I really love working here. I really love the community and the students.

Mayette indicated that she is dedicated to the teaching profession and committed to her community. She hopes to retire at the same school where she began her teaching career in the North over 15 years ago.

Dolly

Upon high school graduation in the Philippines, Dolly enrolled in a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry. However, due to her family's economic struggles, she abandoned that plan and registered for a secretarial diploma program, which was less expensive in tuition and shorter in duration. She noted:

My dad wanted me to take a Bachelor of Science in chemistry, and university was quite expensive. At that time, we were living hand to mouth, so to help and support my parents, because there were five of us in the family, I told myself, okay, I'll just take a two-year course, which is a secretarial or clerical job.

Dolly completed a two-year secretarial program in a local college close to her home but had underlying ambitions to pursue a teaching career. Dolly eventually completed a degree in education while financially supporting her family, which consisted of two brothers enrolled in post-secondary studies. Dolly began her teaching career in the Philippines in 1990. She began teaching at a private Catholic school and was accepted into graduate school to complete a master's degree in education. Dolly stated that it was challenging to work Monday to Friday and take graduate courses to complete her master's degree on weekends. Dolly remained resilient, however, and completed her master's degree while continuing to work full-time.

Dolly and her husband immigrated to Canada to provide their children and themselves with better economic opportunities. Dolly admitted that her family did not decide to leave the

Philippines lightly: “My husband was a civil engineer. He earned a lot. I was promoted to a slightly higher position as a teacher, Level 3.”

Despite their successful careers, Dolly and her husband desired the increased economic stability that a country like Canada could provide. She rationalized:

That time, I struggled because I had a desktop computer. Because of my cyber issues, I got a computer virus, then it shut down, and my whole month’s salary just went to the repairs of that computer. So, my one-month salary went there, and then I had to struggle to support my family at that time.

Departing the Philippines was challenging for Dolly, as she describes herself as a loyal Filipino committed to her country of origin. She finally committed to leaving the Philippines for economic opportunities abroad upon hearing of the plight of her mentor teachers who struggled financially upon retirement:

I noticed most of my co-teachers, who are like mentors to me, started retiring.

Afterwards, I found out they retired, and they were diagnosed with some diseases. All their pension, all of their money, whatever they saved went to their medication, and then they were broke.

Dolly obtained an educational assistant position at a private Catholic school in Winnipeg before finding employment with the Meadowbrook School Division in Northern Manitoba. Dolly was encouraged to apply up North by a Filipino colleague who was teaching in Northern Manitoba. She recalled:

I saw a classmate, an internationally educated teacher. She was on a flight with me and was telling me that she was teaching up North. I said, “Tell me something—is it scary?” She said, “No, I’m in a good community.”

At the time of the study Dolly was the resource teacher at the Arrow Creek School in Arrow Creek First Nation, Manitoba.

Anchor

Like many of her fellow Filipino IETs, Anchor had extensive teaching experience in the Philippines before deciding to immigrate to Canada. When she first arrived in Canada, Anchor's children were 6 and 15 years old. Her decision to come to Canada was based on her desire to provide her children with the best opportunities to live in a country with a strong economy and education system. Anchor taught for 19 years and completed a master's degree in education in the Philippines.

When Anchor officially recertified as a teacher, she applied for teaching jobs in Winnipeg without success. She pointed out:

When I finished my IET program and my post-bac, I started applying for teaching jobs in the city. If I recall, maybe I sent applications online, and on paper, like around 50 [applications]. I got an answer from a Catholic school, but still I did not get a job. I went to different interviews, but I wasn't lucky. Then I started subbing.

A fellow Filipino IET then advised Anchor to apply for a teaching job in Northern Manitoba, as there was a teacher shortage in the region, and teaching jobs were more abundant than in more urban areas of the province. Anchor heeded her friend's advice and interviewed with the Meadowbrook School Division. At the time of the study Anchor was the teaching principal at the Foresthill Community School in Honey Lake First Nation, Manitoba.

Suzanna

Suzanna did not initially train to be a teacher like many of her fellow Filipino IETs. Her background was in accounting, and she worked as an auditor for six years before deciding to enter the field of education in the Philippines. Suzanna explained:

My cousin encouraged me to join a company that would train me as a teacher and employ me at a school. So, I grabbed the opportunity, and of course, I passed the panel teaching and everything, and then they employed me. From there, my teaching career started.

After graduating from teacher training in the Philippines, Suzanna worked as a high school teacher. She taught mathematics, computer science, and software application courses. During this time, Suzanna developed a passion for inclusive education after working with several students with learning disabilities. She enjoyed her work in education so much that she decided to pursue a master's degree in inclusive education. She recalled:

I took my education degree and then my master's degree in special education, which was the start of my education career. I know I had more money in accountancy, but the [education] vocation was calling me to be a teacher.

Suzanna immigrated to the US before moving to Canada for permanent residency. In the Philippines, she attended an interview with the Los Angeles Unified School District, a school board that was on an educational recruitment trip in the Philippines to recruit Filipino teachers. The interview was successful, and Suzanna was offered full-time employment and a work visa in the US.

After spending a few years in California, Suzanna moved to Manitoba, where her parents-in-law resided. Initially, Suzanna was skeptical of departing California, but her parents-in-law persuaded her to move to Manitoba. Suzanna explained that it was difficult to obtain

permanent residency in the US and that her visa was in jeopardy of being revoked because of the extensive backlog of immigration cases in California:

In the first place, I did not want to immigrate [to Canada] because I wanted America.

When I was about to convert my visa from working to immigrant, they [immigration officials] said, “We can convert it, but after you have renewed your working visa for three consecutive years, meaning every three years you need to renew it, three times only.

Beyond that, if your application is not yet done, you must return to the Philippines.” In short, I could not make it as an immigrant there [United States] because of my visa.

Suzanna’s parents-in-law told her that obtaining permanent residency would be much simpler in Manitoba. Suzanna heeded the advice and immigrated to Canada. She underwent additional training to recertify as a teacher in Manitoba before obtaining employment in Northern Manitoba. When Suzanna interviewed for the teaching position, she initially thought she was interviewing for a position in Winnipeg, not in Northern Manitoba. She disclosed:

When I was interviewed, I thought that the interviewer was from one of the school divisions in Winnipeg. I didn’t realize that it was for a fly-in community in the North. It was a band school. It’s not under Meadowbrook School Division. It’s from Rolling Hills School System.

Suzanna was employed as the ELA literacy lead teacher at Arrow Creek School in Arrow Creek First Nation, Manitoba, at the time of the research.

RJ

RJ knew from a young age that he wanted to be a teacher. Both of his parents were educators, so he desired to follow in his familial footsteps:

My parents were a big influence in choosing a career path in teaching because both of my parents were teachers. And at an early age, they introduced me to the way of doing lesson plans, so at an early age, I started writing my own lesson plans because I admired them a lot because I just thought of teachers. I thought to myself, I just want to become a teacher someday. That's the reason why I became a teacher.

RJ was so enthralled with teaching that he used to sit in his parents' classrooms and watch them teach. RJ's mother taught mathematics and science, and his father taught physical education. He recalled imitating his parents and replicating their lessons:

I was in Grade 4. I still remember because I always copied my dad and my mom. When I was young, they used to take me into their classroom, and I would sit at the back of their classroom and watch them teach. When I went home, I usually did what they were doing at home, like setting up my own blackboard and having my brother as my student.

RJ decided to leave the Philippines to pursue teaching opportunities and the economic stability offered by a country like Canada. It was his cousin who convinced RJ to immigrate to Canada. He explained:

I have a cousin who was based in Winnipeg, and she was the one who told me, "Hey, RJ, we need teachers here in Canada. Would you be able to take a look at all these papers? And if you're interested, let me know." So I looked at all the papers, and then I thought to myself, okay, why don't I just give it a try.

In 2012, RJ began gathering all the necessary documentation for immigration and teacher recertification in Manitoba. The immigration process was not complicated for RJ, as he arrived in Canada one year after submitting his documents and was granted permanent residency. After two years of juggling non-teaching employment, RJ underwent the recertification process at the

University of Winnipeg. Once certified, RJ was encouraged by a former classmate to apply for teaching positions in Northern Manitoba. He obtained teaching employment and has worked in various Indigenous communities for several years. RJ was the resource teacher at North Shore Community School in North Shore, Manitoba, at the time of the study.

Minerva

Minerva developed a passion for teaching at a young age. She enjoyed teaching her younger siblings and developed her skills by delivering lessons to them after school. She fondly recalled:

I used to play like I was the teacher with my siblings. So, from a very young age, every time I went to school, I always made sure I learned something so that when I got home in the evening, I had something to teach them.

Minerva entered teaching college after graduating from high school. Upon completing her degree in education, she taught in an elementary school for five years and spent another 10 years teaching high school-aged children. After a 15-year teaching career, Minerva and her family immigrated to Canada to take advantage of the country's economic opportunities that were largely unavailable in the Philippines. She explained:

Our main reason is for a greener pasture. I already had a stable job there [in the Philippines], but then my sister-in-law, who was here [in Canada], convinced us, saying, "I know you guys are okay there, but it is for your children." Okay, that is why we decided to try.

Minerva and her family arrived in Canada in 2015. The transition was difficult, especially adjusting to a northern climate. She remembered: "It was a hard transition, considering the

weather. Before we boarded the plane, it was 30 degrees, and when we came out of the plane, it was minus-30 degrees.”

After arriving in Manitoba, Minerva waited to enter the teaching profession. She explored employment opportunities in other fields, given the challenging nature of the recertification process. Nevertheless, a family member persuaded Minerva to recertify as a teacher. Minerva elaborated:

I submitted all the requirements, and I forwarded everything to the Philippines. They are the ones who submitted my other documents straight to Russell, to the certification division. I got my licence right away without doing any courses. It was smooth, I should say.

After receiving her certification, Minerva applied for many teaching jobs, including positions in Northern Manitoba. She told herself that she would accept the first job that was offered to her:

When I had my certification, I already applied to different northern band schools and I told myself whoever the first one to call me is, I will go there, no matter where it is. So, [name withheld] was the first one who reached out to me, so I went for an interview, a nerve-racking interview. And I had no idea about the community, about First Nations. I was totally blank about it. I had no idea at all.

At the time of the study Minerva was the lead teacher at Fox Grove School in Fox Grove First Nation, Manitoba.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered an introductory overview of the participants selected for this research study. The overview reveals various reasons for the participants wanting to become

educators, from a passion for teaching to desiring a higher-paying career. Some participants, such as Ripple and Chloe, decided to explore other careers in the Philippines before settling on a career in education. Many participants migrated to Canada to access economic opportunities largely unavailable in the Philippines. Once in Canada, some participants, including Mayette and Catherine, decided to recertify right away. Others like Minerva and Juan explored non-teaching careers before deciding to recertify as educators. As teacher certification is costly and time-consuming, it is understandable that some participants chose to explore other careers. Nevertheless, each participant spoke of a deep passion for teaching, which resulted in all participants settling on teaching careers in Manitoba and accepting teaching positions in the North. Some participants applied for teaching positions in the North of their own volition, and others were encouraged by friends and former colleagues to try teaching in Northern Manitoba. The subsequent chapter will explore the participants' adjustment process in Manitoba, including their experiences with survival employment, teacher recertification, and applying for jobs in education.

Chapter 6: Non-Teaching-Related Employment, Recertification, and Applying for Teaching Positions

This chapter explores the Filipino IETs' experiences with non-teaching-related employment, recertification, and applying for teaching positions. Despite elevated levels of education and experiences, immigrant teachers often take on survival-type employment before recertifying as teachers. It is not uncommon for IETs to work minimum-wage jobs in daycares and fast-food establishments before the lengthy recertification process is complete (Abramova, 2013; Stephenson, 2020). Some IETs also accept positions as educational assistants (EAs) before obtaining permanent teaching positions. I also explore the participants' experiences with recertification in this chapter. Scholars have criticized teacher recertification, as it tends to push the experiences and credentials of IETs to the periphery (see Marom, 2017, 2019; Schmidt, 2010). In response to criticism and to streamline the certification process for IETs, Manitoba's Professional Certification Unit amended its teacher recertification requirements in 2024 to align with those of other provinces (Macintosh, 2024). Lastly, the chapter overviews the participants' accounts of applying for teaching employment once certified, including their experiences of applying in Winnipeg versus in northern communities. In this chapter I share some of the initial experiences of the IETs before they moved to teach in some of Manitoba's northern Indigenous communities.

Non-Teaching-Related Employment

Several Filipino IETs interviewed for this study could not immediately recertify as teachers upon their arrival in Manitoba and accessed non-teaching-related employment to meet the financial requirements of living in a new country. While newcomers are often overqualified, survival-type employment is vital to cover living costs in a Western country like Canada. Upon

arriving in Manitoba in 2012, Juan, who had worked in a call centre in the Philippines, continued in that line of work. He also found employment in a supermarket and a credit union. Despite finding employment quickly, Juan did not enjoy his work and began to feel depressed. He recalled:

Before stepping into teaching, I worked in a credit union for six and a half years, still in the call centre department. There was a call that made me so depressed. I got so belittled because of that [call]. I worked for many years in the call centre, but I could not see myself [living] that rough for a long term.

Before Catherine attempted to recertify as a teacher in Manitoba, like Juan, she sought employment in other sectors. She explained:

Even though I was a doctor [PhD in education] in the Philippines, I did not get the chance to land the profession of being an educator. So, I started as a manager at Tim Hortons, and then after that, I worked in customer service at Home Depot and as a teller at RBC bank.

Although she was a trained educator in the Philippines, with a doctorate like Catherine, Ripple could also not work as a teacher when she first arrived in Manitoba and was forced to contemplate a different career. She remembered: “When I came here, I asked, who will I become? At first, I became a coffee maker at Tim Hortons, working as a customer assistant. So, that was my first job.”

Like his fellow IETs, RJ took up several jobs in non-teaching-related fields before engaging with teacher recertification. He recounted:

I was going to do my certification as soon as I arrived in Canada, but when I got here, I waited because I thought it was a tedious process, so I stopped for two years. I delayed

that because I was so busy doing my two jobs. When I first arrived in Canada, I worked as a daycare assistant and a member of the McDonald's crew, so I was juggling two jobs simultaneously.

Newcomers like RJ, Catherine, and Ripple typically take on survival-type employment in host countries before recertifying for their desired careers. The teacher recertification process is lengthy, so IETs usually accept employment outside their expertise and qualifications, such as in fast-food establishments and the service industry (Sethi, 2015). Newcomers are typically afforded less hierarchical status and privilege in host societies and must take on survival-type employment despite the extensive education and experiences they might possess (Muirhead et al., 2020). This phenomenon often delays highly educated immigrants from timely recertification, as they are categorized as less desirable in the hiring process than domestic teacher candidates (Levon, 2015).

Migrant teachers in Canada often find it difficult to obtain teaching-related employment upon certification due to a hiring bias and often leave the profession earlier than teachers from non-racialized backgrounds (Heinz et al., 2023). CRT can help us understand the way Canadian employers, such as school divisions, often demand domestic experience, which pushes the experiences and skills of immigrant professionals, like IETs, to the periphery in favour of native-born Canadians (Thomas, 2021). Embedded and persistent discrimination often results in newcomers being perceived as having skill deficits. To combat this erroneous assumption, newcomers undertake additional skill development and redundant education to compensate for the perceived deficit (Thomas, 2021). While engaged in skill development, IETs such as RJ, Catherine, and Ripple accepted survival-type employment to meet the financial constraints of life

in new host societies (Muirhead et al., 2020; Sethi, 2015). This cycle often relegates IETs to being overqualified and underemployed in the Canadian labour force.

Overqualification

One of the challenges that newcomer professionals face in host societies is the reality that they are overqualified for certain professions. Catherine and Ripple, both holders of doctorates in education, had credentials that very few teachers possess when applying for teaching positions. Immigrant professionals are three times more likely to be overqualified for positions they are employed in than non-immigrant professionals (Cornelissen & Turcotte, 2020). Some research shows that overqualified workers have lower life satisfaction than workers who are employed in positions for which they are adequately qualified (Frank & Hou, 2017). This possibly explains Juan feeling depressed about his call centre job; he could not see himself maintaining that position for a long duration, as it negatively affected his mental health. Ripple was also embarrassed about her position at Tim Hortons. She elaborated:

It is a survival job. It is just survival in a way that they [co-workers at Tim Hortons] didn't even know who I am. I did not even tell them I was a teacher, so they didn't know what I was doing when I was accepted because I was so ashamed of doing the job.

Overqualification is prevalent among highly educated immigrants like Ripple. To combat this sense of being overqualified, newcomers sometimes remove qualifications from their curriculum vitae and resumes to appear suitably qualified (Cho, 2013; Cornelissen & Turcotte, 2020). Cho (2013) points out that school hiring committees often favour domestically earned degrees, as they believe candidates who possess these degrees can deliver the prescribed curriculum and have demonstrated success in a Canadian learning environment versus IETs with

foreign-acquired credentials. As a result, some immigrant professionals believe they need to remove foreign-acquired credentials to improve their status within the new host society.

Ripple was one of those overqualified immigrant professionals who removed qualifications from her resume to gain survival-type employment. She reported on the issue in the following manner:

Why would I say that I am a teacher? I am a Doctor in Education in the Philippines, and here I am. No; I just said the least qualification. And I know that this was just temporary. It is just survival.

Like her fellow IETs, Dolly accepted several survival-type jobs before applying for teacher recertification. She took up employment at McDonalds and Tim Hortons. Dolly and her husband also passed out flyers in their neighbourhood to make ends meet while pursuing teacher certification. She reflected:

While I was studying, we noticed that our money, the money that we had brought, was already disappearing. We had brought millions of pesos. My husband almost got sick because he said he earned that money badly. He said, "What is happening? Our money's gone." I said, "Allow me to do McDonald's," so I started working there. I was doing McDonald's, and then I told him, "Let's support the kids," so we also handed out flyers in our area.

While immigrants are often overqualified for minimum-wage employment, local economies depend on immigrant workers like Dolly and her husband to fulfill job openings. Integration is sometimes thought of as a two-way process in which host societies and newcomers adapt to one another (Lam, 2021a). Integration is rarely seamless, however, and typically involves newcomers accepting survival employment to support themselves financially.

Newcomers must often make significant adjustments to successfully integrate into host societies, as they are afforded less privilege than domestic employees (Lam, 2021a; Muirhead et al., 2020).

While economies heavily depend on immigrant workers, integration rarely functions as a two-way process in practice, as immigrant professionals face a range of challenges from an intersectional perspective. Thomas (2021) points out that newcomer professionals often face challenges related to unrecognized credentials, a lack of domestic experience, and devalued international skills. Canadian employers demonstrate a need for Canadian norms by segmenting highly skilled newcomers into precarious employment (Thomas, 2021). By analyzing integration through an intersectional lens, it becomes clear to us that immigrants experience unequal treatment based on the multiple statuses they assume (Savas et al., 2022). Ripple, for example, faced the challenges of recertifying in her chosen profession as an older female newcomer. Instead of analyzing how a newcomer like Ripple is devalued in the Canadian labour force solely based on her newcomer status, it is vital for us to examine the various intersectional factors that work against her, including gender disparity, ageism, and linguistic discrimination.

Lam (2021b) found that immigrants like Ripple are often lured to urban centres for their job skills but are told they must possess strong communication skills to fill job vacancies. English-language proficiency and Western-accented speech are unrealistic demands that employers sometimes require of skilled immigrant workers, despite the group's ability to secure employment (Lam, 2021b). Intersectionality emphasizes how interrelated oppressive factors, such as linguistic discrimination, can be mutually constitutive when analyzed simultaneously (Savas et al., 2021). To best understand Ripple's experience and that of fellow newcomers like her, it is imperative that we assess the impact of the various axes of oppression through an intersectional lens.

IETs from Western backgrounds who speak English as a native language receive preferential treatment in education systems worldwide. In Australia, for example, IETs with non-native accents, linguistic varieties, and foreign credentials are often marginalized compared to white, native English-speaking teachers (Nigar, 2011). Nigar (2011) determined that Australia's teacher certification bodies disproportionately target IETs who speak English as a non-native language by requiring them to complete arbitrary linguistic tests. These certification bodies often exempt teachers from Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Nigar, 2011). Teachers from outside these countries who speak English as a non-native language but were educated in English are often not exempt from these linguistic tests (Nigar, 2011). This practice suggests that white IETs who speak English as a native language are the teachers of choice in countries that share similar cultural heritages. This mechanism of marginalization often leads to the overqualification of immigrant teachers.

The Importance of Minimum-Wage Work

While many participants expressed dismay at working in survival-type employment before engaging with teacher certification, a few explained the importance of this type of work. Ripple noted:

Yes, it [my job at Tim Hortons] helped me in that I was able to immerse myself, talk to people, and feel the city. That's how it helped me. I could still learn the language [English] and hear people and other things.

Dolly also noted the importance of accepting minimum-wage employment to demonstrate the value of hard work to her children. She said:

We divided the money we got from the flyers among our three kids, which helped us. We taught them how to earn money. And then, when they were at the right age—15 years old—I introduced them to work at McDonald's. So that's how it works.

Immigrants like Dolly and her husband often must endure challenges in host societies, including finding employment, adjusting to workplace regulations, and learning a new language (Boyd, 2008; Lam, 2021a). Despite these challenges, first-generation Filipino parents tirelessly support their children and the entire family (Dalayoan & Magsino, 2010). These efforts were evident among participants like Ripple and Catherine, who took up minimum-wage employment in fast-food establishments, and Dolly and her husband, who delivered flyers to make extra income to support their children. Newcomers must often take up such jobs to counter the systemic barriers that host societies put in place to restrict monetary opportunities for immigrants (Levon, 2015; Muirhead et al., 2020). The sacrifices newcomer Filipinos make in host societies are often necessary to improve the outlook of their children.

Recertification

Recertifying to become a teacher in Manitoba is frequently a timely and costly process, but it is necessary for those IETs who wish to teach in the province's school system. Scholars who have researched teacher recertification have criticized the systemic barriers that make it difficult for immigrant teachers to re-qualify and join the province's teaching ranks (see Marom, 2017; Marom & Ilieva, 2016; Othman, 2022; Tran, 2014). Marom (2017) is critical of the challenging credential recognition process and how regulatory boards across the country often request original, not photocopied, documentation, such as teaching licenses and post-secondary transcripts. These documents can be difficult to obtain for IETs who graduated several decades ago from non-Western universities (Marom, 2017; Tran, 2014). Regulatory bodies also require

IETs to possess a select number of recertification prerequisites, including courses in mathematics, science, history, Indigenous education, and second language education (Othman, 2022; Stephenson, 2020). IETs who do not possess such curricular knowledge must undergo a lengthier recertification process.

While knowledge of core subject material is vital for IETs, teacher recertification boards tend to devalue the professional capital IETs possess. Research by Marom and Ilieva (2016) shows that recertification boards often view the credentials of immigrant teachers from a deficit perspective. IETs are sometimes viewed as educators needing more essential teaching skills versus contextual knowledge (Marom & Ilieva, 2016). Guo (2009) refers to this phenomenon as a “deficit model of difference” (p. 46). In other words, it is a failure by Western accreditation systems to recognize foreign credentials and work experiences because they do not align with Western-acquired accreditations.

Marom (2017) notes that the language and cultural differences of IETs are sometimes perceived as a knowledge deficiency rather than being accepted as intercultural expertise. Through a CRT lens, Thomas (2021) posits that, despite possessing elevated levels of education and skills, newcomers often face the perceived notion that they lack the necessary skills and education to transition successfully into the workforce. This naïve assumption pushes educated professionals, such as IETs, into minimum-wage employment and lengthy, time-consuming recertification processes to prove their worth in the labour force (Muirhead et al., 2020; Sethi, 2015). Filipino IETs may be lacking in knowledge of Canadian history and Indigenous perspectives, for example, but possess knowledge about Filipino and Asian history—knowledge that is typically not valued by recertification boards in Canada. This one-sided perspective marginalizes the professional capital of IETs and justifies criticism of teacher recertification.

CRT can help explain how some histories are normalized while others are often marginalized. Miles (2019) writes about how unequal power structures tend to uplift the histories of dominant (i.e., White) groups while trivializing and obscuring the histories of racialized and Indigenous people. These silenced histories, written from positions of power, are found in archives, in academic histories, and in how societies recall and retell certain events (Miles, 2019). Residential school denialism exemplifies how colonizers tend to refute the history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and minimize the colonial violence that occurred (Carleton, 2021). Throughout history, educational institutions have played a dominant role in establishing dominant narratives and relegating others to the periphery (Miles, 2019). By prioritizing coursework in Canadian rather than Asian history, recertification boards are perpetuating this domineering practice. Miles (2019) encourages all teachers to resist universal histories and create space for new stories and ways of knowing that counter the universal accounts. As a methodological tool within CRT, counter-storytelling, as previously described, can contest and de-neutralize universal histories (Gómez et al., 2025; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). IETs who recertify play a pivotal role in sharing these counter-narratives.

Deciding to Recertify

While the recertification process is challenging, many IETs engage with recertification because they have a passion for teaching and wish to re-enter a profession they chose for themselves when pursuing post-secondary studies in the Philippines. Research by Kailasanathan (2013) indicates that IETs re-enter the teaching profession because they have acquired extensive education and credentials from their home countries and do not wish to abandon their teaching roles. Providing a stable future for their families is another reason why IETs re-enter the teaching force (Kailasanathan, 2013). IETs have invested considerable time as educators and are typically

devoted to the profession (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007), so re-entering the teaching force is a logical pathway for IETs who migrate to Manitoba.

While devotion and passion for the job push IETs to re-enter the teaching profession, the advantages of teaching in Manitoba are a secondary motivator. The perks of teaching in the province include access to benefit plans, medical coverage, and job security (Abramova, 2013). Such privileges help IETs elevate their hierarchical status within the host society (Muirhead et al., 2020). Juan was one of the participants who wanted to take advantage of the perks that a teaching job in Manitoba affords. He was frustrated with his position at the call centre, and his friend encouraged him to recertify as a teacher in Manitoba given that he had his teaching credentials from the Philippines. Juan was reluctant, however, about changing jobs and returning to university to recertify. He rationalized:

I wanted to avoid learning. I did not want to go to education again. I came to the point where I had this issue with my depression. I had a health/personal leave and was seeking an alternative job. I was looking for work either in the teaching field or massage [therapy] because I am good with those [positions], like high-paying jobs. It's all right. When I saw the teacher's salary, it was massive based on their class. At that point, I tried going into education.

Juan's decision to re-enter the teaching profession for a career change and to increase his income is atypical of why IETs decide to recertify in host countries. While teaching often provides a stable financial future, the devotion IETs have for the profession and the considerable time and energy that is invested in schooling to certify are larger push factors than monetary aspirations (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007; Kailasanathan, 2013). Recent modifications to the teacher certification process for IETs in Manitoba in 2024 have made the process less complex for

immigrant teachers, especially the elimination of the major/minor teachables requirement (Government of Manitoba, 2024b). Prospective teachers like Juan who arrive in Manitoba and wish to recertify still must have their credentials evaluated by the province's certification unit. The recertification process for IETs involves several steps, including the submission of required documents (e.g., criminal and abuse record checks, proof of residency or immigration status, teaching certificates, post-secondary transcripts, and verification of teaching experience), an application submission, and the payment of an application fee (\$200.00 as of 2026). Upon review of one's application and documentation, the certification unit deems an IET eligible for a permanent or provisional certificate. The unit can also grant a statement of eligibility or deem an IET ineligible for a teaching certificate (Government of Manitoba, n.d.-b).

Needing to Recertify

Some participants were not qualified to enter the teaching profession upon arrival in Manitoba and needed recertification. The participants who mostly needed to recertify were those who, despite extensive credentials and experiences, had obtained a Grade 10 high school diploma from the Philippines, not a Grade 12 diploma. Manitoba's certification board requires that applicants possess a Grade 12 high school diploma at a minimum to recertify and five years of teacher training. The Philippines amended its high school graduation protocols in 2012 to require 12 years of schooling for a high school diploma. The country also graduates teachers with four years of university study, one fewer year than post-secondary institutions in Canada (Government of Alberta, n.d.). While more educated teachers add value to the Manitoba school system, the protocols place Filipino IETs at a disadvantage if they graduated from high school before 2012, as they must undergo upgrading in Manitoba to recertify.

Mayette was one of the participants who were not qualified to recertify as teachers in Manitoba and required upgrading. Like many of her fellow IETs, Mayette had extensive education from the Philippines. She holds a master's degree in social sciences, a PhD in world development, and 22 years of teaching experience. Despite this extensive education, Mayette needed to meet the province's stringent qualifications to resume her teaching career upon entry to Canada. This frustrating experience is typical for IETs: possessing admirable qualifications yet being denied a teaching license in Manitoba (Marom, 2019; Schmidt, 2010). Recertification is not solely a challenge for teachers; immigrant professionals in other fields, such as medicine, often face difficulties in credentialing in Canada. This challenge results in significant economic losses for immigrants, as their credentials typically yield little to no return in the Canadian job market (Li, 2008). Immigrants from African, Asian, and Caribbean countries often have more difficulty re-credentialing than immigrants from European countries, suggesting that racial features factor into the credentialing process (Li, 2008). Racialized immigrants face a multitude of intersecting obstacles that make it doubly challenging for them to recertify in their chosen careers in Canada.

The power relations of ethnicity, ability, and age intersected to work against Mayette in her bid to recertify as a teacher (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Cooper, 2016). She was a racialized IET within the largely homogenous Manitoba teaching force (Martin, 2016). She held a high school diploma from the Philippines, which was considered outdated, and the certification unit deemed her graduate degrees insufficient to compensate for her high school qualifications. She was also older than most of her teaching counterparts. Through an intersectional lens, all these intersecting factors contributed to Mayette's challenging path to recertification.

Mayette was skeptical about recertifying as a teacher but concluded in retrospect that it was a beneficial experience for her career. She explained: “When I applied for my certification here, they [Manitoba certification unit officials] still wanted me to return to school. At first, I thought, ‘Why would I do that?’ But then I realized it was helpful.”

Like Mayette, Catherine was not qualified to resume her teaching career in Manitoba and required upgrading. Unlike some of her fellow IETs, Catherine did not obtain a Bachelor of Education degree in the Philippines. Instead, she graduated with a Bachelor of Science but possessed the prerequisites to be granted a teaching license. However, Catherine found it challenging to resume a teaching career in Manitoba without a Bachelor of Education degree. She recounted:

When I came here, I was not a graduate yet. I didn’t have a Bachelor of Education. What I had was a Bachelor of Science in journalism. I took education credits and got certified back in the Philippines. If you have a degree, not necessarily a Bachelor of Education, and you meet all of these requirements, then if you pass the exam, you are good to go.

Catherine had various options because she was not certified to teach in Manitoba. She could have taken additional coursework in the Philippines to obtain a Bachelor of Education degree or upgraded her degree in Manitoba. The option to certify locally was expensive and time-consuming. Stephenson (2020) notes that it can take an IET like Catherine several years to complete the recertification process to become eligible for a provisional or permanent teaching license in Manitoba. As a result, some IETs, especially those who are more advanced in age, abandon their goal of becoming teachers (Stephenson, 2020). This situation is an unfortunate reality for some IETs, so it is imperative to identify solutions that ease recertification hurdles and reduce the number of IETs who abandon their goal of becoming teachers. Education officials in

Manitoba can mitigate teaching shortages by increasing the number of immigrant teachers in the provincial teaching force.

Catherine did not want to abandon her goal of becoming a teacher and decided to take upgrading in the Philippines. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the coursework she needed was offered virtually. This permitted Catherine to remain in Manitoba while completing her upgrading. She pointed out:

One option was to connect with the university I studied in back in the Philippines. I only had one semester, about 15 credits, to finish. It took about one semester to finish the Bachelor of Science in education. There, I was permitted because I was a former student, so even though I was here in Canada, as long as I attended those necessary times and [completed] those requirements, I could be a student. So I took advantage of that.

While COVID-19 caused many disturbances in the school system, the ability to enroll in courses virtually was an unintended advantage. IETs like Catherine and Juan took advantage of this opportunity and completed degree requirements online to recertify as teachers. This option would likely not have been available for IETs had the pandemic not occurred.

Recertifying at an Older Age

Like Catherine and Juan, Anchor required upgrading before obtaining permanent teacher certification. She possessed a Bachelor of Education and a master's degree from the Philippines but did not have the prerequisite courses or a Grade 12 high school diploma. The certification unit granted Anchor a provisional teaching license and required her to complete 30 credit hours of upgrading. Despite her two degrees in education, including one degree at the graduate level, an IET like Anchor was still tasked with completing a substantial number of credits for upgrading. Anchor's experience paralleled Mayette's; she was an IET attempting to recertify at

an older age, with qualifications that the certification unit dismissed (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Cooper, 2016). All these factors ensured that Anchor's path to recertification was challenging. She explained:

When I asked how they [certification unit officials] evaluated my transcript or records from the Philippines, they said, "We are missing two years of education." In the Philippines, once you finish Grade 6, you go to high school for four years, ten [years] in total. After finishing high school, we go to university or college, wherever we want.

Marom (2019) believes that certification units often need to place more value on the credentials and experiences IETs possess. The certification unit in Manitoba was not satisfied that Anchor had received a Grade 10 high school diploma from the Philippines. Her education, including a graduate degree, did not make up for the two years of high school coursework required by the certification board. While certification units do not explicitly state that non-Western credentials and experiences are not valuable, the amount of upgrading required of IETs like Anchor indicates that internationally-acquired education is given less preference than Western-acquired education.

Despite her predicament, Anchor's strong passion for teaching compelled her to recertify. She said: "I love teaching kids, so I decided that although I am old to return to school, I have to so that I can continue with what I had started back home."

Anchor's children supported her decision to re-enter the teaching profession, but they worried about their mom recertifying at an older age. Older IETs, like older immigrants, typically face more challenges than younger immigrants when analyzed through an intersectional lens. Unlike their younger counterparts, older immigrants tend to possess fewer personal and professional networks, which hamper those IETs searching for employment (Nayak et al., 2025).

Older immigrants also tend to possess less proficiency in English and often encounter more challenges socially integrating into host societies than their younger peers. Older IETs may also face challenges in terms of travel and relocation, as they tend to have more familial responsibilities than younger IETs (Nayak et al., 2025). Many of the older IETs in this study, such as Anchor and Mayette, for example, spoke about the stress of moving away from spouses and children, as well as the difficulty of travelling back and forth between Winnipeg and their northern residences. Younger IETs like RJ and Juan, who did not have spouses or children at the time of the study, did not face these same familial separation difficulties. When analyzed through an intersectional lens, it appears that age was an additional barrier faced by older IETs during the recertification process.

Anchor recalled her children's worries about recertifying at an older age, saying:

Even my kids were worried because they asked me, "Mom, are you sure you can still do it? I said, "Of course I can." I even challenged them, "If you want, we can share marks, mine and yours," to show them I can still do it, right?

Like Anchor, Mayette recertified at an older age and remembered the challenges of taking courses with mostly younger Bachelor of Education students. She recalled: "It was mostly undergrad, so they [students in the class] were young. I was not comfortable."

Recertifying at an older age holds many challenges for teachers like Mayette and Anchor. Negative stereotypes abound for older adults who engage in workplace training. Some of these stereotypes include beliefs that older workers provide employers less of a return, are more costly to employ, and are unwilling to engage in training opportunities (Butrica & Mudrazija, 2022). These assumptions are primarily unfounded, as some research has demonstrated that older employees are often dependable and trustworthy, exhibit less absenteeism than younger staff,

and possess institutional knowledge that can be passed on to younger employees (Toomey & Rudolph, 2017). Nevertheless, the negative stereotypes that abound for older IETs represent another difficulty that marginalizes them through an intersectional lens and makes it difficult for these older teachers to recertify and find employment in the teaching field (Butrica & Mudrazija, 2022; Nayak et al., 2025).

The experiences of Mayette and Anchor, nevertheless, are a testament to the benefits that older teachers can provide. Both were willing to engage in recertification to acquire the knowledge necessary to teach in the Manitoba school system. They also had tremendous expertise that could be passed on to the younger teachers (Toomey & Rudolph, 2017). Fortunately, the school division that hired Mayette and Anchor saw the value in these two IETs and, after some time spent as classroom teachers, elevated them to administrative positions so they could mentor other teachers.

The Benefits of Academic Bridging Programs

While recertifying, Mayette admitted feeling more comfortable in classes where the composition was primarily IETs like herself. She noted:

I enjoyed and found comfort in the classes I took with other IETs. I realized that sometimes you need someone if you are new to a place. You will need someone to cling to, especially if you are both immigrants.

Some research indicates a benefit to bridging programs, where IETs recertify as a group by completing the program together (see Gordon, 2016; Wimmer et al., 2019). Wimmer et al. (2019) note that IETs can share experiences, receive mentorship, and celebrate successes in a bridging program utilizing a cohort model. A cohort model can provide a connection among peers, increase a sense of belonging, and encourage collaboration among participants. IETs who

recertify in a cohort may benefit from the social and academic support and mentorship within the cohort (Catalan & Simon, 2024). IETs who recertify together with others can grapple collectively with the challenges inherent in a Western, Eurocentric education system and its associated materials and pedagogy in a reassuring environment (Wimmer et al., 2019). Networking within the cohort can also lead to the securing of employment for IETs (Schmidt et al., 2023). These advantages speak to the effectiveness of the cohort model for IET recertification.

While IETs benefit from collaborative support within the cohort model, Wimmer et al. (2019) express caution about bridging programs where IETs do not take any courses with Bachelor of Education students and recertify solely with fellow IETs. They feel that shared learning is vital between IETs and Bachelor of Education students, as both types of educators will work together in schools throughout the province upon credentialing. Gordon (2016) acknowledges that bridging programs, in general, provide immense benefits to internationally trained professionals like teachers. He notes that these accreditation programs expose newcomers to their chosen field (e.g., teaching, pharmacy, engineering) in a Canadian context and provide support for immigrant professionals as they recertify in a highly bureaucratic system such as the education system. Gordon (2016) suggests that it is unethical to entice immigrants to Canada only to offer little support as they re-enter their previous positions. This idea speaks to the importance of academic bridging programs for newcomer professionals.

Ripple and Anchor enrolled in the University of Manitoba's academic bridging program for IETs and were members of the first cohort in 2006. Anchor explained:

The University of Manitoba had a program [Academic and Professional Bridging Program for Internationally Educated Teachers]. We were the first batch for that

program. There were eight of us. The group included Filipinos, Ukrainians, Croatians, and Indians. Our advisor was Dr. Clea Schmidt. In short, we finished that.

The IET Program at the University of Manitoba was implemented to build equity in the teaching force and ensure the cultural and linguistic diversity among teachers paralleled the diversity in the student body. The program, which included coursework and a practicum component, was attended by IETs from various countries, including Ukraine, India, Egypt, and the Philippines (Block, 2012; Schmidt, 2015b). The IETs who attended the program had between two and 20 years of international teaching experience (Schmidt, 2015b). Admission requirements included a writing sample, GPA requirements, and language and residency prerequisites. The tuition was covered by Manitoba Labour and Immigration (Block, 2012). The program ran successfully until 2012 when funding ceased (Dunfield, 2011). The discontinuation of the IET Program at the University of Manitoba resulted in IETs recertifying alongside Bachelor of Education and PBDE students within the province.

The IET Program at the University of Manitoba provided relevant coursework for IETs who were required to recertify before being granted permanent teaching licenses. The certification unit granted Ripple a provisional teaching license upon landing in Manitoba. However, the unit required Ripple to upgrade to qualify for a permanent teaching license, so, like Anchor, she enrolled in the University of Manitoba's IET Program. During her time in the program, Ripple established many meaningful relationships. She elaborated on the friendship she shared with one IET, saying:

I had an IET classmate from Nigeria, so we became friends, like family friends. I have to emphasize this as well: she was an anchor. There are many people, but only a few you could talk to at that level. She conducted research when she was at the University of

Winnipeg. She came to [name withheld], my first school, so the friendship continued all these years.

Ripple also made a connection in the IET program with Lee Anne Block, one of the IET coordinators at the University of Manitoba. Ripple reflected on their relationship: “Lee Anne Block was not just a professor to me; she became a friend. She became an anchor. That’s the reason why when she passed away last year [2022], it was just so devastating.”

Developing relationships like the one Ripple made with Lee Anne Block is crucial for IETs in host societies. Immigrant teachers face a range of challenges as they adapt to different educational systems (Schmidt, 2015a; Wimmer et al., 2019; Yan, 2021). These challenges include acquiring suitable socio-cultural knowledge and having their metacognitive competence questioned (Yan, 2021). A lack of professional support often leads immigrant teachers to feel disconnected from new education systems, so forming connections with fellow IETs and instructional staff is essential (Yan, 2021). Within a supportive cohort, IETs can make meaningful connections, such as the one Ripple made with the Nigerian IET, to whom she referred as her “anchor.” Fellow IETs can collaborate, network, share experiences, and brainstorm solutions to issues with each other (Catalan & Simon, 2024; Schmidt, 2015b; Wimmer et al., 2019). While some research demonstrates the importance of IETs connecting with Bachelor of Education students during the recertification process, there are many advantages of utilizing the cohort model for IET recertification.

Manitoba’s Professional Certification Unit

Despite completing the IET Program at the University of Manitoba, Anchor was disappointed when the certification unit evaluated her credentials. She recounted:

I started with Class 4. Why Class 4? I had my master's degree in the Philippines and finished my IET [program]. I finished my 30 credits here and am still in Class 4. I cried because I know that some of us [fellow IETs] did not go to university or school, and they are Class 5. Even the University of Manitoba disagreed with what Russell [location of the certification unit] did when they evaluated my credentials.

Manitoba's Professional Certification Unit grants teacher classifications based on academic qualifications for salary purposes. An applicant with a four-year Bachelor of Education degree or equivalent is awarded a Class 4 (Government of Manitoba, n.d.-a). To be awarded Class 5, an applicant must have a three-year bachelor's degree plus a two-year Bachelor of Education degree. To certify at Class 5, the certification unit also accepts the equivalents to the above requirements (Government of Manitoba, n.d.-a). Anchor was not sure why she was classified as Class 4 instead of Class 5; however, she explained that the certification unit did not fully recognize her master's degree and that she needed to take additional coursework:

If I wanted to go higher, I had to do post-bac. I did my post-bac, so my teaching certificate became Class 5. I had a master's degree [from the Philippines], but I went back to do my master's degree. I did my master's in June 2018. So, I got what I wanted.

Anchor's experience with recertification aligns with Marom's (2019) research into the challenges IETs encounter due to their foreign credentials. Marom (2019) believes that IETs such as Anchor are often regarded as novice teachers in the recertification process, despite having several years of teaching experience abroad. During the recertification process, the professional capital that IETs possess is weighted less than the credentials that recent teacher graduates possess, which are limited to practicum-related experiences (Marom, 2019). This biased weighting can result in an over-representation of White teachers and administrators in the

education system, as immigrant teachers with superior credentials and experiences to pre-service educators are given less preference in hiring (Gómez et al., 2025). With White pre-service teachers enrolled in significant numbers in teacher-training institutions, the racial hierarchy remains (Omi & Winan, 2015). CRT often comes under attack in North America when its proponents attempt to unsettle this racial hierarchy by increasing the number of racialized teachers in the teaching force.

Utilizing a CRT framework can help us understand how Whiteness is normative and sets the standard of racial hierarchy. Indigenous Peoples, Asians, Latinos, and Africans are typically categorized as non-Whites and negatively labelled as “others” (Delgado et al., 2017). When Whiteness is prioritized and viewed as the universal standard, then the credentials and experiences of racialized people are prioritized less (Delgado et al., 2017). Kohli and Pizarro (2022) discuss the centrality of Whiteness in teacher education. As teaching forces in Canada are predominantly White, the curriculum that is taught privileges White comfort and tends to sideline the experiences and voices of BIPOC students and families (Kohli & Pizarro, 2022). Certification units that privilege the credentials of recent teacher graduates over IETs reinforce the cycle of Whiteness as normative.

By prioritizing Western-acquired degrees and experiences, certification units implicitly act as gatekeepers, upholding a racial hierarchy and preventing IETs from being certified promptly and in sufficient numbers (Marom, 2019). This gatekeeping tactic positions IETs from a deficit perspective (Marom, 2019), resulting in their being underrepresented in Manitoba’s teaching force. Racial, gender, and linguistic markers often factor into whether the professional experiences and credentials of IETs are valued or devalued in a school system (Marom & Xu, 2025). Cultural capital, such as credentials, experiences, language, and education, that aligns

with mainstream Canadian society is inherently favoured over international professional capital (Marom & Xu, 2025). Whiteness also factors into the devaluation of IETs' teaching credentials. White teachers and administrators are afforded many structural advantages and unearned privileges that BIPOC teachers do not reap, such as having their experiences, language, and education prioritized (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Leonardo, 2004). As a result, IETs typically must work much harder than their Canadian counterparts to enter the teaching force.

MAFTI Support

To assist Filipino IETs in the credentialization process, MAFTI offers informational workshops and seminars. A few of the interviewees highlighted MAFTI for the organization's support in the initial stages of the recertification process. Juan reported: "MAFTI has tried having forums and seminars, like how to get certified here in the province. They did it twice. The first one was in 2018 or 2019. Then they also had a forum this year [2023]."

Chloe connected with fellow Filipino IETs during workshops that MAFTI organized. She recalled: "When I came here [to Manitoba], I got involved with MAFTI. So, I heard stories about their [Filipino IETs'] difficulties getting into the system, and the negative experiences that they have being in the system."

Like Chloe, Catherine made some crucial connections through MAFTI-sponsored events. She reported:

I attended the seminar that MAFTI hosted. There was an advertisement about how to get certified in Canada. When I was working, not in the field of education yet, I tried to get in touch, and then I attended one of their seminars. That is where I learned how to get certified. It was beneficial because aside from the knowledge of getting certified, I also made many connections with Filipino teachers who attended.

Catherine praised MAFTI for providing support during the strenuous recertification period. She added:

MAFTI helped me connect with others. It was an avenue for the teachers to get together and gather based on the programs they conducted, like the seminars on how to get certified. It's also one way of us being united or reunited.

While the participants indicated that the informal support provided by individual Filipino teachers and the Filipino education diaspora was essential, the work done by MAFTI, especially the informational seminars and workshops, helped them navigate the recertification process.

Recertifying Comes More Easily to Some

While some IET participants faced challenges during the recertification process and were required to complete several credit hours of post-secondary coursework, others were more fortunate. They were granted teaching licenses in a timely fashion. Those who received certifications more easily had obtained a Grade 12 high school diploma in the Philippines, versus older IETs who possessed a Grade 10 diploma.

Minerva was one of the participants who did not experience any significant challenges during the recertification process. She explained: "When I checked with the assessment division [Manitoba's Professional Certification Unit], I found that my master's courses were all credited to me, so I think that may have made a difference."

Minerva initially assumed that re-entering the teaching profession in Manitoba would be cumbersome, so she sought different employment. However, she quickly realized that she missed teaching and that a career in a different field would not suffice. Minerva consulted with a relative teaching in Manitoba and was encouraged to apply for recertification. Minerva heeded her relative's advice and submitted her documentation for recertification. She disclosed:

When I first came here [to Manitoba], I thought, “I had enough of teaching, right?” I tried to do another job, but the fulfillment wasn’t there. So, my relative convinced me; she gave me advice, saying, “Why don’t you try to get your license?”

Immigrant professionals like Minerva are faced with a crucial decision upon arrival in host societies—whether to continue with their previous careers or seek new employment. Highly educated immigrants are typically more motivated to adapt to the norms of a new host society, which often facilitates their more successful integration compared to immigrants with lower levels of education (Solati et al., 2022). Solati et al. (2022) explain that proficiency in English or French is a strong determinant of whether immigrants can obtain employment in their chosen fields in Canada. Coupled with racial discrimination, immigrants who possess low levels of English or French ability are given lower hierarchical status within Western societies, especially in the labour force (Solati et al., 2022).

Through an intersectional lens, we can recognize how immigrants face multiple barriers to labour-force participation, including language barriers (Crenshaw, 1995). Discrimination based on race, intertwined with linguistic exclusion, ensures that immigrants face obstacles accessing employment (Levon, 2015; Muirhead et al., 2020). The Government of Canada’s (2014) *Panel on Employment Challenges of New Canadians* report, which collected data from over 135 newcomer-serving organizations, found that many newcomers experienced difficulties accessing employment. Commonly cited hurdles included credential recognition, lack of professional networks, and minimal Canadian work experience (Government of Canada, 2014). The study’s data added further evidence that newcomers face multiple hurdles in accessing employment in Canada. Many highly educated immigrants are often relegated to work in the fast-food industry, like Ripple and Catherine, both of whom hold doctorates in education. Both

of these highly educated IETs worked at Tim Hortons before engaging with teaching recertification. RJ was also forced to accept employment in the fast-food industry before recertifying as a teacher. The panel report and data from this study support the assertion that, despite the extensive experience and education they may possess, immigrants face many systemic barriers to labour-force participation and are often relegated to survival-type employment.

With a strong knowledge of the English language, however, Filipino newcomers typically have an easier time integrating into the local community than other newcomers. Coupled with higher levels of education, Filipino migrants often experience a less strenuous adjustment to workplaces than other newcomers and fewer intertwined elements working against them when analyzed through an intersectional lens (Manuel, 2017; Vachon & Toews, 2008). This is the result of Filipinos being granted more privileges and hierarchical status than other BIPOC individuals (Muirhead et al., 2020). Filipinos are not immune to the challenges imposed by credentialization; however, their high levels of education and proficiency in English often make the process less arduous.

Like Minerva, the credentialization process went smoothly for RJ. He credited Manitoba Start, a settlement agency, with assisting him with recertification. He stated:

When I got to Canada in 2013, I went to ... I don't know if you've heard of it? Manitoba Start is a non-profit agency that helps newcomers to settle in Manitoba. I attended three weeks of entry-level programming there, and that's when I learned how to get certified as a teacher in Manitoba. Because when I arrived in Canada, I was not a certified teacher yet.

As a non-profit government agency, Manitoba Start deserves credit for assisting newcomers like RJ to re-enter the workforce. The agency receives funding from the provincial and federal governments and offers career services free of charge (Manitoba Start, n.d.). The agency focuses on credentialization and connecting newcomers to potential employers. Manitoba Start offers workshops, career coaching, resume development, and networking opportunities to assist internationally educated professionals and skilled workers in credentialing in Manitoba (Manitoba Start, n.d.). These services are vital to support newcomers like IETs in re-entering the workforce.

RJ thought recertifying would be time-consuming, but upon submitting documentation was awarded a permanent teaching license in less than two years. He reported:

When I finally decided to apply for a certificate, I gathered all my documents. I talked to my representative back home [the Philippines] to help me gather all those papers. So, I submitted them in July 2015, and then by November 2016, I got my certificate. I was surprised because they credited all of it. They did not even require me to go to school and take courses.

RJ felt fortunate because he obtained his documentation with relative ease from the university he attended in the Philippines. He said: “It was easy because I connected with the registrar’s office at the university where I’m from, and I could talk to them through Facebook Messenger. I told them about the documents I would need.”

Like RJ, Chloe obtained her certification promptly and with little difficulty. She recalled: I submitted all my credentials. I got copies of my credentials directly from the Professional Regulation Unit in the Philippines and then sent all of my transcripts here

[Manitoba]. Fortunately, when they assessed my credentials, the professional regulation unit in Russell did not ask me to upgrade; they gave me permanent certification.

Immigrants typically have various experiences recertifying in their chosen professions in Canada. Some recertify relatively quickly; others experience significant challenges and take several years to complete recertification processes (Cho, 2013). This was true for many participants of this study. For example, Minerva, RJ, and Chloe discussed experiencing very few challenges during the process. They obtained documentation with relative ease from their post-secondary institutions in the Philippines, and their credentials were all recognized by Manitoba's Professional Certification Unit. Minerva, RJ, and Chloe were not tasked with taking additional courses to recertify or enroll in academic bridging programming. For these IETs, teacher recertification was a feasible process.

Other IETs experience significant challenges during the recertification process. For instance, Ripple, Mayette, and Anchor were required to take additional courses and enroll in academic bridging programming. What differentiated those IETs who experienced challenges versus those who experienced no significant obstacles was age—one of the intersecting factors that limit the opportunities of older IETs (Collins & Bilge, 2016; Cooper, 2016). Older newcomers are typically vulnerable throughout the adjustment process in host societies and face limited opportunities compared to younger newcomer populations (Crenshaw, 1995; Muirhead et al., 2020). In exploring the issue through an intersectional lens, Steward et al. (2024) note how older individuals typically receive more contempt and less respect within society. Naïve assumptions abound about those who are more advanced in age, including the belief that older people lack intelligence, possess less meaningful experiences, and require more assistance than their younger peers. Older people who are racialized face these assumptions and must also

endure racial discrimination within host societies (Steward et al., 2024). As racialized IETs, Ripple, Mayette, and Anchor must endure more intersecting vulnerabilities, which ensured the recertification process was doubly challenging for them.

As younger IETs, Minerva, RJ, and Chloe did not endure age discrimination like some of their peers. The younger teachers all obtained a high school diploma from the Philippines after 2012. Their credentials and training were all approved by Manitoba's certification unit. On the other hand, Ripple, Anchor, and Mayette all graduated from high school before 2012, and their training and credentials were not approved. While the Philippines deserves credit for strengthening its high school graduation and teacher-training requirements, these modifications were not useful for previous graduates like Ripple, Anchor, and Mayette, who required substantial upgrading in Manitoba before being recertified as teachers. The credential recognition process needs streamlining. Cho (2013) points out that Canada needs a central governing body to evaluate the credentials of immigrant professionals, including IETs. Instead, several different governing bodies exist in the various provinces and territories. There is also a need to streamline immigrant credentials, because various organizations are involved in credential recognition, including professional regulatory bodies, post-secondary institutions, and employers (Cho, 2013). Marom (2018) argues that the teacher recertification process needs more streamlining and a more reciprocal process. IETs typically possess a wealth of diverse teaching methodologies and experiences from their countries of origin. Instead of valuing this diversity, however, IETs are typically evaluated on what they are lacking (i.e., Western/Eurocentric knowledge) instead of the valuable experiences they possess (i.e., non-Western/Eurocentric epistemologies) (Marom, 2018). This indicates that the recertification process for teachers in Canada is more one-sided than reciprocal.

Applying for Teaching Positions

The IETs who participated in the present study had diverse experiences applying for teaching positions before accepting teaching jobs in Northern Manitoba. Before recertifying and applying for educational positions, many IETs accepted jobs in the service industries to support themselves and their families financially. This sort of sacrifice is common, as newcomer teachers often work in fast-food establishments, daycares, and as EAs before recertifying as teachers (Abramova, 2013; Stephenson, 2020). IETs sometimes also accept volunteer jobs in schools before securing positions as educators. While volunteer work helps IETs gain valuable experience in the school system, unpaid volunteerism places a financial strain on newcomer teachers who must afford the high costs of recertification and support their families (Niyubahwe et al., 2013; Stephenson, 2020; Szeto, 2022). Even once certified, IETs are not guaranteed teaching jobs, especially in urban settings. Many must assume substitute and term teaching positions before finding permanent jobs (Stephenson, 2020).

Working as Educational Assistants

After recertifying as a teacher, Suzanna worked as an EA before obtaining a permanent teaching position. She said it was challenging to transition to more of a supportive role in the classroom but acknowledged the importance of the experience, saying: “I learned from different kinds of schools and different kinds of teachers. I got all the good ones [host teachers], not the bad ones.”

Like Suzanna, Dolly worked in several minimum-wage positions before obtaining an EA job at a private Catholic school in Winnipeg. Even though it was not a teaching position, Dolly acknowledged the importance of the EA job, saying: “I was earning experience. I was acting on my short-term goal. I was earning money, and then I was getting experience in a school system.”

Dolly was content with her EA position, as it constituted related experience, and the salary helped support her family. However, after spending time with children in an educational setting, Dolly pushed herself to find teaching employment, saying: “I can do a much better job than what the teacher was doing. I can do that [be a teacher].”

Dolly was inspired to do more. She possessed a master’s and a PhD from the Philippines but never felt her experiences and credentials were valued in Manitoba. She explained: “They [school hiring committees] see that you didn’t study or graduate from here, education-wise. I was just an international teacher at that time. Your resume goes straight to the garbage can.”

Immigrant women like Dolly and Suzanna typically face considerable challenges obtaining employment in host societies. These challenges make them accept employment, such as EA positions, below their qualifications. According to Statistics Canada, immigrant women are more likely to be unemployed (14.6 percent) compared to non-immigrant women (6.6 percent) (as cited in Szeto, 2022). It sometimes takes immigrant women as many as five years from arrival in Canada until they can resume their previous careers. From an intersectionality standpoint, the requirement of Canadian work experience and the failure to recognize internationally acquired credentials are only some of the obstacles that newcomer women must endure to gain employment (Szeto, 2022). The experiences of Dolly and Suzanna align with Crenshaw’s (1995) intersectional research into the experiences of immigrant women and the fact that pre-existing vulnerabilities, such as gender discrimination and xenophobia, intersect to increase the challenges that these women experience. These challenges explain the frustration that female newcomers like Dolly experience with the hiring process in Canada.

Applying in the City

Many participants applied for teaching jobs in Winnipeg once certified but needed help to obtain employment beyond the substitute level. Anchor shared her experience with applying for jobs in the city, saying:

When I finished my IET program and my post-bac, I started applying for teaching jobs in the city [Winnipeg]. If I recall, maybe I sent applications online and on paper, around 50, and I got an answer from a Catholic school, but I still didn't get the job. I went to different interviews, but I need to be lucky. And then I started subbing.

While Anchor felt she needed to be lucky to secure employment in the city, the reality is that BIPOC teachers like her are largely pushed out of teaching opportunities in larger urban centres like Winnipeg. School divisions in urban centres tend to employ primarily White teaching forces (Martin, 2016; Stephenson, 2020). Gómez et al. (2025) argue that White supremacy and privilege are the reasons why teaching forces remain non-diverse in composition. A fear of racial reconciliation and the loss of teaching jobs to BIPOC candidates upholds Whites at the top of society's hierarchical order, which results in fewer teaching roles for diverse candidates (Gómez et al., 2025). CRT is often attacked by critics for attempting to unsettle this racial hierarchy (Omi & Winant, 2015). Anchor believed that luck determined teaching status in the city; however, a review of CRT suggests that Whiteness, privilege, and a rigid hierarchical structure are stronger determinants of who can access teaching jobs.

The job prospects for IETs have improved significantly in recent years, especially since the pandemic (Macintosh, 2023a). Job vacancies are abundant throughout the province, especially in rural and northern communities. Prospective teachers willing to venture to these more remote locales in Manitoba will find it easier to secure employment as teachers than they

did before the pandemic (Macintosh, 2023a). The pandemic caused significant disruptions to teaching staff in Manitoba and throughout North America. As a result, some school boards restructured hiring policies to fill vacancies (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2023). In Massachusetts, for example, entry requirements were eased under an emergency order to fill teaching positions (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2023). This procedural shift, made in crisis, increased BIPOC teacher representation as applicants required only an undergraduate degree to be considered (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2023). Through a CRT lens, the hiring of more BIPOC teachers, such as IETs, during the pandemic was a purely instrumental decision, not a moral awakening to increase diverse teacher representation. The need for more teachers intersected with racialized labour during the pandemic to create temporary openings for BIPOC teachers (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2023). CRT can help us understand how labour-market needs often trump equity-focused hiring.

Once certified, RJ decided to pursue teaching jobs outside of Winnipeg because he had heard that obtaining employment in the city would be challenging. He recounted: “I was told that it would be tough to apply to Winnipeg schools because of politics, and you need to have a connection to get a job in Winnipeg.”

Skilled immigrants like RJ often face several barriers to accessing suitable employment, particularly in urban centres like Winnipeg. Taylor (2019) notes that highly educated professionals, such as IETs, are more likely to face discrimination in the hiring process than newcomers with less education. Name discrimination and undervaluing immigrants’ credentials are typical examples of discrimination that immigrants face in the hiring process (Taylor, 2019). An overview of CRT reveals that racial hierarchies are in place that keep the workforce predominantly White and push immigrants, even those who are highly educated like RJ, to explore employment possibilities in locales that are primarily non-White (e.g., Indigenous

communities) (Rahman, 2024). Rahman (2024) notes that immigrants experience more prejudice and are more vulnerable in the hiring process. As a result, they are typically excluded from more lucrative labour markets, such as those found in larger urban centres like Winnipeg, despite advanced qualifications compared to Canadian-born candidates (Rahman, 2024).

Ripple obtained substitute and term teaching positions in various Winnipeg schools but felt ill-treated by her colleagues. She recalled:

The city was not ready for us. For me, like a Filipino—we have this culture of being hospitable, like, “Hey, how are you?” However, there was not even a word when I was in the staff room. I would say, “Hey, how are you? How are you doing?” Not a single word [in response]. At that time, 15 years ago, I felt the city wasn’t ready for us [IETs]. It was not welcoming 15 years ago. So, for me, I decided to leave.

Ripple expected to be welcomed respectfully in school staff rooms; instead, she was ignored by school staff, and her greetings were met with silence. IETs like Ripple sometimes face hostility and unwelcoming environments in schools. Research by Block (2012) and Schmidt (2010) indicates that this hostility is often linked to the systemic discrimination perpetuated against immigrant teachers, including discrimination in terms of names, accents, food preferences, clothing, and foreignness. These acts of hostility should not be pinned as isolated incidents. Social exclusion, like what Ripple experienced, is one of the typical discriminatory behaviours that IETs face in a colonial school environment (Muirhead et al., 2020). Social exclusion intersecting with the challenges above tends to create an unwelcoming environment for IETs.

Applying up North

Instead of applying in Winnipeg, RJ sought employment in Northern Manitoba. He rationalized his decision to seek teaching opportunities in the North, saying:

My classmate from Manitoba Start told me, “Hey, we need teachers here in [name withheld]. Would you like to give it a try?” So, I submitted my application to the principal, and then after two days, I got a call for an interview. They interviewed me, and I was hired right away.

A fellow Filipino IET convinced Anchor to apply for work in Northern Manitoba. She was subbing in the Winnipeg School Division but got a call saying her application had been accepted. She explained:

I got a call. That was [name withheld] school, so that was my first school. It’s a band-operated school. And then, the following year, a friend of mine, who is an IET, we were in the same program [IET Program at University of Manitoba], told me that in this school where he applied and got the job, they still have an opening, so I went there. I brought my portfolio, and I had an interview there, and then I got the job.

Chloe was working in an adult education program in Winnipeg and was not inclined to work up North, but a friend convinced her to seek employment outside of the city. She recalled:

I was not actively applying for teaching, but a friend invited me to work up North. I applied for the position, and then, not even a week after, the entire application did not take a week, they offered me the position. Then, I resigned from my job and went up North.

It was evident that involving their families in deciding whether to accept teaching employment in the North was essential to the Filipino IETs. Chloe was one of the participants

who involved her family in the decision, saying: “Of course, I talked with the family. We had a family talk because that was one of the considerations.”

Catherine consulted with her husband before venturing up North, as it was an important life decision. She said:

My husband and I talked about it because being away from my husband is a sacrifice. It is a different experience. We had only been in Canada for two years during that time. It’s just the two of us, and then I will be far away from him.

Filipinos typically maintain strong intergenerational ties to family members. They tend to believe that familial unity deters isolation and exclusion; therefore, Filipinos often involve family members in important life decisions (Chaturvedi, 2005; Oropilla & Guadana, 2021; Salazar, 1993). Family cohesiveness is a cornerstone of Filipino identity and social relations; therefore, it is understandable that IETs such as Catherine and Chloe discussed their move and future livelihoods in northern communities with their spouses and families (Oropilla & Guadana, 2021). Catherine and Chloe involved their families in deciding whether to move up North because they felt their family members would offer the best advice.

Moving to a northern community can be a life-altering choice, so involving family members in the decision was essential to many Filipino IETs. Family separation can, nevertheless, have detrimental effects on immigrant families (Lu et al., 2020). Family separation can disrupt parenting and lead to inadequate supervision of children during critical developmental years. As a result, immigrant parents face a difficult decision when considering whether to accept employment in northern communities to support their families and be away for critical durations of time from spouses and children (Lu et al., 2020). Choosing to live up North

is not solely a professional decision, but a profoundly personal and familial one shaped by intersecting priorities.

Racial hierarchies typically restrict immigrants' access to employment in urban labour markets (Rahman, 2024; Taylor, 2019). As a result, immigrant professionals like Catherine and Chloe must make important life decisions to accept employment in remote locations and be away from their families during critical periods. Abawi (2021a) notes how the teaching force, especially in urban centres, is primarily White, while early childhood educator (ECE) positions tend to be filled by more racialized and marginalized people. Precarious positions within education, such as ECEs, term teachers, substitute teachers, and educational assistants, are typically lower paid and carry diminished professional status compared to permanent teaching positions (Abawi, 2021a). To gain higher professional status and salaries, IETs like Chloe and Catherine must often seek teaching employment in more rural and northern communities. This phenomenon exemplifies the racialized division of labour in the teacher market. It demonstrates how IETs are systemically channeled into less desirable roles and locations, thus reinforcing the racial hierarchy within the teaching profession.

Needing to Teach

The need to return to the teaching profession resonated with all participants. Many grew weary of minimum-wage employment and desired a return to their previous careers. Ripple applied for teaching employment up North in order to re-enter the classroom. She was tired of her minimum-wage job in the fast-food industry and felt her purpose was best fulfilled by teaching. She elaborated:

There was a point when I needed to go back to the classroom. Otherwise, I would be losing myself. I decided to leave, and Lee Anne Block phoned me. She said, "Why are

you leaving [Winnipeg]?” I replied, “I just need to return to the classroom.” That is for my sanity; probably, that’s just how I felt. I needed to go back.

Like Ripple, Dolly grew weary of her Tim Horton’s job and yearned to return to the classroom. She reflected on her frustration and the prayers she made to God, saying:

“Lord, is this what you want for me? If this is it, allow me to accept what you want for me wholeheartedly.” We went to the Philippines for a vacation. I went to church. I am a church person, and I said, “Lead me to my vocation, Lord, where you need me most. If Tim Horton’s is the place, let me embrace it wholeheartedly.”

Like Dolly and Ripple, Anchor was dissatisfied with her lack of teaching employment in the city. There was a teaching shortage up North, so Anchor submitted her application to work in Northern Manitoba and received a phone call from a school director. She explained:

There was already a need for teachers up North. It is hard to find myself here [in Winnipeg]. That would be the reason why that could be my purpose. Just take it that way, so if they need teachers there [up North] and Winnipeg is not yet welcoming to immigrant teachers like me, then why push it, right?

The fact that Anchor, Dolly, and Ripple had difficulty accessing the teacher labour market in Winnipeg can be explained by CRT and one of its core tenets that racism is ordinary, not aberrational. As a result, racism is often difficult to identify and eradicate (Delgado et al., 2017). The ordinariness of racism also means that only blatant forms of discrimination are typically addressed in society. CRT suggests that formal conceptions of equality exist in policy, not actual practice (Delgado et al., 2017). Despite inclusive hiring policies in many school divisions, IETs like Anchor, Dolly, and Ripple are often pushed out of the urban labour market. Ordinary racism that IETs deal with allocates greater privileges and status to Whites than to non-

Whites within society (Tyndall & Raza, 2024). Whiteness is not inherently visible within the education system, but its presence allocates power and privilege to specific individuals (Carr, 2016).

Harris (1995) explains that Whiteness often operates as a form of property, meaning that Whites, and in this case White teachers, reap unearned values. Carr (2016) opines that the education system should be open to the voices and experiences of all identities, especially those individuals who have dealt with racism and racialization, such as IETs. Anchor, Dolly, and Ripple had considerable experience and credentials that should have earned them valuable teaching positions within the city. However, because of structural inequalities within the education system, their credentials and experiences were sidelined in favour of the professional capital of domestically trained educators. As racialized teachers, Anchor, Dolly, and Ripple did not possess the value and privilege inherently awarded to White teachers despite strong credentials (Carr, 2016; Harris, 1995). This devaluing, examined through a CRT lens, can explain the disproportionate number of immigrant teachers working in remote and rural locales.

Like Anchor, Catherine felt compelled to teach again. She struggled to find teaching employment in Winnipeg and applied up North upon receiving recommendations from fellow Filipino IETs. Catherine, however, was dissuaded from moving up North by some of her co-workers. She said:

My co-workers from the bank were even discouraging me, saying, “No, Catherine. You wouldn’t like it there. It’s sad there. It’s a reserve.” I heard a lot of stereotypes and negative feedback, like, “You wouldn’t like it there. You’re a very jolly person. You’re a sociable person. There, it could be so sad.”

Stereotypes abound regarding Indigenous Peoples, as evident in Catherine's commentary above. Unfamiliarity, ignorance, and the media's negative portrayal of Indigenous Peoples are problematic excuses for negatively stereotyping Indigenous Peoples (Henry & Tator, 2002; Skelton, 2022). Newcomers tend to replicate the detrimental stereotypes shown to Indigenous Peoples by non-Indigenous Canadians (Skelton, 2022). CRT can help demonstrate how racial hierarchies are in place to push Indigenous and immigrant people to compete for housing, employment, and essential services in the country (St. Denis, 2011). To overcome these negative portrayals, all Canadians, including IETs like Catherine, need education in terms of Indigenous history, land claims, Indian Acts, and treaties (Haig-Brown, 2012). Despite the stereotypes that she heard, Catherine pushed them aside. Her determination to continue her teaching career was strong, and she wanted to try living and teaching in a northern locale.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored Filipino IETs' experiences with survival jobs, recertification, and the application process for teaching positions. All participants held survival-type employment before engaging in teacher recertification. Multiple barriers, such as a lack of Canadian-related work experience, the credentialization process, and racial biases, forced the IETs to accept positions they were overqualified for but needed to financially support themselves and their families in a new host society. Through a CRT lens it becomes apparent how IETs, such as the Filipino teachers in this study, experience discrimination based on several intersecting factors, including their non-native accents, linguistic varieties, and foreign credentials (Lam, 2021b; Nigar, 2011; Savas et al., 2021). As a result, many of the IETs had difficulty accessing employment in Winnipeg. This phenomenon is not an outlier, as the research strongly suggests that immigrant teachers are frequently excluded from urban teaching

employment and pushed into remote and rural regions of the country (Collins & Reid, 2012).

Recent teacher graduates do not often pursue these positions, given their advantage in the teacher labour market over IETs

The participants also shared various experiences—both positive and negative—with the recertification process. The process was more challenging for older IETs with qualifications that Manitoba's Professional Certification Unit deemed insufficient to be granted a permanent teaching license. Younger IETs had fewer challenges with the recertification process and were certified in a more timely manner, given their updated qualifications. Viewed through a CRT lens, it becomes apparent how recertification boards tend to favour the professional capital of domestically trained teachers and tend to minimize the advanced qualifications and experiences of immigrant teachers (Marom, 2019, 2025; Marom & Ilieva, 2016; Marom & Xu, 2025). This domineering practice positions recertification boards as gatekeepers that keep teaching forces predominantly White in urban areas within the province (Miles, 2019; Marom, 2019).

The chapter also explored the experiences of the IETs with applying for teaching employment and the difficulty of finding jobs in Winnipeg. The teaching force in Manitoba is primarily homogeneous, with many White female teachers and male administrators (Martin, 2016). Whiteness is implicitly valued within the teaching ranks, and CRT posits that White teachers possess many of the traits that school boards value (Carr, 2016; Harris, 1995; Kohli & Pizarro, 2022). As a result of this phenomenon, some of the Filipino IETs felt socially excluded from the teaching profession in the city; others felt a need to re-enter the profession and were willing to relocate to achieve that desire. The following chapter will explore the participants' accounts of residing and teaching in some of Manitoba's northern Indigenous communities and the challenges and successes associated with their experiences.

Chapter 7: The Benefits and Successes of Living and Teaching in Indigenous Communities

This chapter explores the benefits IETs perceived regarding living and teaching in Northern Manitoba, including an overview of the successes the IETs reported experiencing. I examine the positive welcome many IETs experienced upon arrival in these communities and how relationships were forged between newcomer teachers and Indigenous Peoples. The chapter also investigates how the IETs supported each other and engaged in activities to maintain their physical and mental well-being while residing in remote communities. The chapter concludes with an overview of the IETs' resiliency and how they adapted to life on Indigenous reserves.

Welcoming Communities

While a few participants encountered skepticism from residents and students upon arrival in First Nations communities, many Filipino IETs spoke fondly of their joyous welcome. RJ was apprehensive upon first arriving in North Shore; he did not understand his duties and felt overwhelmed. However, the residents and school staff made him feel welcome in their community. He shared: "They were very welcoming. They were very accommodating. I felt supported by the administration [of the school] as well as the community. The chief and council are nice to the newcomer teachers here."

RJ also felt welcomed when teaching for the first time. He recalled: "The students were nice. In the first year, I had Grades 2 to 3. Early years are easier to manage, right? I was able to develop a good relationship with the parents as well as my students."

Like RJ, Juan felt welcomed in Pelican Grove. The residents shared their resources and transported the teachers to different events around the community. Juan shared: "They are very welcoming in the community. They share what they have. If you want to go somewhere and play sports or if you want to go fishing, if you want to do something, they will help."

Chloe received plenty of support from the community members in Deerwood First Nation upon arriving on the reserve. She discussed how residents helped when she needed assistance and willingly shared their food. Chloe explained:

The community members are welcoming. You know, especially on a day-to-day basis, we're all on good terms. When we need help, they will always come. They will offer assistance to you. They're also generous with sharing their culture. I had a co-teacher [Indigenous] who would, from time to time, knock on my door and give me moose meat. So that's something that I really appreciate.

Chloe also recalled getting her vehicle stuck in the snow one day and explained how the residents all pitched in to help: "I got stuck in the snow, and then my community members rushed in to help. There were ladies who had nothing on their heads, no mittens, but they were digging the snow under the car. It's things like that."

The Indigenous Peoples were the original inhabitants in Canada upon the arrival of European settlers. Kasparian (2012) explains that there is much to learn from Indigenous communities, who have a deep respect for the land. Indigenous Peoples typically have a strong sense of hospitality and value all living things. Some of their core beliefs include generosity, hospitality, and multiculturalism (Kasparian, 2012). Juan, RJ, and Chloe all spoke of the hospitable welcome and support they received in their respective communities. The IETs were taken to events and on fishing and hunting excursions. The Chiefs, town councils, and school administrators of the communities warmly welcomed the new teachers, providing them with essential information and shared meals. When the IETs found themselves in a difficult predicament, such as Chloe, who got her vehicle stuck in the snow, community members willingly pitched in to assist.

Despite being a traditionally welcoming and hospitable group, Indigenous Peoples have historically been mistreated within Canadian society. Indigenous Peoples today are often perceived as second-class citizens by colonial powers. As a result, their skills and attributes are significantly undervalued in the labour force (Ahluwalia, 2012). The federal government often recruits immigrants and temporary foreign workers to fulfill labour vacancies and rarely consults Indigenous Peoples on immigration matters and policies (Ahluwalia, 2012). As Canada's first inhabitants, Indigenous Peoples have historically not been shown the hospitality they have afforded to other groups. Utilizing a CRT lens, we can recognize how the Indigenous Peoples in Canada have experienced the detrimental effects of settler colonialism (Writer, 2008). Biased police practices, inequitable court systems, and overrepresentation within prison populations are some of the ill effects that settler colonialism continues to have on Indigenous Peoples in Canadian society (Skelton, 2022). CRT can show us how colonization is endemic in society and enforces the continual marginalization of Indigenous Peoples, including the recruitment of foreign-trained labour to fulfill vacancies that Indigenous people are qualified to take on (Ahluwalia, 2012; Writer, 2008).

Forging Relationships

Many of the IETs forged strong relationships with their students and community members. The forging of meaningful relations eased the adjustment of IETs on Indigenous reserves. Minerva had heard some naïve assumptions that Indigenous children were challenging to manage due to misbehaviour. Cushing (2026) notes how deficit thinking that frames marginalized children in need of corrective interventions is a victim-blaming narrative that affects Indigenous Peoples. IETs who fail to question these assumptions might enter classrooms with a false perspective of Indigenous children and behaviour within classroom settings.

Misbehaviour is common in schools among all races of children and not a phenomenon that should be solely attributed to Indigenous children (Cushing, 2026). Harmful depictions of Indigenous Peoples, such as the assumption that Minerva heard about Indigenous youth and the issue of misbehaviour, are biases that IETs should be wary of when assuming positions in Indigenous communities. Utilizing CRT can help us contest these biased assumptions and falsehoods and realize that systemic inequality is endemic and results in incorrect assumptions being made about Indigenous Peoples (Writer, 2008).

Many of the IETs understood the importance of land-based teaching and approaching the curriculum, awash in Eurocentric philosophy, with a critical stance. Some of the IETs joined with Indigenous teachers and co-facilitated lessons on the land. Minerva, for example, participated in the harvesting of traditional medicine with her school's Indigenous language teacher. Juan co-facilitated a lesson on rabbit hunting with his school's land-based learning teacher, and Ripple organized a gardening project with her school. Land-based learning represents a shift away from traditional classroom settings and involves bringing students onto the land to experience and engage with Indigenous processes (Wabie et al., 2021). Land-based learning contests the Whiteness that often dominates educational curricula (Wildcat et al., 2014). Caribou et al. (2021) argue that the practices and beliefs of Whites are intrinsically embedded in K–12 curricula. This reality disadvantages non-White students by exoticizing their perspectives and forcing them to adapt to Eurocentric worldviews (Caribou et al., 2021). By involving themselves and their learners in land-based learning processes, the IETs are resisting the settler curriculum in favour of more meaningful learning experiences. Using a CRT viewpoint, we can understand land-based learning as a means to disrupt Eurocentrism and centre Indigenous ways of knowing.

Minerva was surprised to find that many of her students were shy and introverted. She knew that she needed to gain her students' trust in order to motivate them, explaining:

I needed to gain my students' trust. I wanted them to be more comfortable around me, so that's the first thing I worked on. After a month, they started talking. They started looking at me eye to eye. That's when I actually started with academic standards.

Minerva also sought to connect with Fox Grove First Nation residents. At first, many residents hesitated to converse with her when she arrived in the community. As a sociable person, Minerva was determined to forge relationships with the community members. She recalled:

At first, Elders and adults were very shy. I always said good morning, and I even learned to say good morning in their language. They would just look at me without saying anything, but I kept doing it until they felt more comfortable. Then, when I forgot to say good morning, they tried to be sulky, saying, "Oh, where's my good morning today?" So, I can say that I built a good relationship with them. That's when I really felt welcomed.

Suzanna's strategy for making meaningful connections in Arrow Creek involved forging relationships with her students' parents and connecting them with community resources, such as Jordan's Principle.¹⁴ She said:

¹⁴ Jordan's Principle is a policy that ensures that First Nations children can access services and support promptly. Funding is provided to help First Nations children with their health, social, and educational needs (Government of Canada, 2024a). The support offered by Jordan's Principle is in recognition of Jordan River Anderson, a five-year-old First Nations child who lost his life from a rare genetic condition called Carey-Fineman-Ziter syndrome. Anderson died in hospital while the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba debated which governing body would fund home care for the child (Government of Canada, 2024a).

I touch base with parents because it's the only way to talk to them about what's happening [in their child's classroom]. I ask how I can help your kids, how we can support them, and if they need help from Jordan's Principle.

Mayette forged strong relationships in Turtle River by making herself visible in the community. She explained:

Every time we have activities, not just in my school but in the community, I want to make sure that I am visible and [I] always talk to the parents. If the parents here see me, they'll come and hug me.

Mayette included a picture of a community gathering in her school (Figure 3), saying: "This is a picture of a community feast."

Before becoming Turtle River's principal, Mayette worked as a classroom teacher. She recalled how she forged relationships with her students, saying:

At first, students will really try your patience; they really push your buttons. But then, I realized that these are kids that really need attention, so that's why I really fight. The first thing that I did was build relationships with the kids. Sometimes, I set aside the curriculum, and we talked about our own stories. They loved when I told my story as an immigrant. I think that is the starting point. I got their trust. I got their confidence.

There is power in storytelling and, more specifically, in transcultural storytelling (see Senehi, 2020). Transcultural storytelling is a process that mediates relationships and brings parties to mutual recognition within a cross-cultural milieu (Senehi, 2020). Senehi (2020) notes that transcultural storytellers mindfully bring "their cultural stories and knowledge into a larger negotiation of cultures, identities, and meaning" (p. 23). In other words, transcultural storytellers

might share personal narratives but are mindful not to present them as universally applicable. This approach prioritizes the sharing and acknowledgment of diverse experiences.

Figure 3

A Community Feast in Mayette's Community



By Senehi's (2020) definition, Mayette engages her Indigenous students in transcultural storytelling. She shares her immigration story while encouraging her learners to share their stories. Mayette urges her students to share their stories because she understands that the voices of Indigenous Peoples are often silenced by people in positions of power (Miles, 2019). Mayette understands that these counter-stories shed light on the experiences of Indigenous Peoples and need to be heard. By listening to her students' stories, Mayette can respond more effectively as a teacher working in Indigenous communities. By interweaving their narratives, Mayette and her students are negotiating cultures, identities, and meaning (Senehi, 2020). This reciprocal process

benefits both parties and is essential in challenging dominant narratives (Miles, 2019; Senehi, 2020; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Within this study, counter-storytelling also emerges through the narratives of the Filipino IETs. Counter-storytelling is emphasized in CRT, as it can challenge majoritarian stories, expose racial privilege, and negate complacency (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Mayette and her fellow participants are able to share stories of their resilience, collective agency, and the meaningful relationships they are building in northern schools. These narratives can challenge the negative perceptions of immigrant teachers and Indigenous communities (Miles, 2019; Senehi, 2020; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). For example, counter-storytelling can challenge the assumptions that IETs are simply working in northern communities to earn money and that northern schools accept them only because they are in desperate need of teachers. By sharing their stories, IETs like Mayette can demonstrate the credible work they do in providing quality education and building meaningful relationships in the North.

While Mayette reported some difficulties with adjusting to her new students and some cases of misbehaviour, all learners, regardless of race and locale, can be challenging to teach at times. Cushing (2026) emphasizes the need to refrain from stereotyping marginalized students as problematic to teach due to their race. The risk of stereotyping Indigenous learners as challenging to manage within classroom settings is that it curtails their ability to learn successfully and reinforces inequity in the school system (Cushing, 2026). If Mayette believes that Indigenous children are challenging to teach, this deficit perspective might prevent her from succeeding as a teacher with Indigenous learners. Managing classrooms is a challenge that teachers face in all learning environments (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014). Teachers new to the profession (i.e., recent teacher graduates) and those entering new school systems (e.g., IETs) will

face challenges that all novice teachers encounter, including managing classrooms, setting timetables, grading, and meeting the diverse needs of all learners (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014). It is vital to avoid framing typical education issues as problems that only face Indigenous communities.

Mayette reinforced the importance of education to her students in Turtle River. She understood that education is the key to accessing future opportunities. She motivated her students by saying: “You know what? If you finish your education, you can be more competitive and earn more money. I always tell them [my students] how important education is.”

Despite Mayette’s encouragement, Indigenous students face barriers to accessing higher education. Financial constraints, for example, often impede Indigenous students from pursuing post-secondary studies. Some Indigenous students are eligible for free post-secondary studies (Monkman, 2016). However, the belief that all Indigenous students can access free higher education is a myth, since the number of Indigenous students who apply for post-secondary reimbursement often exceeds the number of federal government bursaries. For example, the Little Pine First Nation in Saskatchewan typically turns down 30 applicants per year as the reserve can only fund 15 to 23 applicants yearly (Monkman, 2016). Indigenous students from remote communities must also pay the increased costs of relocation and adaptation (Mardon & Ahmed, 2023). These barriers result in Indigenous students graduating at a lower rate than non-Indigenous students (Friesen, 2022).

Like Mayette, Ripple developed strong relationships with her students and, in turn, made meaningful connections with the community members in Eagle’s Creek. Community members gifted Ripple with fish several times and invited her to cookouts in their backyard, where they

smoked fish. Ripple said: “Eagle’s Creek is very loving and has very good people. It’s like a home away from home.”

Ripple spoke of the importance of feeling at “home” in Eagle’s Creek. The concept of “home” is multifaceted, yet it is linked to a sense of belonging to one’s community (Camilleri et al., 2023).

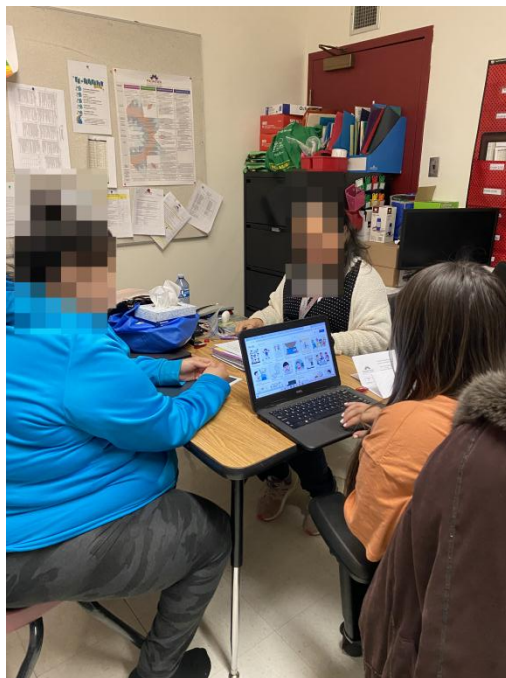
A strong sense of belonging within a home can mitigate psychological distress and feelings of social exclusion, while also enhancing integration and life satisfaction among the inhabitants (Camilleri et al., 2023). Parro (2018) found that a home is more than a simple dwelling; it is a place where a sense of togetherness and family is forged among its inhabitants. It is also a place where dwellers can restore relationships, healing can take place, and resistance can take shape to counter the relegation perpetuated by mainstream society (Parro, 2018).

Burleigh (2016) reported that community integration can facilitate greater retention among a teaching force. Migrants typically report feeling less attachment to their communities than locals (Camilleri et al., 2023), so a sense of belonging or a sense of “home” is vital, as Ripple reported. If IETs like Ripple report feeling at home in Indigenous communities, there is a greater likelihood of these teachers remaining to teach and contribute positively. Increasing teacher retention is vital, as teacher shortages are common in Northern Manitoba. Teacher stability within the teaching force is crucial for enhancing the experience and achievement of First Nations students (Burleigh, 2016). A dedicated teaching force focused on forging strong relations with Indigenous Peoples is needed to mitigate the ongoing impacts of settler colonialism.

Like Ripple, Dolly has formed connections with the community members in Arrow Creek. She included a picture of a parent-teacher meeting that she conducted (Figure 4), saying: “Here, I am conducting a meeting with a teacher and parent.”

Figure 4

Dolly Conducting a Meeting With a Teacher and a Parent



The sharing of food also connected Dolly with the residents of her community. Whenever Dolly misses her mom in the Philippines, she will cook pancit,¹⁵ as the dish reminds her of her home country and her mom. Dolly cooks for the residents in Arrow Creek when she hears they are having a difficult time. She explained:

Why not cook pancit noodles for these people because of my mom? That’s the connection. They don’t have to ask me [to cook]. If I feel I am missing my mom, I will

¹⁵ Pancit is a traditional Filipino noodle dish. The dish is thought to have originated from Chinese traders during pre-Hispanic times in the Philippines. There are different versions of pancit throughout the country. The ingredients include noodles, vegetables (e.g., beans, carrots, cabbage), meat, soy sauce, and pepper (Mercado & Andalecio, 2020).

just cook. If they get to know me, I will tell them that if it's your birthday, just give me a shout, and I'll cook for you.

Like Dolly, Juan shared pancit with his students. He shared a picture of his students cooking the dish (Figure 5) and explained: "In this picture, I introduced pancit noodles to my Grade 7 students, and they loved it."

Figure 5

Juan Sharing Pancit With his Students



While food can be viewed as a superficial form of intercultural engagement, it served as a springboard for the establishment of more meaningful relationships between the Filipino IETs and the students and residents of the First Nations communities. Juan, for example, spoke of introducing pancit to his Grade 7 learners and explained how they enjoyed preparing and eating the dish together. Similarly, Dolly mentioned that she prepared traditional Filipino food for the community residents of Arrow Creek and delivered it to them during difficult times. According to Woolley and Fishbach (2017), the sharing of food often brings people together and is a vital

component of social and cultural life. Social connections are developed by sharing food, and a sense of interpersonal closeness is thereby achieved (Woolley & Fishbach, 2017). By sharing traditional food with their students and residents, Dolly and Juan strengthened interpersonal connections within their respective communities. These connections may have been superficial and limited in duration, but they acted as a springboard to the creation of more profound and lasting relationships (Woolley & Fishbach, 2017). By experiencing her offers of food during times of difficulty, the residents of Arrow Creek might have come to understand that Dolly is a person who can be counted on to provide support during challenging times. While the food provided important nourishment, the support and connections made through the exchanging and sharing of different dishes strengthened the relationship between the Filipino IETs and the residents of their communities.

Like Dolly and Juan, RJ has forged strong relationships with the residents of North Shore. When the community members found out that he was from the Philippines and not a local teacher, they began inviting him and a fellow Filipino IET for hunting, fishing, and boat rides. He reminisced about how North Shore's residents welcomed him into the community, saying:

They let us taste moose meat, caribou, and pickerel. I got to experience those things. I got to taste wild meat. I got to experience fishing and hunting. Although I was scared to go on a boat ride, a lot of effort was made to take us.

RJ shared a picture of his first hunting experience (Figure 6) and commented:

You can see the exhilaration and excitement in this photo. Here I am, sharing my first hunting experience. A chapter in my story unfolds, where the thrill of the hunt meets the humility of the harvest, and the wilderness becomes a mirror reflecting my curious self.

Figure 6*RJ's First Hunting Experience*

Suzanna also participated in a new experience in Arrow Creek. She shared a picture of members of the community cleaning and deboning a fish (Figure 7), explaining: “This picture shows Elders cleaning and deboning fish as the students help during cultural days.”

Figure 7*Elders Cleaning and Deboning a Fish*

RJ also shared pictures of catching and preparing a fish for the first time (Figure 8) and remarked: “This picture shows me grinning ear to ear. My patience is rewarded with a moment of joy—a testament to the thrill of catching the pickerel. Fish are so abundant in the water of [name withheld] Lake.”

Figure 8*RJ Catching a Fish*

Of a second picture (Figure 9), he said: “Here, I dive into the hands-on experience of fixing a fish. This photo captures the moment of discovery and concentration as I navigate the intricacies with curiosity and determination. Mission accomplished: I learned a new fish-fixing skill.”

Figure 9*RJ Fixing a Fish*

RJ also made strong connections with the residents of North Shore because of his fondness for the Northern Lights.¹⁶ RJ has studied the Northern Lights intently and prides himself on understanding where and when they will occur. He proudly passes on this information to the residents and his students. He explained:

The parents call me Mr. Northern Lights. Not only do they call me a teacher, but they also call me Mr. Aurora Guy. They asked me if we could see the Northern Lights tonight. I studied how to read an aurora forecast to give some parents insight into what to expect if they happen tonight or there's no chance of seeing the lights.

RJ shared pictures of the Northern Lights (Figure 10) and commented:

¹⁶ In Manitoba, the Northern Lights are primarily seen in the northern parts of the province. In Indigenous culture, many legends and beliefs about the lights go back several generations. Examples include the idea that whistling at the lights will make them dance, inhaling the lights will result in death, and that the lights embody the spirits of stillborn children (Barton, 2019).

These are self-portraits adorned with the beautiful glow of the Northern Lights. The photographs of me and the Aurora capture the magic of the moment as vibrant ribbons of light cascade across the night sky, and I become a small witness to the grand spectacle of this celestial beauty.

Figure 10

RJ's Self-Portraits With the Northern Lights



Suzanna also shared a picture of the Northern Lights outside her teacherage in Arrow Creek (Figure 11), explaining: “This is a picture of the Northern Lights at my teacherage.”

Suzanna, RJ, and their fellow IETs have forged strong relationships in Indigenous communities by embracing Indigenous Peoples’ knowledge systems and practices. LeBaron (2003) writes that embracing Indigenous practices and epistemologies is crucial in sustainable reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. For decolonization to truly take place, epistemic disruptions are essential (Meston et al., 2025). Disruptions can occur when Indigenous voices and knowledge systems are centred over settler-colonial discourses (Conrad, 2022). In K–12 schools, teachers can disrupt colonial modes by engaging in truth-telling,

encouraging individualistic behaviour, and respecting the relationship that Indigenous people have with the land (Meston et al., 2025).

Figure 11

The Northern Lights at Suzanna's Teacherage



Land-based learning is a means to centre Indigenous ways of knowing and disrupt oppressive systems. Indigenous Peoples typically maintain strong connections with the land (Cull et al., 2018), an aspect of life that the Filipino IETs have embraced. RJ, for example, has taken an interest in the Northern Lights and has participated in hunting, fishing, and boating excursions with the residents of North Shore. Ripple has also accepted invitations for fish cookouts in her community. RJ and Ripple eagerly accepted these invitations, which shows that the IETs view these cultural practices as legitimate and necessary; they did not brush them off as token gestures (LeBaron, 2003). LeBaron (2003) emphasizes that an appreciation for worldviews and practices that differ from one's own is essential in forging improved relationships. Ripple and RJ have taken an interest in the cultural practices of the Indigenous Peoples of their

communities; consequently, they have formed meaningful connections and been welcomed by the residents.

Forging relationships is imperative to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (LeBaron, 2003; Lederach, 1997). The Filipino IETs have forged strong bonds and engaged meaningfully with Indigenous people in their communities. For example, Minerva has gained the trust of Fox Grove First Nation residents by acknowledging them each morning. Suzanna builds relationships with her students' parents and informs them about community resources, such as Jordan's Principle. Mayette forges strong relations by making herself visible in the community and connecting with parents outside school hours. She also stresses the importance of education to her students and shares stories from her immigrant experience. By sharing her narrative and listening to her students' stories, Mayette is engaging in transcultural storytelling (Senehi, 2020), which creates a sense of solidarity between herself and her students (Woods, 2020). Storytelling and sharing lived experiences are cultural practices connecting newcomers and Indigenous Peoples, which can challenge dominant narratives as seen through a CRT lens.

Similar Cultures

Many of the Filipino IETs revealed that the reason for their successful adaptation to life in Indigenous communities is the fact that Indigenous and Filipino people share several commonalities. Chloe explained: "When I first got to know my students, I found them to be like Filipinos. They were quiet and timid. At first, they were shy."

Juan shared that the Philippines has several Indigenous groups, which means he can relate to the Indigenous people in Pelican Grove. He explained:

We have many Indigenous groups, so I can relate. We have these common traits that I can see in the North with the Filipinos. Filipinos have close family ties. You know, grandparents, brothers, sisters, and their kids are all in one house. The close-knit ties of the Indigenous people and the Filipino people are similar.

Canada and the Philippines share a history of colonization and aggressive assimilation tactics against Indigenous Peoples. In Canada, the Catholic Church operated roughly 70 percent of the residential schools throughout the country, assisting in the effort to eradicate Indigenous cultures and languages from Indigenous youth (Eliot, 2021). Similarly, Spanish colonization in the Philippines led to the forced spread of Roman Catholicism throughout the country (Eliot, 2021; Elizalde, 2022). Spanish colonialism was followed by an imperialist war of assimilation by American forces in the Philippines (Eliot, 2021; Go, 2004). Indigenous Peoples in both countries today continue to face settler colonialism in the form of development of Indigenous lands (Eliot, 2021). In the Philippines, the Igorot People have fought against resource development projects initiated on their lands without their consent (Santiago, n.d.). Indigenous Peoples in Canada also fight against pipeline expansion and oil extraction in their traditional lands (Eliot, 2021). Filipino IETs may understand these colonial tactics or may have endured them as Indigenous people themselves. This reality can help explain why these IETs are a good fit for working in Indigenous communities in Canada.

Minerva made connections with her students and Fox Grove First Nation residents because she identifies as Indigenous herself. She shared:

I have a personal connection to Indigenous communities because back home, I was a “Highlander.”¹⁷ That’s what they called it. I belonged to an Indigenous community back home, so I can relate to some of their stories. I have that experience of being Indigenous back home. I use it to challenge my students to be more confident they can be somebody in the future.

Indigenous teachers like Minerva play important roles in school systems and can serve as effective role models for the Indigenous youth they teach. Lunda et al. (2024) found that students’ cultural identity development was enhanced when an Indigenous teacher spoke the local language, shared a similar cultural history, and possessed knowledge of land-based learning pedagogy. Indigenous teachers are also more likely to discern the teaching practices that will benefit Indigenous youth (Lunda et al., 2024). For example, Minerva recalled feeling shy as a child, which she attributed to being an Indigenous student going to school with non-Indigenous youth. She uses this experience to motivate her students, saying:

I helped my students become empowered. At first, the students were really shy, saying, “I can’t do that.” It hurt me when one of my students said that, so I kept pushing them saying “you can do better.” And then one of my students said, “Come on, teacher, I’m just a kid.” Hearing that from them, it hurt me because I heard that a lot growing up. Being a Highlander, my confidence was really low. Now that I’m working with younger kids, I always sit beside them and motivate them to do better and show the community also that these students can contribute or do something for a positive change.

¹⁷ The “Highlanders,” also known as the Igorots, are an Indigenous group living in the Cordillera Mountains in the North Luzon region of the Philippines. They are commonly known as the Philippine Highlanders and have lived in the region for millennia (Madjaco, 2023).

The Philippines is ethnically diverse, much like Canada. The country is comprised of approximately 110 ethno-linguistic groups, with an estimated 14 to 17 million Indigenous inhabitants out of 117 million people (UNDP, 2013). Many Indigenous Filipinos live in the country's Northern Luzon and Mindanao regions. Like Canada's history of marginalization against First Nations Peoples, Indigenous groups in the Philippines have experienced historical discrimination (UNDP, 2013). Native Filipinos have endured the loss of ancestral lands and displacement to rural regions and have had their identities and cultures stripped away by settlers and governing bodies. An armed conflict in the Mindanao region has displaced Indigenous people and altered their traditional ways of life (UNDP, 2013). The Philippines and Canada share an exclusionary history of oppression against Indigenous Peoples.

In his interview, Juan mentioned that Indigenous Peoples and Filipinos value family connections and togetherness. He elaborated: "Filipinos are very family-oriented. That's what I find similar about our culture and Indigenous culture. We value our family a lot; that's what I can see when I compare their native culture to our culture."

To connect with Indigenous people in Pelican Grove, Juan took up the practice of smudging and learned about the different types of traditional medicines the Indigenous people used. He explained:

I learned about smudging and their traditional medicine, which is similar to ours. We have herbal medicine, but here, they call it traditional medicine. I find it the same because the herbal medicine we use back home is very abundant in our place, and the traditional medicine that they use here is actually the only medicine that you can find.

Juan also experienced a traditional rabbit hunt with his school's land-based teacher in an outdoor education class. He shared a picture of the experience (Figure 12) and stated: "My students and

the other high school students (Grades 7 and 8) went to the bush for rabbit hunting. We have an outdoor exploration teacher who led the activities.”

Figure 12

Juan and Students Hunting Rabbits



Minerva also learned about traditional medicine by joining her Indigenous colleagues on a land-based activity. She shared a picture (Figure 13) and remarked: “In this picture, I was harvesting traditional medicine during a trip to the land with our native language teacher and students.”

Ripple also engaged with land-based learning by helping her students plant a garden in the community. She shared a picture of the activity (Figure 14), saying:

The garden was created during my first year at Eagle’s Creek. Here, you can see the students harvesting the tomatoes and carrots they planted before the end of the school year. It’s very powerful for them to use and appreciate the land.

Figure 13

Minerva Harvesting Traditional Medicine

**Figure 14**

Ripple's Students Harvesting Their Garden



By living and teaching in Indigenous communities, Filipino IETs, such as Ripple, Minerva, and Juan, are likely to develop a deeper understanding of the importance of land-based

learning and how it can help achieve reconciliatory aims with Indigenous Peoples. Colonial projects such as residential schooling and settlement-based reserves, exposed through a CRT lens, have marginalized Indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies in favour of curricula rooted in Eurocentric philosophy (Bowra et al., 2020). Land-based learning, enacted through activities such as traditional rabbit hunts and the harvesting of traditional medicine, serves as a direct contestation to settler colonialism (Wildcat et al., 2014). Unlike Western systems, land-based learning does not separate humans from the natural world (McDonald, 2023), nor does it segregate activities such as hunting, trapping, and fishing from classroom teaching (Bowra et al., 2020). For example, the gardening project that Ripple participated in was not a standalone, token initiative. Instead, the project was an essential activity that engaged Indigenous learners with the natural world. Land-based learning plays a significant role in Indigenous self-determination, health, reconciliation, and environmental stewardship (McDonald, 2023). It is a key strategy in the reclamation of the Indigenous way of life before settler colonialism.

Similarly, RJ made connections by engaging with traditional beading. He explained how he was introduced to the practice, saying:

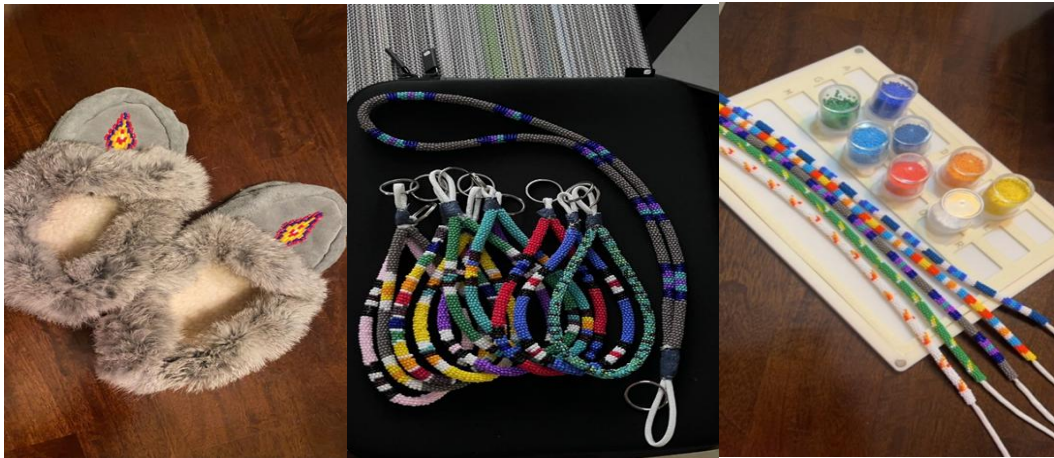
A lot of the Elders introduced me to beading. I was so interested in it. I started beading, and they [Elders] supported my passion, too. I started selling lanyard beads, long lanyards, and short lanyards. I started making them and then just selling them to people.

RJ shared pictures of his beadwork (Figure 15) and expressed his feelings, saying:

These images capture the glow of accomplishment as I showcase the beadwork born from patience, creativity, and passion. Each bead tells a story, and at this moment, my artistry becomes a visual symphony, a reflection of the dedication and the joy of crafting beauty with my own hands.

Figure 15

Examples of RJ's Beadwork



Mayette shared a picture of some traditional practices common in Turtle River (Figure 16), saying: “This image shows my students learning to boil tea in the winter and making bannock.”

Figure 16

Making Tea and Bannock in Turtle River



By learning about Indigenous ways of life and incorporating land-based learning into their classrooms, Filipino IETs can help Indigenous students reconnect with the land. By implementing land-based learning, Filipino IETs can also create a sense of community in the class (Scully, 2015; Wildcat et al., 2014). The implementation of land-based learning is crucial for immigrant teachers in Indigenous communities, as there tends to be resistance, especially among new teachers, to examining and changing their perspectives and practices when it involves Indigenous education (Scully, 2015). Scully (2015) notes that apprehension exists among some teachers regarding the prioritization of Indigenous culture and knowledge systems over others. Some research indicates a need to transform Indigenous education by engaging in decoloniality to increase the success of Indigenous learners and create greater cross-cultural understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (see Maston et al., 2025; Scully, 2015). This aim is crucial in the fulfillment of reconciliatory objectives.

Cross-cultural understanding is essential for improving the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and newcomer groups like Filipinos. Smudging ceremonies, learning to bead from Elders, and sharing pancit are examples of cross-cultural practices that the IETs have engaged with, which can improve relations between Indigenous and newcomer groups (Datta, 2019). By partaking in cross-cultural practices, non-Indigenous people learn about ways of life that differ from their own while discovering commonalities. Juan, for example, spoke of participating in an outdoor education class where students learned about traditional medicine. He mentioned that native Filipinos engage in a similar practice of harvesting herbs for medicinal use. Recognizing these commonalities is essential to developing connections and mutual understanding (Datta, 2019). Stronger relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are necessary to achieve reconciliation.

Maintaining Physical and Mental Well-Being

Indigenous communities can be isolating places for non-Indigenous people familiar with living in more urban settings. Fewer of the services and facilities to which urbanites are accustomed are available for newcomers living and working in northern and remote communities (OECD, 2016). Many of the IETs are living in these communities without their families, so maintaining their physical and mental well-being is essential. This isolation is a reality, however, for all newcomers who live away from their families in host societies, such as international students, work permit holders, and refugees. Despite being away from their families, many Filipino teachers enjoy time with their fellow IETs. Some spend time in church and engage in social activities like karaoke.¹⁸ Others enjoy jogging and hiking outdoors in their communities. Many participants understand the importance of maintaining physical and mental health while living in remote communities.

While life in northern and remote communities presents challenges, teachers' mental health is a prominent concern in all settings and locales. Teaching is a highly stressful profession associated with reduced satisfaction, higher burnout, and poorer performance among those teachers suffering from adverse mental health outcomes (Agyapong et al., 2022; Kush et al., 2022). Teachers often report higher levels of anxiety and workload fatigue compared to healthcare and office workers (Kush et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic had detrimental effects on teachers' stress levels in a profession already labelled as highly stressful (Laidlaw, 2023). During the pandemic, teachers faced a range of challenges that contributed to poorer

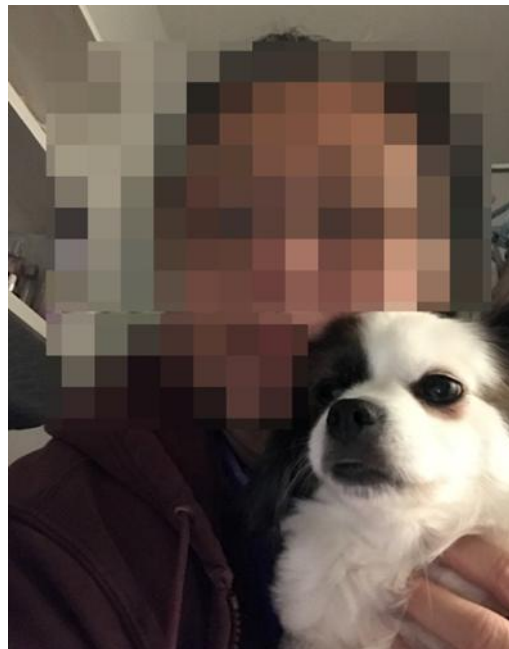
¹⁸ Many participants mentioned how they spent their free time singing karaoke with friends and family members. Karaoke offers a space of interaction and active engagement within the home and community. The activity is also an avenue for social and emotional connection and is an important expression of human agency (Pascasio, 2021). Karaoke plays an important role in the lives of many Filipinos.

mental health outcomes, including physical distancing and online teaching (Campbell et al., 2022; Laidlaw, 2023). Prioritizing mental health among teachers, especially post-pandemic, should be acknowledged, as it is not only a northern issue.

Dolly does not involve herself in many leisure activities to maintain her physical and mental well-being. She prefers to spend her free time in school preparing for her upcoming classes, even on weekends. However, she finds solace in the community's church. She also enjoys spending time with her dog. She explained: "I try to connect with the church, and then when I'm home, I'll listen to music. I'm just by myself here in the unit, and after much anxiety, I bought a dog. I travel with my little dog."

Figure 17

Dolly's Dog, Fluffy



Dolly included a picture of her dog (Figure 17), saying: "This is a picture with my dear Fluffy. I always travel with her back and forth from the community. She's my companion."

Like Dolly, Suzanna attends church in Arrow Creek. She also enjoys cooking and donating food to the people from her church. She shared:

In the community, there's a chapel. A priest can give me a ride to his chapel and mass. I need to cook something like pancit. It's from my pocket. I give it to the church. It's only just a small thing what I'm doing in this community.

Figure 18

Ripple Ventures to Church



Ripple also stressed the importance of attending church. She shared a picture of venturing to church service on a cold and blustery winter day (Figure 18), saying: “This picture was taken in Eagle’s Creek on our way to the church. It was a wintery day, but attending church was necessary to sustain our inner strength.”

Unlike her fellow Filipino IETs, Mayette chooses to spend her free time in her school doing administrative work. She enjoys reading when she is not in school but prefers to keep her life busy and occupied with work-related tasks, saying:

I almost always spend my time at school, even on the weekends. I'm in the school doing all my work. If I'm not reading a book or if I'm not in my apartment, I come to school and do many things here.

Juan is more extroverted than Mayette and enjoys meeting up with his fellow Filipino teachers for karaoke. He also spends time exercising to stay physically fit, saying: "We have karaoke and potlucks. That's what we normally do on the weekends. Sometimes, we jog when we get together. We have a gym. We have physical fitness activities in the school. Those are the things that we do."

Like Juan, Catherine enjoys socializing and engaging in activities with her fellow Filipino teachers. She shared:

We do Zumba, cook food together, and try to leave all our worries behind when we come back to our places. We do karaoke and movie nights. Those are the activities that we do to get away from the stress we have at school. We help each other ease those pressures.

Engaging in social activities and spending time with fellow teachers occupy a significant portion of their time when IETs are not teaching in their schools. Filipinos typically engage in activities that have a social component (Reyes, 2016). Reyes (2016) explains that enjoying leisure activities often contributes to positive well-being. This enhanced well-being can lead to the strengthening of social relationships, greater positive emotions, the acquisition of skills and knowledge, and an overall better quality of life (Reyes, 2016). Music, socialization, and spending time with others often make up a significant aspect of Filipino life (Campbell, 1991). This

phenomenon persisted for the Filipino IETs living in northern Indigenous communities and contributed to their positive physical and mental well-being.

Minerva admitted that being away from her family is challenging, but her fellow Filipino teachers have become like a second family. The comfort this family provides is important to Minerva. She explained:

The most challenging thing is being away from family. Even now, there are still times when I want to go home. But there are lots of us [Filipinos] here. We are not from the community, so we built our own family. We call ourselves “outside teachers” because we are from outside the community.

Minerva spends much time with her Filipino colleagues, especially on weekends. She shared:

We live in the same area, and every weekend, we plan our activities. For example, during fall, we go blueberry picking or have a picnic at the beach. We go hiking, too. We do our own activities, so we have something to do. And then during winter, we go skiing. There are many activities that we can do, and we go together. Even some of our local friends [Indigenous people] join us.

Minerva shared a picture of her colleagues on a blueberry-picking trip (Figure 19) and commented: “This picture was taken at the community’s south beach. We went blueberry picking and had lunch there. These activities collectively strengthened our resilience in the North.”

Figure 19

Minerva and Colleagues on a Blueberry-Picking Trip



From the commentary and photos shared, it is apparent that the Filipino IETs are integrating successfully into their respective communities. The connections being made between newcomer teachers and Indigenous Peoples are necessary to achieve reconciliatory aims and improve the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (Mueller et al., 2011; Preston et al., 2017). Colonialism disrupted the connections among Indigenous Peoples for generations (Maracle, 2021). Colonial tactics such as residential schooling, the removal of children from families during the Sixties Scoop, and the reserve system have largely disrupted and destroyed the connections Indigenous Peoples had in attempts to assimilate them into the colonial system (Maracle, 2021). The erasure of cultures, traditions, and people themselves is made simpler when connections are fractured and traditional knowledge systems are frayed (Maracle, 2021). Collaboration is essential between IETs and Indigenous Peoples to ensure Indigenous cultures, traditions, and knowledge systems can thrive in First Nations communities.

The sharing of diverse perspectives and the integration of Indigenous epistemologies within curricula can ensure Indigenous histories, cultures, and worldviews are properly shared (Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Schnellert et al. (2022) state that collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers is vital to dispel harmful stereotypes, address curricular gaps, and create learning spaces that honour the integration of Indigenous perspectives and systems. By living and working in harmony, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can create a respectful learning environment that fosters diversity and reconciliation (Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). The successful integration of Filipino IETs in First Nations communities is a crucial step toward achieving the above-mentioned aims.

Anchor enjoys spending time with her Filipino colleagues outside of school. She considers these co-workers her friends. The group enjoys eating together, singing karaoke, and sharing experiences. Anchor explained:

Maybe twice a week, we eat together. We do karaoke. Filipinos love food, singing, and dancing. We talk about things that are not about school, like about experiences. We talk about experiences like driving during winter time. We just share laughter and stories to make sure that they [fellow Filipino teachers] are comfortable and think that they're not alone.

In Northern Manitoba, Filipino IETs are faced with the challenges of fitting into Indigenous communities and acclimatizing to an Indigenous way of life. Ensuring the well-being of teachers is essential in remote communities, as most new educators face a difficult transition (Kingsford-Smith et al., 2023; Willis & Grainger, 2020). Many teachers in remote communities are away from families and personal networks and must acclimatize to cultural and racial differences. While Filipino IETs often continue some of their favourite pastimes such as karaoke,

attending church, and sharing meals, some previously enjoyed activities may be inaccessible in remote communities (Willis & Grainger, 2020). The personal resources of a teacher, such as supportive colleagues, often play a significant role in teacher well-being (Kingsford-Smith et al., 2023), so developing relationships with co-teachers positively impacts job satisfaction.

The Filipino IETs work with teachers from diverse backgrounds in their respective schools. Co-teachers identify as Filipino, Indigenous, and from other backgrounds, including Indian. Educational institutions can often be unwelcoming and even racially hostile places for BIPOC individuals (Luedke, 2023). The hostility and intolerance that BIPOC teachers experience can lead to feelings of marginalization, discouragement, and self-doubt (Luedke, 2023). Some research has shown that BIPOC teachers are treated with contempt in urban schools and often face discrimination in terms of their names, accents, dress, and religion (Block, 2012; Sangalang, 2022; Schmidt, 2010). The schools that Filipino IETs work at in Northern Manitoba, which employ many immigrant and Indigenous teachers, are essentially counterspaces—places of refuge and resistance (Luedke, 2023).

The Filipino IETs in Northern Manitoba maintain their physical and mental well-being by developing strong relationships with their fellow Filipino colleagues and with the Indigenous residents of their communities. Dolly and Suzanna, for example, engaged with members of their church community. Juan, Catherine, Minerva, and Anchor enjoyed karaoke and dancing together. The teachers also planned movie nights and potlucks and went on outings such as picnics, blueberry picking, and skiing. Indigenous friends sometimes joined the teachers on these ventures. The Filipino IETs supported each other and engaged in activities outside of school hours; this support was vital in lowering anxiety levels and helping the newcomer teachers integrate into their new communities (McCormick & Dooley, 2005). These informal gatherings

also allowed the Filipino teachers to gather in a safe space, receive support, and discuss common issues (Bouchamma et al., 2018; McCormick & Dooley, 2005). According to CRT, these counterspaces of refuge are vital for strategic collaboration and to validate the experiences of racialized teachers (Luedke, 2023; Margherio et al., 2023). Anchor, for example, mentioned how the group often shares experiences such as the challenges of winter driving. The Filipino IETs maintain their physical and mental well-being through collaboration and by supporting each other in Indigenous communities.

Filipino Resiliency

The participants strongly emphasized the resiliency of Filipino people during the interviews. Life in Indigenous communities can be isolating for new residents. The weather can be extreme, and many live in these remote locales without their families. While many IETs engage in activities to maintain their physical health and mental well-being, it takes a significant amount of resiliency to reside and teach in remote communities. Teacher shortages are rampant in Northern Manitoba (Monkman, 2017), indicating that some teachers may not have had the fortitude to remain in the North.

Nevertheless, teacher recruitment and retention in First Nations schools is multifaceted. Schools in the North struggle to maintain adequate staffing and often feel the brunt of high teacher turnover (Mueller et al., 2011). Mueller et al. (2011) determined that some teachers struggle to adjust to remote assignments and feel isolated in rural communities. Other teachers leave northern posts because they feel less supported and have fewer professional networks to access compared to their counterparts in larger, more urban divisions (Mueller et al., 2011). The loss of teachers in the North has detrimental effects on Indigenous learners, resulting in the erosion of partnerships between teachers and students (Burleigh, 2016; Monkman, 2017; Mueller

et al., 2011). The partnerships between Filipino IETs and Indigenous communities are vital, therefore, to stabilize teacher retention and mitigate turnover in First Nations schools.

Approached through a CRT lens, the alliance between Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples also becomes key in disrupting the ill effects of settler colonialism. Indigenous epistemologies have been historically suppressed through assimilation and white supremacy (Gahman & Legault, 2019). To counter this suppression, the Filipino IETs in this study have shown a meaningful interest in the cultural practices of Indigenous Peoples in their communities (Mohamed et al., 2020). By their doing so, Indigenous knowledge systems and land-based activities can help them challenge the balance of colonial power (Skelton, 2022), and meaningful connections can be made between newcomer groups and Indigenous Peoples.

According to Yosso (2005), the social networks and connections a group forms constitute its social capital, which is vital for the acquisition of cultural capital. Pierre Bourdieu defines cultural capital as “an accumulation of cultural knowledge, skills and abilities possessed and inherited by privileged groups in society” (as cited in Yosso, 2005, p. 76). Newcomer groups such as IETs typically possess less cultural capital than more dominant members of society, which results in less privilege (Marom & Xu, 2025). In the school system, a lack of cultural capital results in IETs struggling to secure teaching positions in urban areas because they lack the social networks and connections that the dominant group uses to secure such positions (Marom & Xu, 2025; Yosso, 2005). By forming meaningful connections with Indigenous Peoples and other educators in northern communities, Filipino IETs are acquiring the cultural capital needed for greater social mobility.

Filipinos have demonstrated the ability to succeed personally and professionally in the North. Filipinos comprise one of the world’s leading overseas labour demographics, with an

estimated 10 million Filipinos living and working abroad (Asis, 2017). Filipinos residing and working abroad send remittances back home to support families; indeed, some of the IETs interviewed for this research study also mentioned how they send remittances back home to support siblings and elderly parents. The income from Filipinos who work internationally contributes significantly to the Philippines' economy. It is a leading reason why the Government of the Philippines encourages citizens to seek employment abroad (Straiton et al., 2017).

Catherine explained that Filipino teachers can meet the challenge of living and teaching in remote communities because of the group's willpower. She elaborated:

Our group [Filipino teachers] has that patience. We have a "survival of the fittest" attitude. We have support among the teachers within the group to encourage each other. We encourage and help each other. We eat together, so whenever we come from school and back to our homes, it's like exchanging ideas that we have. It's our outlet to become happy.

Suzanna believes that Filipinos are a resilient group of people. She feels Filipino teachers have the mental fortitude to teach anywhere. Suzanna recalled hearing a former Filipino principal explaining the tenacity that Filipino teachers possess, saying: "I remember someone asking a [Filipino] principal why Filipino teachers are always hired, and he said, 'If you give Filipinos a piece of chalk, they can teach anywhere.'"

Suzanna explained that Filipinos are resilient and determined. She said that Filipino children typically go to great lengths and travel long distances to access education, especially in the more marginalized communities in the Philippines. She stated:

Even our students in the Philippines will climb mountains and hills, drive and swim lakes, and do all of this to have education across the community. They will do all of this to have a paper and pencil in their hands.

Minerva feels strongly that resiliency, dedication, and a strong sense of commitment are why Filipino teachers have succeeded and integrated well into Indigenous communities. She said: “Filipinos have their own career goals. They want to accomplish those goals first in the community before leaving. I would say dedication is one reason why Filipinos stay, and the ability to adapt is another.”

Migration is often a challenging endeavour and can result in mental health problems for immigrant groups, including Filipinos. Increased levels of stress and anxiety are typical for migrants, including feelings of confusion, anxiousness, and social withdrawal (Straiton et al., 2017). The Filipino IETs residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities have negated the stress and anxiety that accompanies migration by engaging in activities that maintain their physical and mental well-being. Some research suggests that informal support and religion are key to maintaining mental health (Hufana et al., 2020; Straiton et al., 2017). Ripple, Dolly, and Suzanna stressed the importance of attending church and connecting with their faith—a connection that Ripple said has helped sustain their inner strength. Juan, Minerva, and Anchor discussed the importance of informally supporting each other as teachers. The group meets for karaoke, physical activity, cooking, and movie nights. Juan said these connections ease the anxiety of being away from families and mitigate the stress of the teaching profession. Minerva misses her family in the city but acknowledged her Filipino colleagues’ important role as a “second” family. The members of this family support each other and provide the strength and resilience needed to live and teach in the North.

Social networking with colleagues has been a key contributor to the success of Filipino IETs in Northern Manitoba. A close network can ease adjustment stress and negate feelings of loneliness (Straiton et al., 2017). Hufana et al. (2020) point out that Filipinos typically strongly desire to connect with others, a core Filipino value. The Filipino worldview also strongly emphasizes community; as a result, Filipinos prioritize collectivism, which consists of making social connections and supporting community members (Hufana et al., 2020). Anchor mentioned, for example, how Filipino IETs support newcomer Filipino teachers by engaging in conversation and arranging potlucks. Minerva added that connecting with fellow Filipino teachers strengthened the group's resiliency, which is needed to dissipate loneliness and homesickness. Social networking fosters a sense of belonging, crucial for newcomer Filipinos residing and teaching in Indigenous communities.

The friendships established with Indigenous community members have also been an indicator of the successful partnership between Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples. Minerva discussed how her colleagues frequently go on outings, such as blueberry picking and picnics with Indigenous friends, and Suzanna mentioned that she shares food with Indigenous residents at her church. RJ befriended Indigenous people in the community when he took up the practice of beading; he valued the friendships he made with Elders who helped him develop his beading skills. While the Filipino IETs have made meaningful connections in their respective communities, relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples have historically been characterized as tense and nuanced (Alidina et al., 2020). Adam and Hogue (2015) note that a disconnect exists between the two groups due to various factors, including false stereotypes, misinformation, and a lack of meaningful interactions. Although on a smaller scale, the friendships between Filipino teachers and Indigenous Peoples in northern communities are an

important stepping stone toward improving overall relationships and alleviating some of the tension between newcomer groups and Indigenous Peoples.

Conclusion

This chapter profiled how Indigenous Peoples have welcomed Filipino IETs in their communities. While not all communities were as welcoming as others, the study participants largely felt accepted as new residents. Juan and RJ mentioned how people in their community provided transportation and invited the newcomer teachers on fishing, hunting, and boating trips. Chloe shared how community members provided her with moose meat and rallied to pull her stuck vehicle out of the snow. This joyful welcome served to negate apprehension among the Filipino teachers. Throughout history, Indigenous Peoples have encountered hostility on behalf of settlers, including through harmful Indian Acts, the residential school system, and displacement to remote parts of the province (Ahluwalia, 2012). Analyzed through a CRT lens, White settler society has marginalized Indigenous Peoples through displacement and discriminatory systems and policies (Writer, 2008). Despite the adverse treatment they have received from non-Indigenous people, the Filipino IETs reported that Indigenous Peoples were gracious hosts by welcoming and accepting them into their communities.

Forging relationships has been a key contributor to a strong connection being made between Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples. Filipino teachers have forged relationships by making themselves visible in the community, sharing food, and participating in outdoor excursions with Indigenous residents. RJ has made connections by familiarizing himself with the Northern Lights and teaching his students and community members about the intricacies of the natural phenomenon. Cultural similarities between Filipinos and Indigenous Peoples have also strengthened the connection between the two groups. Both sides share a history of colonization

and have felt the harmful impacts of colonial expansion (Adam & Hogue, 2015; Alidina et al., 2020). Despite this negative commonality, Filipinos and Indigenous Peoples share other positive similarities, such as a reliance on traditional medicine and strong familial values (Chaturvedi, 2005; Salazar, 1993). The Filipino IETs have connected with Indigenous Peoples by respecting Indigenous culture and learning about their traditions. Juan mentioned how he participates in smudges. RJ immersed himself in traditional beadwork, and Ripple and Suzanna participated in land-based educational outings. These outings connect Filipinos to a new culture and benefit their physical and mental well-being, which is needed when living in the remoteness of Northern Manitoba.

Most importantly, the Filipino IETs have befriended Indigenous Peoples in their respective communities. The two groups have gone on outings together, share food at community events, and assist each other when challenges arise. The friendships made in Indigenous communities are an important step in alleviating historical tensions and improving the relationship between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples (Adam & Hogue, 2015). As demonstrated throughout the chapter, the Filipino IETs have enjoyed many successes by living and teaching in Indigenous communities.

Chapter 8: The Experiences and Challenges of Living and Teaching in the North

This chapter explores the experiences of the Filipino IETs in northern Indigenous communities. The first section of the chapter focuses on what life is like in Northern Manitoba from the perspective of the IET participants. An overview of the communities the Filipino IETs are residing in begins the section. The sacrifices the participants made, including how many left spouses and children in the city for significant amounts of time, are examined. This section also discusses the advantages of northern employment, including how school divisions and band schools in the North often make significant financial investments to entice teachers to reside and teach in northern communities.

The second section of the chapter focuses on the challenges of teaching in Northern Manitoba and how the IETs mitigate the barriers of living and teaching in the North. The section begins with the initial experiences of the IETs as they settled in northern communities. Working in isolation, encountering skepticism from some community members, and working with Indigenous parents who sometimes mistrust the school system due to a history of mistreatment are some of the challenges that are explored in this chapter. While the IETs experienced some difficulties living and teaching in northern communities, the resiliency of the group, the advantages of teaching in the North, and the beauty of the region, as shown in the accompanying pictures, will be emphasized. This section concludes by describing the strategies that IETs use to mitigate some of the challenges associated with teaching in northern communities.

Working in the North

Many of the communities featured in this section are in the northern regions of Manitoba, while a few are situated more centrally in the province. IETs must often make significant sacrifices while living and working in these communities. IETs sometimes must leave spouses

and children behind while teaching in the North. Three of the ten IETs interviewed for this study, fortunately, had spouses and children living with them during most of their time spent in the region. Suzanna's husband, for instance, moved up North to join her in Arrow Creek, and during her interview, Suzanna expressed how fortunate she felt having her husband join her. Seven of the ten IETs were living alone and apart from their families at the time of the interview. Minerva, for example, spoke of the difficulty of leaving her young children in the city with her husband. Anchor spoke of the guilt she felt when her young son begged her to return home, and Catherine spoke of the challenge of living apart from her husband for the first time in her life. Spouses and children visited and stayed up North for short periods, but spending time away from families for long durations emotionally affected the IETs.

Through an intersectional lens, IETs face multiple barriers as they adjust to host societies. Before applying for teaching positions, IETs face challenges with qualifications recognition and recertification, as well as systemic racism within hiring practices once certified (Boyd, 2008; Marom, 2019; Schmidt, 2010). These obstacles often preclude IETs from accessing the job market in urban regions. Ripple, Suzanna, and Dolly spoke of the numerous applications they submitted that were rejected by urban divisions and the hostility they felt in staff rooms when substitute teaching in city schools. The creation of a more diverse teaching force can be achieved by employing more IETs; however, the power relations of race, ethnicity, and age often work against IETs in the hiring process (Collins & Bilge, 2016). These intersecting relations result in a teaching force lacking in racial diversity, and IETs are largely excluded from employment in urban schools.

Despite the challenges of working in Northern Manitoba, there are many advantages of accepting employment in the North. For example, the Meadowbrook School Division and other

band schools cover a range of costs for teachers willing to relocate to the North, including travel allowances and incentive packages (Greenslade, 2023). Northern school boards often must pay significant recruitment fees to entice teachers to live and work in their communities, placing a financial strain on these institutions. The School District of Mystery Lake in Thompson, for example, often struggles to fill vacancies and must frequently attend career fairs, make cold calls to potential applicants, and post extensively on social media and in newspapers to attract teachers (Greenslade, 2023). The Meadowbrook School Division, like Mystery Lake, has difficulty attracting applicants and sometimes relies on educational assistants to cover classrooms until qualified teachers are in place. Both divisions spend significant money to attract teachers inter-provincially and internationally as well (Greenslade, 2023). Northern school boards must work increasingly harder than urban divisions to attract and retain teaching staff.

Indigenous learners evidently feel the brunt of the teacher shortages and financial strains that affect school divisions in Northern Manitoba. School divisions like Meadowbrook and Mystery Lake spend considerable amounts on attracting teachers, but sometimes cannot adequately staff their classrooms (Gillies, 2023; Greenslade, 2023). Without qualified teachers, Indigenous students in these divisions cannot access the educational opportunities that are afforded to students in more urban divisions. These structural disadvantages limit the educational opportunities for Indigenous learners whose ancestors were displaced to the remote and northern regions of the province by settlers (Gillies, 2023). Teacher shortages and financial strains for northern school divisions showcase the inequity that is endemic in society for Indigenous Peoples.

Overview of Communities

The Filipino IETs interviewed for this study lived and taught in various Indigenous communities. Manitoba has 63 First Nations communities; 17 do not have all-weather roads and are designated as fly-in communities (Government of Canada, 2022). Two of the IETs, Minerva and RJ, lived in fly-in communities. One of these fly-in communities is Fox Grove First Nation.

Minerva taught in Fox Grove for approximately eight years. Unlike many Filipino colleagues, Minerva spent her teaching career in a single school in Canada. She described Fox Grove by saying: “Fox Grove is like, I don’t know how far it is from Winnipeg, but it’s a fly-in community, and it’s a big community. Out of the four communities that make up [name withheld], it’s the biggest community.”

Figure 20

Fox Grove First Nation Viewed From a Helicopter



Fox Grove First Nation is approximately 600 kilometres from Winnipeg. The remoteness of Fox Grove First Nation means that helicopters are needed to access the community during the

wintertime. Minerva shared a picture (Figure 20) and commented: “During the seasonal freeze-up and breakup of the lake, conventional modes of transportation like boats and cars become unsafe. To access the community and the airport, we rely on helicopters, ensuring safe travel in these challenging conditions.”

RJ worked in various Indigenous communities but spent most of his time employed as a teacher in North Shore. He provided an overview of the community:

North Shore is a remote community. Here, fishing and hunting are the main sources of livelihood for people. The population is about 1,200, and most roads here are gravel roads, so it's not easy to access. In order for you to come here, you have to take the ferry. You actually have to park your car on a ferry to be able to cross the lake to get here. It's a four-hour drive from Thompson. It's a safe community, and I like it here.

RJ shared a picture of the scenery in his community (Figure 21) and stated:

This is my favourite spot in the community. This photo looks like a canvas of untouched landscapes and untamed skies. In the North's quiet vastness, nature paints a masterpiece, where the beautiful skies meet the ravishing sunset, revealing the sublime beauty that only the north can effortlessly command.

RJ mentioned that having a vehicle is imperative while living in North Shore. He recalled:

When I first came here, I didn't have a vehicle yet. In order to get out of North Shore, just to get to Thompson, it would've required a lot of effort, knocking on everyone's door and asking for a ride to bring me to Thompson, but when I got my vehicle, everything became so convenient for me because I can get out anytime I want.

Figure 21*RJ in North Shore*

RJ also mentioned how accessing healthcare can be challenging in northern communities like North Shore due to their remoteness. He recalled a time when he had difficulty accessing emergency dental care:

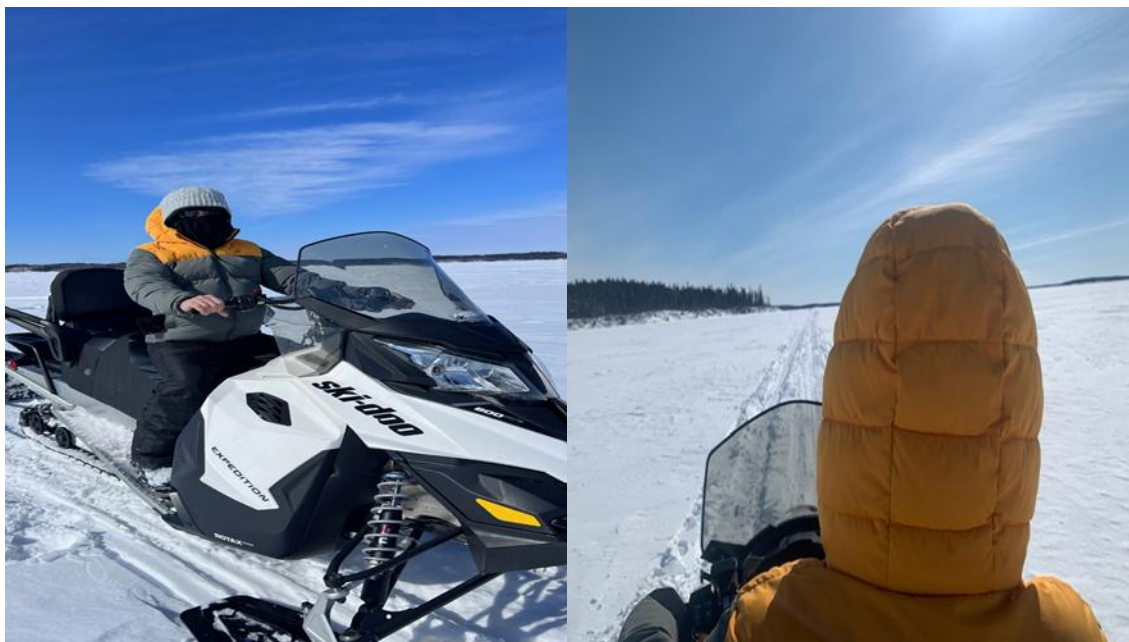
The doctor here comes once a month, and when they come, it's only a three-day visit, then they're gone. Same thing with the dental check-ups. There was one time I had a very bad toothache, and I really couldn't hold it anymore, so I called the nursing station, and we don't have a dentist. I mean the dentist also comes every month.

Healthcare and transportation challenges, as RJ mentioned, have long been a concern in Northern Manitoba. Northern residents often face difficulties accessing essential services, such as healthcare, due to unreliable road, rail, and air transportation (Cash, 2024). The lack of infrastructure funding in the North exacerbates transportation and healthcare difficulties. Highway accidents are also more serious in the region due to less reliable emergency services

(Cash, 2024). Indigenous Peoples who were displaced to the northern and remote regions in Manitoba face an underinvestment in public infrastructure and services compared to residents in urban areas (Muhajarine, 2024). Many of these services are essential to quality of life, such as healthcare, transportation, internet coverage, and cell phone service. To earn an income in the North, residents often need to commute to more populated areas to access employment (Muhajarine, 2024). The livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and IETs are affected by these transportation and healthcare challenges, like when RJ could not leave his community without a vehicle and could not access dental care in a timely fashion. Less government investment in infrastructure and essential services in the North is another colonial tactic that disadvantages Indigenous Peoples and makes life doubly challenging in Northern Manitoba.

Figure 22

RJ Riding a Snowmobile



RJ also commented on how snowmobiles are popular means of transportation during the wintertime in North Shore for navigating the challenging terrain. He shared pictures (Figure 22) and explained:

These are photos of me in pure exhilaration as I navigate the snowy expanse on my first Ski-Doo [snowmobile] ride. In this frozen adventure, these photographs capture the joy radiating from every bundled-up layer. The whirl of the engine harmonizes with the beating of my heart, and the frozen landscape becomes a canvas for the unbridled excitement of a maiden Ski-Doo journey, etched under the smiles of my covered face.

Minerva added that using a boat is necessary to navigate around Fox Grove First Nation. She shared a picture (Figure 23) and stated: “Given my lack of swimming skills, navigating a boat posed my initial challenge upon entering the community. Water envelops the community; and the sole means of transportation is by boat.”

Figure 23

Boats at Fox Grove First Nation



Geographical isolation segregates many of Manitoba's Indigenous communities, like North Shore and Fox Grove First Nation. The remoteness of these northern communities presents challenges for their inhabitants, including issues with economic development, service delivery, and access to the labour market and healthcare services (Cash, 2024; Muhajarine, 2024; OECD, 2016). Air travel is also a significant challenge in the North. Air travel is the primary method of transportation linking many northern residents to larger communities, such as The Pas, Flin Flon, and Thompson, as well as cities in the southern region, including Brandon and Winnipeg (Brass, 2023). High airfare costs, excessive baggage fees, and frequent delays and cancellations exacerbate the air transportation challenges that plague the North. A lack of qualified pilots and mechanics also hampers airlines that operate in Northern Manitoba, such as Perimeter Aviation and Calm Air (Brass, 2023).

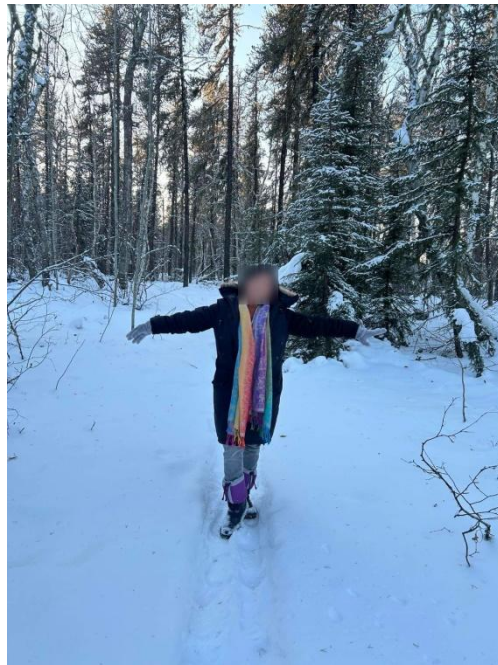
Colonial expansion resulted in Indigenous Peoples being forced to northern and remote regions of the province, culminating in a loss of traditional lands, cultures, and identities (Snelgrove et al., 2014; Steinman, 2020; Tester, 2017). Colonial displacement now results in Indigenous Peoples being unable to access healthcare and essential services in a timely and affordable fashion due to a lack of infrastructure investment in the North and costly airfares (Brass, 2023; Cash, 2024; Muhajarine, 2024). The effects of settler colonialism are endemic for Indigenous Peoples (Writer, 2008), as the group continues to struggle to access essential services in the North through no fault of their own.

Mayette is the principal of Turtle River Education Centre. She loves living and working in the community. She provided an overview of Turtle River, saying: "Turtle River is a small community. Right now, I believe we have only 500 people. It's really small. I would say 90 percent or 95 percent of the people are Indigenous. Cree is their dialect."

Minerva included a picture of the trail that she uses to walk to her school (Figure 24), saying: “This image shows the trails that I take to go to school.”

Figure 24

Minerva on Her Walk to School



Ripple is the teaching principal at Timberwolf School in Eagle’s Creek. She worked as a classroom teacher in two other communities before settling in Eagle’s Creek. She has been employed in the community for nine years. Ripple described Eagle’s Creek, saying:

Eagle’s Creek is not really a northern community. It’s close to Dauphin. It’s in the central part of Manitoba. These people have been exposed to Filipinos, so they accepted me and supported me, and at this point, there is trust and support.

It is essential to note that not all First Nations communities where IETs work are remote, like North Shore and Fox Grove First Nation are. Eagle’s Creek, for example, is approximately

300 kilometres¹⁹ northwest of Winnipeg and roughly 120 kilometres northeast of Dauphin. Deerwood First Nation, where Chloe resides and teaches, is approximately 285 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg. Some of the communities, however, are very remote. Turtle River, where Mayette works, is approximately 1,000 kilometres north of Winnipeg and roughly 250 kilometres from Thompson, the most populated municipality in Northern Manitoba. Pelican Grove, where Juan lives and works, is about 600 kilometres northwest of Winnipeg but less than 10 kilometres from The Pas.

According to Layton (2023), the remoteness of a community affects the opportunities available to Indigenous Peoples. Essential services, including retail, schools, and healthcare facilities, tend to be more challenging to access for those living in remote communities (Layton, 2023), such as Pelican Grove and Turtle River. The forced relocation of Indigenous Peoples to remote regions of Manitoba continues to have lingering effects on the future generations of Indigenous youth when examined under a CRT lens, as the remoteness of one's community factors into high school completion rates among Indigenous Peoples (Cash, 2024; Layton, 2023; Muhajarine, 2024). Living in proximity to a school is a positive factor in completing a high-school education. Residing farther from school results in higher transportation costs to access schooling and a lower likelihood that the remote community contains the support and role models to mentor high school-aged youth (Layton, 2023). While high school should be available for all those interested in attending, Indigenous youth living in remote communities in Manitoba have a more challenging time accessing schooling outside of their communities.

¹⁹ All distances were calculated using Google Maps.

Ripple shared a picture of her community (Figure 25), commenting: “This is a view of the back window of my teacherage. This was taken during COVID where life was so uncertain, but looking at the beautiful sunset always brightened my day.”

Figure 25

A View From Ripple’s Teacherage



Like Ripple, Anchor works as a teaching principal; at the time of the study, she was stationed at the Foresthill Community School in Honey Lake First Nation. IETs who assume the role of teaching principals take on an important, dual-role position that involves both teaching and administrative duties. These dual-role educators are more frequently found in remote, rural, and northern schools with lower enrollment (Newton & Wallin, 2013). In their research, Newton and Wallin (2013) suggest that the teaching principal may be an untenable position. Some of the challenges associated with the position include heavy workloads, a myriad of roles, and difficulty deciphering between the two different jobs (i.e., administrator vs. teacher). Cornish and Jenkins (2015) note that teaching principals often work in isolation, receive minimal

administrative assistance, and usually experience a lack of professional interactions. Teachers who ascend to the role of teaching principals are also usually thrust into administrative positions without adequate professional development at the principal level (Newton & Wallin, 2013). The above hurdles highlight the challenges that teaching principals must face as dual-role educators.

Despite the challenges associated with the position, Newton and Wallin (2013) note that the teaching principal position may be a promising model within certain educational settings, especially for low-enrollment schools in non-urban areas, such as Eagle's Creek and Honey Lake. Teaching principals like Ripple and Anchor, who work in remote settings, can usually form more meaningful relationships with students and community members, given the lower number of students and residents. For example, Eagle's Creek has an estimated 120 residents, and Honey Lake has roughly 300 residents.²⁰ In their interviews, both IETs emphasized the importance of forming connections with students and community members, as well as the impactful role they played as teaching principals. The ability to interact more closely with students, given the lower student-to-administrator ratio, is an additional benefit of the teaching principal role (Newton & Wallin, 2013). Some research thus supports the effectiveness of the teaching principal position despite the inherent obstacles.

Anchor taught in a few other schools before assuming the teaching principal position at Honey Lake. She described the community:

It's a small community. Until now, because there is not enough housing, some [residents] are still in the city [Winnipeg] or other parts of Manitoba. When I started this school, I just had 22 students. I thought we would not be able to open it because when we did the August gathering in 2018, the superintendent told me, "I don't know if we're opening this

²⁰ These population figures were gathered from a Google search.

school because there's no registration." And so, I was worried because I left Grand Rapids, and now I am ready to come to Honey Lake, and then the superintendent told me, "Not sure if we are going to open," so I told myself, "Where am I going?"

School closures, teacher shortages, and interrupted education are issues that plague Indigenous communities in Manitoba. The historical displacement of Indigenous Peoples to remote locations in the province means that teachers are difficult to employ and retain; as a result, northern schools routinely face closure, and learners face interrupted education (Burleigh, 2016). Teacher shortages and interrupted education result from settler-colonial displacement that can be exposed through a CRT lens (Writer, 2008). By taking Indigenous lands and sending people to remote locales in the province, settler colonialism has disrupted the education of Indigenous Peoples by making their communities challenging to access and reside in for teachers. An increase of employable teachers such as IETs could pay dividends in mitigating the teacher shortages and interrupted schooling that often plague Indigenous communities. Hiring more teachers and ensuring continuous education are essential steps toward decolonization.

Mitigating funding disparities for First Nations schools is another crucial step toward decolonization. Although residential schooling has ended, funding shortfalls are another colonial tactic exposed through a CRT lens that prevents Indigenous schools from offering competitive teacher salaries (Bentham et al., 2019; Drummond & Rosenbluth, 2013). Many federally funded First Nations schools receive significantly less funding than provincially and territorially funded school divisions (Bentham et al., 2019). According to Bentham et al. (2019), federal funding for First Nations schools has been capped at 2% annually since 1996, while funding for provincially and territorially administered schools is capped at 4.1%. This disparity has resulted in an approximate \$3 billion shortfall for First Nations schools (Bentham et al., 2019). Drummond and

Rosenbluth (2013) point out that federal funding is roughly 20 to 50 percent lower for First Nations schools than provincially funded schools in some regions. The funding disparity hampers decolonization efforts and requires mitigation so that Indigenous schools can offer competitive salaries to prospective teachers.

Making Sacrifices and Taking Advantage of Opportunities

Many participants have made sacrifices by choosing to live and teach in Northern Manitoba. IETs often leave spouses, children, and extended family members behind in the city by accepting teaching positions in northern locales. Minerva, for instance, leaves her husband and children in Winnipeg while she lives and teaches in Fox Grove First Nation. She tries to visit her family once a month. The trip requires flying, as Fox Grove is only accessible by air. Minerva stated: “With my family in Winnipeg, I fly at least once a month, and especially on long weekends, I take the opportunity to be with family for a longer time.”

Minerva has three children, two who are over 18 and one who is five years old. Minerva’s two older children tell her not to worry about them and that they can be independent while she lives up North. They communicate with their mom through Facebook and confide in her if they have problems. Minerva admitted, however, that leaving her youngest child is stressful. She explained:

Right now, the hardest part is my five-year-old [son]. It’s hard for me to leave him all the time. But then my husband keeps saying, “That’s what I’m here for.” He keeps telling me, “Oh, you took care of the two older ones by yourself before, so it’s my turn.”

Like Minerva, Suzanna has spent most of her time away from her family while she has taught up North. She pleaded with her husband to join her once he retired. She explained: “My

husband lives in the city because he has work. He has worked in the city for ten years already. I told him to retire because I needed his help, and he said, ‘Okay, give me some time.’”

Anchor spent 10 years living apart from her husband and children while residing up North. She remembered how her son pleaded with her to return to help him with his homework. She recalled:

At the start, when my son was still young, like in elementary, I called at night, and he was doing the assignments or homework, but then he said, “Mom, come home. It’s hard.”

And I said, “Now?” And he said, “Yeah, now.” I said, “I can’t.”

Like Anchor, Dolly reminisced about the time she spent away from her family while teaching up North. Her children are older now, but it was challenging when they were younger. She reflected on the time she spent away from them, saying:

When I started teaching here [Arrow Creek First Nation], it was still a fly-in community.

When I moved here, it was my first year away from my family. My family is my priority.

That’s why I moved to Canada, so being separated from my family was a huge challenge.

Immigrant women like Dolly, Anchor, Suzanna, and Minerva face a rash of challenges in host societies, including separation from children as they support themselves and the family unit away from home. Immigrant women sometimes take on employment below their qualifications to support families, as evidenced by Dolly and Suzanna accepting EA jobs even though they were licensed teachers. Drawing on intersectionality, immigrant women often face experiences like those of immigrant men, as their international credentials and experiences are undervalued in the Canadian workplace (Szeto, 2022). Immigrant women, nevertheless, face additional barriers, namely gender discrimination and the biased assumption that women must be the sole caregivers for their families. Immigrant women also deal with multiple stressors, such as a temporary

reduction in employment status and the loss of personal and familial networks (Knaifel & Rubinstein, 2024). The female IETs in this study, such as Dolly and Suzanna, discussed the difficulty of leaving their parents and family networks behind in the Philippines. Dolly and Suzanna went from being teachers in the Philippines to working as educational assistants. Mayette, a doctoral holder and former professor in the Philippines, underwent a lengthy recertification process to secure employment as a term teacher and, eventually, a permanent teacher. These experiences demonstrate how female IETs must navigate several intersecting challenges in Canada as they rebuild their lives and recertify in their chosen professions.

While immigrant women face challenges in host countries, Knaifel and Rubinstein (2024) caution researchers against focusing too much on these challenges. Viewed through an intersectional lens, immigrant women demonstrate considerable empowerment, resilience, and agency as they adjust to host societies (Njeze et al., 2020). The benefit of employing intersectionality as a theoretical framework is that it allows for the analysis of intersecting relations alongside the resilience and fortitude that immigrants demonstrate in mitigating these challenges.

Being away from family was challenging for Mayette, but she made monthly trips to the city to see her husband and children. Mayette also brought her daughter to work in her school.

She explained:

My youngest daughter did her education at the University of Winnipeg. She completed a Bachelor of Science in biology. At the time that she graduated, she couldn't find a job in Winnipeg. I took her here, so she was one of the EAs, and then later on I needed a phys. ed teacher, so she was our gym teacher for a while.

IETs who give unqualified family members' teaching jobs is an issue that needs to be problematized. Mayette, on the one hand, could be praised for filling the vacant physical education teaching job at her school. Her daughter held an undergraduate degree and could likely fill the position to some extent. One could also praise Mayette's resourcefulness in filling the vacancy that her employer, the Meadowbrook School Division, likely could not fill in the short term. Nevertheless, Indigenous learners deserve to be taught by qualified teachers, including in the subject of physical education. Throughout history, Indigenous knowledge systems have been pushed to the periphery by teachers in favour of curricula dominated by Eurocentric perspectives (Henderson, 2023). Failing to provide qualified teachers for Indigenous learners is a continuation of harmful colonial practices exposed through a CRT lens (Preston et al., 2017). These colonial tactics create social inequalities for Indigenous youth. The current and future generations of Indigenous youth deserve positive schooling experiences (Preston et al., 2017). While Mayette's daughter possessed post-secondary education and provided some stability to the position, she was neither a qualified teacher nor an expert in physical education.

Catherine is closer to her family than some of the other IETs, as her community of Honey Lake First Nation is more centrally located in the province than others. Nevertheless, Honey Lake is over 350 kilometres from Winnipeg, and going back and forth between the community and the city requires a substantial amount of driving. Travelling from Winnipeg to Honey Lake can be challenging, especially during the winter. Catherine explained:

Honey Lake is 3.5 hours away, so it's approximately 350 to 370 kilometres away from Winnipeg. We have our townhouse in Winnipeg. My husband stays there and works there in the city, and I go back every week. We [fellow Filipino IETs] all go back every week.

We have our carpool. So no matter what, if there's a typhoon or a winter blizzard, we always go back to our family.

As a teaching principal, Ripple is tasked with hiring new teachers. Before she hires a new educator, Ripple makes sure the individual is aware of the sacrifices it takes to live up North and that the decision has been thoroughly discussed with the applicant's family. She elaborated:

If teachers intend to come, I always ask, "How old are your kids? What does your husband say?" For example, Meadowbrook School Division has 40-plus vacant positions, but we will not just tell an applicant, "Okay, come on, leave your family, and join us."

Ripple understands the sacrifices that IETs must make if they choose to reside and live up North, as she experienced anxiety herself upon relocating from the city. She recalled:

There was a time I was crying by myself. I was missing my husband, and I wanted to go back [to the city], and then I could not sleep. Immediately, I told my principal that I didn't feel comfortable with what was happening around me.

IETs like Ripple often make sacrifices like relocating to remote locales to improve the livelihood of their families. Immigrant parents sometimes give up promising careers in their countries of origin and familial time to provide financially for their households (Boyd, 2008). IETs make these sacrifices despite the strain that it places on families, especially on children. Anchor mentioned how her son pleaded for his mom to return to the city so she could help him with his homework. Dolly commented on how stressful it was to leave her young children at home in a new country, and Ripple recalled her anxiety about leaving her husband in the city. Cuevas (2019) explains that immigrant parents like Anchor, Dolly, and Ripple are often treated with mystical reverence and cast as martyrs in fiction and academic scholarship, given the sacrifices they are willing to make for the betterment of their children's lives. While sometimes

cast as superheroes, the lived reality of immigrant parents is more complex (Cuevas, 2019). Many newcomers must work tirelessly in survival-type employment and remote locations to financially support their families (Abramova, 2013; Stephenson, 2020). This sacrifice often goes unrecognized in mainstream society.

Nevertheless, IETs are pursuing their chosen careers, so the sacrifice is nuanced and deserves acknowledgment. While living and residing in remote and northern communities presents challenges, there are numerous benefits to life in Northern Manitoba. IETs who join these communities have an opportunity to become part of the social fabric of their respective communities. Smaller, rural communities are typically known for providing a great deal of support and concern, and treating all members as extended family (Schmidt, 2008). Teaching abroad is typically viewed as an exciting opportunity, while numerous studies highlight the challenging nature of life in northern communities (see Bell, 2004; Mendelson, 2008; Wotherspoon, 2006). It is essential to change that narrative, as life in the North offers numerous opportunities. Teachers who move up north tend to benefit from career advancement and the opportunities available for working professionals (Schmidt, 2008). RJ, for example, became a resource teacher, Anchor and Mayette ascended to the rank of teaching principals, and Chloe became a guidance counsellor. The North also provides numerous options for outdoor activities that teachers can partake in throughout the year (Schmidt, 2008). Juan, for instance, learned how to hunt, RJ learned snowmobiling, and Minerva learned how to harvest traditional medicine. For researchers and policymakers seeking to attract and retain immigrant teachers, it is vital to showcase the vibrancy of the North and the opportunities available, rather than continually referencing the sacrifices it takes to live in the region.

Employment Incentives

Despite the challenges of residing in northern communities, employment in the North has several benefits. These incentives include signing bonuses, incentive packages, and travel allowances (Greenslade, 2023). Minerva commented on how her employer, the Fox Grove First Nation, pays for her trips to the city. She explained:

Our employer pays when we go there [Winnipeg] and at the end of the school year—beginning and end. That’s a round trip. And then every December, they will give us another round trip for free. If there are some workshops in Winnipeg, they will send us to them. They will also cover everything.

Juan mentioned how some northern school boards entice teachers by providing allowances and signing bonuses. He explained:

One of the perks that they are introducing in the Meadowbrook School Division is that all graduates of any Manitoba university starting in 2023 will get a \$10,000 package. So, if you know somebody graduating from U of M or even from U of W, any university here, and wants to work with Meadowbrook, they can get \$10,000 consecutively, so \$10,000 this year, next year, and the coming year. So, three years for \$30,000.

Juan also mentioned that housing for teachers (e.g., teacherages) is very affordable and that utilities are free. He shared a picture of his teacherage in Pelican Grove (Figure 26), commenting: “This is where teachers reside. We only pay barely minimum and utilities are free. It is a three-minute walk from the elementary building and ten minutes to the high school building.”

Figure 26*Juan's Teacherage in Pelican Grove*

The Meadowbrook School Division frequently faces teacher shortages that hinder its ability to provide uninterrupted education in its communities. As Juan mentioned, one of the division's strategies is to offer monetary incentives to entice new teachers. The division spent approximately one million dollars in recruitment fees in 2023 (Greenslade, 2023). In 2023, the division was 45 teachers short of its capacity, and despite aggressive recruitment throughout the year, it remained 20 teachers short of its goal. Meadowbrook often utilizes EAs and unlicensed educators to fill teaching positions temporarily. The division has also considered conducting overseas recruitments to find qualified teachers (Greenslade, 2023). While bringing in more teachers is vital for education in the North, it comes at a significant cost to the division's budget and service delivery. The forced relocation of Indigenous Peoples to remote and northern areas, when analyzed through CRT, can be seen to have residual effects on generations of Indigenous youth. School boards like Meadowbrook must allocate significant portions of their budgets to

teacher recruitment, rather than to service delivery (Greenslade, 2023), which hampers the educational opportunities afforded to Indigenous learners in the region.

Increasing the number of Indigenous students in teacher-training programs could help mitigate teacher shortages in remote and rural regions of Canada, especially if these teachers return to work in their communities. Various factors interconnect, however, leading to a gap in support for future Indigenous teachers. Skelton and Flett-McMahon (2025) determined that interrupted education in First Nations communities, financial constraints, the education system's Eurocentric focus, and retention issues all factor into an underrepresentation of Indigenous teachers. For example, financial constraints prevent many Indigenous students from certifying as educators (Cameron et al., 2024; Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Many First Nations students rely on student loans, bursaries, and scholarships to enter post-secondary institutions (Cameron et al., 2024). These financial supports are often temporary and non-recurring, leaving some applicants unable to afford high tuition fees once the supports cease (Cameron et al., 2024). In addition to short-term financial allocations, Cameron et al. (2024) determined that Indigenous students face obstacles in accessing affordable housing and childcare while completing post-secondary schooling, which leads to an increase in withdrawals. The aforementioned factors all contribute to a lack of Indigenous teachers and subsequent teaching shortages in northern schools.

Interpreted through a CRT lens, the withholding of sustained financial support and the restrictions of affordable housing and childcare are structural inequities that limit the opportunities for Indigenous students. Settler colonialism resulted in Indigenous Peoples being stripped of their lands and sent to reserves—confined spaces located far from urban, settler-controlled areas (Egan & Place, 2013). The reserve system is a constrained network that is

economically, politically, and geographically excluded and marginalized (Egan & Place, 2013). These systemic barriers hamper Indigenous students' ability to succeed in teacher training programs (Cameron et al., 2024; Gillies, 2023; Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Gillies (2023) found that deficit thinking often pins Indigenous students as possessing academic struggles because of internal deficiencies rather than structural inequities. This deficit-oriented perspective denies further academic opportunities to Indigenous learners and limits their participation in teacher training programs (Gillies, 2023; Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Gillies (2023) stresses that White dominance remains pervasive in education systems due to anti-Indigenous deficit racism—a belief that Indigenous Peoples cannot succeed academically in traditional White systems. This deficit discourse can prevent Indigenous students from succeeding in traditional teacher-training programs and contributes to the widespread teaching shortages in Indigenous communities.

The Challenges of Living and Teaching in Indigenous Communities

For newcomer teachers, residing and working in the North has several challenges. Upon arrival, new residents might be taken aback by the living conditions in remote communities. Some of the Filipino IETs had assumed communities in Canada would be affluent and modernized. They were surprised to witness the poverty that marked some of the Indigenous communities they had accepted employment in and compared them to impoverished ones in the Philippines. The instability of internet and cellular networks and geographical isolation were also mentioned as challenges with residing in Northern Manitoba (Government of Canada, 2024a). Some IETs also shared the barriers of working in the North, including the isolation of working in smaller schools, the skepticism from some students and community members, and the lack of support they received from some parents and families. The intergenerational trauma caused by

residential schooling is evident in many First Nations communities and explains the mistrust some community members have of the school system (Milne, 2016; Wilk et al., 2019). The IETs acknowledged this trauma as a primary cause of the friction between Indigenous families and the school system.

To best contribute to the Indigenous communities and schools, several IETs engaged in relationship-building and reconciliation initiatives. Some of these initiatives included providing transportation to and from school, hosting community events, and fostering connections with Elders and community members. Reconciliatory aims can be achieved by improving the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (Mueller et al., 2011; Preston et al., 2017), reconciling differences, and finding common ground (Lederach, 1997). While IETs play a pivotal role in the reconciliation process in northern communities, they serve equally important purposes in all schools and communities throughout the province. For example, IETs who teach in inner-city schools work in environments with more diverse student populations than in Indigenous communities (Block, 2012). Block (2012) conducted research with IETs teaching in inner-city Winnipeg schools and determined they were successful in extending students' understanding of difference and minimizing racial stereotypes. IETs who work in diverse learning environments can be effective mediators between cultural groups, and given their immigrant experiences, can mentor newcomer students. IETs can also provide important translation, when required, to students and parents who speak the same language (Block, 2012). The above highlights the contributions that IETs can make in various educational settings.

Initial Thoughts and Experiences

During his first year of teaching up North, RJ experienced significant challenges and became overwhelmed. He recalled the difficulty of his first teaching assignment, saying:

During my first year, it was hard because everything was overwhelming. It was my first time at the Meadowbrook School Division, and when I first got here, I did not have any clue what to do. I wasn't told what the expectations were except for all the paperwork we needed to submit every month. That's all I knew.

Some of the participants expressed shock in terms of the living conditions in the communities that they reported to. Minerva, for instance, was initially surprised at the living conditions she encountered in Fox Grove First Nation. She commented on how the community resembled some of the poorer communities in the Philippines, saying:

Back home, they would say, "Canada, it's so fancy, no poverty at all." But when I went there [Fox Grove First Nation], it was like I was back home. I've heard it from other teachers and IETs who came: "Am I really in Canada, or am I in a third-world country?"

Chloe works as the guidance counsellor at Applewood School in Deerwood First Nation. She provided some details about the school and the community, saying: "I've been teaching in Deerwood First Nation for five years. The school is Applewood School, the only school in Deerwood First Nation. When I first came there, I taught Grades 8 and 9 combined."

Like Minerva, Chloe commented on the isolation of living in an Indigenous community and how the necessities she took for granted in the city were difficult to access in Deerwood First Nation. She explained:

It's challenging because it's an isolated community. We have our all-season road, but it is still isolated because we don't have Rogers. We don't have a network there. For the first few years, we only had a satellite connection, and there were times when the weather was bad; we didn't have a connection to the internet so that we couldn't communicate with our families.

Life in First Nations communities comes with many challenges. As Chloe shared, phone and internet connections are often slower and less reliable in northern communities than in urban settings. Power outages are more common in Indigenous communities because of inclement weather, contributing to the unreliability of essential services (Government of Canada, 2024a). Climactic conditions in the North vary depending on geographical location, but they can be extreme in some communities. Amenities such as groceries are somewhat limited and more expensive, and accessing clean drinking water can be challenging (Bradford et al., 2017; Government of Canada, 2024a). A CRT-based analysis shows how settler-colonial expansion and the historical displacement of Indigenous Peoples to the northern regions of Manitoba have resulted in a lower quality of life for those living in northern Indigenous communities (Writer, 2008). While climatic conditions are uncontrollable, essentials such as internet coverage, phone service, food, and water are made harder to access for Indigenous Peoples and residents in northern communities through no fault of their own. Access to safe drinking water, for example, is vital for community survival, yet inequities in water access exist, contributing to physical and mental illness in Indigenous reserves (Bradford et al., 2017). Less government investment in essential services like water access is another colonial tactic that marginalizes Indigenous Peoples.

Working in Isolation

Given the low student enrollment in some of the northern schools, some of the IETs taught in isolated environments. Anchor, for example, dealt with isolation, as she was the only teacher stationed at her school. Her school was brand new, and she was the only staff member working in the building for the first month. Anchor recalled:

I was the very first one that they hired. For a month, I was in a portable classroom with kindergarten to Grade 9 [students] in one classroom. So, I had my Mom help me clean the school. I brought my Mom with me.

Rural schools tend to face numerous hurdles, including geographical isolation and lack of funding. These schools also face stiff competition from urban divisions for highly qualified teachers and typically need to provide financial incentives to attract new educators to remote regions (Greenslade, 2023; Thornton, 2017). Anchor's predicament brought several difficulties; however, it is essential to acknowledge the positives of her situation. Rural educators like Anchor play important roles in smaller schools. For example, they can typically form more meaningful, longer-term relationships with community members, particularly if they reside and teach in a community for a long duration (Thornton, 2017). Anchor, for instance, has resided and taught in Honey Lake for over 10 years. Ripple has spent over nine years living and teaching in Eagle's Creek, and Minerva has spent her whole teaching career in Canada, roughly 10 years, residing and teaching in Fox Grove First Nation. While it took some time, Minerva, Ripple, and Anchor made strong connections with Elders, community members, and students in their respective communities.

Thornton (2017) explains that teachers like Anchor can develop a stronger understanding of the needs and desires of their students, given the lower teacher-to-student and administrator-to-student ratios that comprise rural and remote school populations. As the teaching principal in Eagle's Creek, Anchor had only 22 students in her school to begin the year. Low student populations provide educators with opportunities to maximize the resources available to meet their learners' needs. Fostering strong connections and meeting the needs of all learners is typically a more challenging task for educators in urban schools with large student populations

(Thornton, 2017). The above research highlights some of the meaningful benefits of teaching in remote and rural schools.

Anchor eventually received some assistance, as the school hired a custodian, a secretary, and an EA. Although the EA was not a certified teacher, Anchor was advised to divide the class. She explained:

I divided the class into the early and middle years classes. The EA watched the other half while I was doing the early years. When the early years were doing some work, I moved to the other classroom and taught that class for the middle years while the EA watched the early years.

While Anchor and the EA did their best to provide instruction and supervision given a difficult situation, there is an implication that students received instruction only half the time, which is problematic. Indigenous learners in Manitoba have long borne the brunt of maltreatment and marginalization (Henderson, 2023). Henderson (2023) notes that settlers have historically marginalized Indigenous learners within the education system through various means, including eradication, integration, and good intentions. Henderson (2023) explains that it took until the early 2000s for Indigenous education to receive more attention, especially in *The Manitoba Teacher*, the chief publication of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. Conferences devoted to Indigenous education and Indigenous-fused curricular approaches received increased attention from the publication beginning in the twenty-first century. Prior to that time, Indigenous education received scant consideration from governing bodies and teacher societies (Henderson, 2023). While headway has been made in Indigenous education, failing to provide Indigenous learners with qualified teachers and utilizing EAs to teach students shows that much more needs

to be done to adequately meet the needs of these learners, especially in northern and remote communities that feel the brunt of teacher shortages.

Anchor's school eventually hired another certified teacher after a few months. Anchor taught kindergarten to Grade 4 students in one classroom while the new teacher was tasked with teaching Grades 5 to 9. As the teaching principal, Anchor stressed that the most significant challenge she has is the high teacher turnover. She shared:

I have to hire another teacher almost every year because having a multi-grade class is tough. It's good that I started working in a big school. As the math support teacher [previously], I went to different classrooms, from Grades 1 to 8, so I know how it's done. Even if it's multi-grade in my class, I can handle it and know how [to teach multi-level classes]. However, for the others, it must be very tough for them. That's the challenge for me as the principal—having teaching staff stay longer.

Teacher retention challenges are multifaceted. In many Indigenous communities, the duration of a typical teacher's tenure can often be measured in months rather than years (Hall, 2012). The instability of the teaching force in Indigenous communities often has negative repercussions for Indigenous students. High teacher turnover is associated with lower academic outcomes (Mueller et al., 2011). Hall (2012) notes that a "come and go" syndrome negatively affects learners who desire stability in the classroom. Mueller et al. (2011) point out that Indigenous communities struggle to retain certified teachers due to limited support services, inadequate professional support, and the elevated needs of learners in remote communities. The forced historical relocation of Indigenous Peoples to remote areas affects the future of Indigenous youth. The use of unlicensed teachers, high teacher turnover, and the long distances to educational institutions marginalize Indigenous learners in remote regions (Layton, 2023;

Mueller et al., 2011). These colonial tactics limit the opportunities Indigenous students can access within their communities.

Isolation is a significant factor in teacher turnover. Many teachers leave isolated Indigenous communities after a short duration, which leads to a shortage of educators in these communities (Burleigh, 2016; Mueller et al., 2011). The issue of working in isolation as a teacher in Eagle's Creek came across strongly in Anchor's interview. Anchor detailed how she spent the first few months of the year as the only teacher working in isolation. She was given the challenging task of teaching kindergarten to Grade 9 students, first alone, and then with only the support of an EA. She also spoke of the challenges of retaining teachers in her role as a teaching principal.

While Anchor spoke of the hardships of retaining teachers, she also spoke of her own self-efficacy, resilience, and resourcefulness. Resilience plays a crucial role in teacher retention, encompassing various factors such as competency, belonging, usefulness, and optimism. Teachers who demonstrate these qualities can usually perform better in challenging conditions (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001). Anchor demonstrated resilience by successfully teaching a class of kindergarten to Grade 9 students with the support of only a single EA. Teaching this range of grade levels is not a predicament that any teacher would be tasked with in an urban school. After successfully navigating difficult situations, teachers typically feel helpful, competent, and a sense of belonging within their schools and communities (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001). The resilience that IETs like Anchor demonstrate by teaching in isolated environments must be showcased by researchers.

The fact that Filipino IETs have been employed in First Nations schools for many years is a testament to their resilience and their dedication to the Indigenous communities and schools

that host the teachers.²¹ Mayette has been employed as a teacher and principal in Turtle River for over 15 years. Anchor mentioned having spent over 10 years in various Indigenous communities as a teacher and teaching principal, and Minerva has spent eight years teaching in Fox Grove First Nation. Oskineegish (2013) points out that non-Indigenous people who enter First Nations communities, such as IETs, should be sincere and willing to connect with students and community members. Educators who prioritize economic gain and the acquisition of experience for future teaching opportunities over relationship-building do a disservice to the communities and the learners they teach (Burleigh, 2016; Mueller et al., 2011; Oskineegish, 2013). Teachers working in Indigenous communities should develop cultural competency, respect community values, and avoid making harmful assumptions about Indigenous Peoples (Kapesh, 2020; Oskineegish, 2013). Oskineegish (2013) says that teachers who enter Indigenous communities are “outsiders” and therefore should recognize the privilege they possess and understand that Indigenous communities are self-sufficient places not in need of external intervention. This study has shown that Filipino IETs are adhering to several of the above recommendations, as evidenced by their tenure in these communities and the fruitful relationships they have developed.

Encountering Skepticism

Some participants encountered skepticism from students and community members regarding their presence. Catherine mentioned how fellow Filipino IETs had cautioned her about the unwelcoming reception they had received in some communities. She explained:

²¹ Only Filipino IETs who were currently teaching in Northern Manitoba were interviewed for the present study. No IETs who had left teaching jobs in Northern Manitoba were interviewed.

I heard many sad stories and experiences with the previous teachers before us, their experiences, and what happened to them. During my first year teaching, some [people] were hostile. Some students were hostile; some students were friendly. I can sense that because of how they treat us, they know we are teachers. I can still sense and feel the racism in the way that they [students] sometimes don't follow what you say.

Catherine felt skepticism in the classroom among some of the students. She explained that students had difficulty trusting her because she was an outsider, saying: "They feel that you're different, so why should I trust you?"

Some parents also challenged Catherine: "The parents challenged me every year. There's always a parent, especially in my first year, they were asking, 'Do you have business on that?'"

Anchor reasoned that intergenerational trauma from residential schooling was a primary reason why some Indigenous families failed to support their children's teachers and sometimes kept their children at home. She explained: "It's a First Nations community, and you know their history about schools. They're still struggling with trust and sending kids to school."

The harmful effects of settler colonialism, examined through a CRT lens, helps to explain the mistrust that some Indigenous families have of the school system. The harmful legacy of the residential school system, for example, has created apprehension today among Indigenous parents and families regarding schooling. This apprehension is evident in parents challenging Catherine's authority and questioning why they should place their trust in a community outsider. Milne (2016) says that distrust and tension create barriers for Indigenous families in developing meaningful connections with schools. The harmful legacy of residential schooling results in the inability of some families to develop positive attitudes toward non-Indigenous educators like Catherine (Milne, 2016). Wilk et al. (2019) note that because of intergenerational trauma caused

by residential schooling, some Indigenous parents are unlikely to support their children with school activities, given their mistreatment within the education system. The residential schooling experience is complex, as survivors demonstrate varying levels of resilience in overcoming traumatic experiences (Wilk et al., 2019). This phenomenon creates various levels of support expressed among Indigenous families toward the education system, explaining the skepticism that IETs received from some community members and students.

Mayette took action to mitigate some of the mistrust that families in her community had of the school system and encouraged her learners to attend school. She explained her plan to increase student attendance, saying:

What I did was create transportation for them. We don't have any bus here, like a school bus, we don't have that. Because we were concerned about these kids and that they needed to come to school, so we hired someone to pick them up in a van.

Despite this initiative, Mayette admitted that getting students to attend regularly is difficult. However, she is determined to problem-solve to come up with a solution, saying: "We have to step up, put our heads together, and find ways to get the students back to school."

Like Catherine, Dolly felt pushback in the reserve from some community members. She stated:

They [community members] see us as just some people who are working there [Indigenous communities] for money. I heard from an Elder, "Oh, you're here because of money. You are here because you cannot get a job in the city."

Catherine recalled that some of the skepticism she felt was regarding the funds that teachers were provided by the school division and band offices. Some felt the money was better spent elsewhere in the community and should not be provided to outsiders. She recalled the

comments that some community members made to her, saying: “Some people there started to get jealous of us [IETs]. They felt like they were spending a lot of money. They questioned, “Why are they spending a lot of money on the teachers? Why are they pampering them?””

Catherine felt hurt by some of the comments directed her way by some community members. She shared: “It hurts if you don’t have that intention [teaching solely for money]. Yes, money is a concern, but don’t slap it in my face. It’s not easy for me to be here, and leaving our families is not easy.”

The relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples are often strained. The Adam and Hogue (2015) report concluded that Indigenous Peoples sometimes exhibit xenophobic inclinations toward newcomers, and newcomers sometimes hold prejudicial attitudes toward Indigenous Peoples. In the report, some of the Indigenous participants shared how newcomers typically possess little understanding of Canadian history and the harms perpetuated upon Indigenous populations by the federal government. A few participants also felt that the federal government brought newcomers into Canada for employment purposes and economic gain despite Indigenous people being qualified and willing to accept unfilled positions in the labour force (Adam & Hogue, 2015). While tensions exist between both groups, the media often casts Indigenous Peoples as troubled (Anderson & Robertson, 2011; Henry & Tator, 2002). The media’s negative portrayal of Indigenous Peoples was a primary reason why newcomers sometimes shy away from interacting positively with Indigenous Peoples (Adam & Hogue, 2015). These stereotypical portrayals are systemically ingrained in mainstream society (Anderson & Robertson, 2011; Henry & Tator, 2002). IETs, therefore, have much unlearning to do before assuming teaching positions in Indigenous communities.

Bernauer (2024) notes how Canada is a settler-founded state, one in which Indigenous Peoples have suffered the dispossession of their territories and the elimination of nations. Racial tensions between Indigenous Peoples and newcomer groups such as IETs can be traced to the notion that the effects of settler colonialism are still very much evident in society today and have adverse impacts on First Nations Peoples. Reece (2024) affirms that CRT “recognizes that racism is coded in law and by extension embedded in social structures and public policy, and that systemic racism is responsible for reproducing racial inequality” (p. 1). Even though atrocities such as the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop have ended, for example, Indigenous Peoples continue to feel the harmful effects of geographical development, social inequality, and structural violence (Bernauer, 2024; Byrne et al., 2018). Newcomers often replicate stereotypes of Indigenous Peoples, which fractures relations with Indigenous communities (Adam & Hogue, 2015; Skelton, 2022). Therefore, educational programming is essential so newcomers, such as IETs, can learn an accurate version of Canadian history, including the harmful impacts of colonization and residential schooling (Alidina et al., 2020; Haig-Brown, 2012). Improved education for newcomer groups can mitigate tensions between them.

An examination of CRT suggests that newcomers, such as IETs, should become well-versed in the history of Indigenous-settler relations in Canada to avoid defaulting to a settler-informed perspective (Alidina et al., 2020; Haig-Brown, 2012). CRT acknowledges that inter-racial tensions emerge among marginalized groups in a settler-colonial state and that White supremacy is largely responsible for the division among marginalized communities (Delgado et al., 2017), such as immigrants and Indigenous Peoples. St. Denis (2011) and Adam and Hogue (2015) note how inter-racial groups within a colonial system are often pitted against each other for resources, including housing, employment, and community services. This stiff competition

further marginalizes both groups while empowering Whites (Adam & Hogue, 2015; St. Denis, 2011). The research suggests that the creation of counterspaces and the formation of allyships can strengthen marginalized communities in a colonial system (Luedke, 2023; Margherio et al., 2023; Sumerau et al., 2018). Marginalized groups like IETs can work collaboratively with Indigenous Peoples to challenge societal oppressions (Sumerau et al., 2018), negate deficit-oriented discourse (Margherio et al., 2023), and mitigate racial microaggressions (Luedke, 2023). IETs and Indigenous Peoples can use these decolonial strategies to strengthen their collective bond and create a more affirming racial climate (Margherio et al., 2023).

Some of the IETs acknowledged the lack of connection some Indigenous parents had with the education system, and they attributed this tension to the “transgenerational trauma” (Volkan, 1997) caused by residential schooling, not individual faults. Vayrynen (2001) believes that it is essential for non-Indigenous people to acknowledge the existence of conflict and the need to reconcile differences. Mayette took a proactive approach to strengthening the connections between Indigenous families and her school. She acknowledged the issue of poor attendance and reckoned that one of the causes was the lack of transportation. Mayette took action and hired a driver to transport students to and from school. Vayrynen (2001) explains that finding common ground and coming to a harmonized reality is imperative to creating meaningful partnerships in Indigenous communities. By assisting students with transportation, Mayette took a step forward in strengthening the partnership between her school and Indigenous families.

Chloe felt skepticism from one of the Indigenous teachers at Applewood School. She explained that the teacher insisted that an Indigenous teacher should assume the vacant guidance counsellor position at the school, not a non-Indigenous person. She said: “The teacher told me

that it would be nice to have a local, from a First Nation, [assume the role of guidance counsellor]. I think that was uncalled for and really unprofessional.”

While this sentiment may have been disconcerting for Chloe, advocating for more Indigenous teachers within First Nations communities is a worthwhile cause. An increase in Indigenous teachers, guidance counsellors, and administrators is essential to ensure that the perspectives of Indigenous Peoples are given preference over Eurocentric epistemologies, which have dominated Western education curricula as exposed through a CRT framework (Gaudreau, 2023). An increase in Indigenous teachers is also needed to reach parity with the number of Indigenous students. In the Winnipeg School Division, for example, roughly 27 percent of learners identify as Indigenous, yet fewer than 10 percent of teachers province-wide identify as Indigenous (Macintosh, 2022). Increasing the number of Indigenous teachers, therefore, is important as a matter of equity.

Beyond symbolic representation, Indigenous teachers bring a wealth of knowledge to classrooms, including linguistic, cultural, and experiential knowledge (McDevitt, 2021). Indigenous teachers are also typically proficient at facilitating important conversations about social justice, which are necessary to combat settler colonialism and improve relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians (Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Advocating for an increase in Indigenous teachers is a way to decolonize the education system and provide necessary space for Indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews (Dion, 2016; Montero & Dénommé-Welch, 2018; Watters, 2015). While the comments made by the teacher may have been jarring for Chloe, it is important to understand the context of these comments and the efforts needed to increase the representation of Indigenous educators.

The Indigenous teacher insisted that Chloe needed a stronger understanding of the Seven Sacred Teachings²² and that an Indigenous person would be better suited for the role of the guidance counsellor. Chloe, however, pushed back, saying:

I know about the Seven Sacred Teachings. They're not patented. They're not something new. Teaching respect, bravery, and love is not new and not exclusive to the Anishinaabe culture. It can all be passed on to anyone. Of course, I have to use their perspectives, teachings, and resources so it would be more relatable to the students, but the concepts are all the same.

Chloe felt reassured when some community members stood up for her and informed the other teacher that a qualified non-Indigenous person could assume the role of the guidance counsellor. Chloe shared:

I wasn't expecting people to stand up for me, but there were locals who said, "Chloe, we're all the same." And there were people saying [to the other teacher], "You know, you should not expect Chloe to do this and that."

Chloe and her Indigenous-teaching counterpart eventually reconciled and agreed to engage in more mutual collaboration going forward. Collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers is essential for cultivating an equitable educational environment (Watters, 2015). Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers who engage in mutual collaboration can demonstrate to all learners the importance of effective communication and working across cultural boundaries (Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). This partnership enriches the curriculum

²² The Seven Sacred Teachings (also known as the Seven Grandfather Teachings) are Anishinaabe principles that guide individuals to live a good life. These guiding principles are passed down through generations via stories and ceremonies. The seven teachings are love, truth, wisdom, humility, respect, courage, and honesty (Legislative Assembly of Ontario, n.d.).

with diverse perspectives and fosters a deeper understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, and worldviews (Watters, 2015). Drawing from CRT, we can see how the histories, cultures, and worldviews of Indigenous Peoples have been marginalized through colonization and continue to be pushed to the periphery by non-Indigenous teachers who fail to integrate Indigenous knowledge systems into the curriculum, leading to alienation among Indigenous students (Battiste, 2017). By working collaboratively, Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators, such as Chloe and her counterpart, can address curriculum gaps, challenge stereotypes, and create learning experiences that integrate Indigenous knowledge systems (Battiste, 2017; Schnellert et al., 2022). A collaborative approach benefits Indigenous students by providing culturally relevant and respectful education and helps all students develop a greater appreciation for diversity and reconciliation.

Students' Learning and the Impact of COVID-19

Some of the IETs shared insights about their contributions to their students' learning. A few of the IETs mentioned how their students tended to struggle with literacy and numeracy. Juan recalled the difficulties that one learner had with reading. He elaborated on the challenge the student had and what was done to mitigate the difficulty, saying:

There was one student who could not read that much. After six months [in my classroom], he improved his reading. I thought about using phonemes²³ specifically [with him]. Phonemes were very helpful in improving his reading.

Chloe found that some of her students had difficulty reading simple text and performing grade-level mathematical tasks. She shared: "I found the students to have issues with their

²³ In linguistics, a phoneme is the smallest sound unit. They are capable of conveying a distinct meaning. Examples include the "b" sound in bat, "r" sound in ring, and "s" sound in sing (Nordquist, 2024).

literacy and numeracy. They were well behind even when the pandemic hit, and again, they fell behind [during the pandemic].”

Catherine echoed Chloe’s assertion that some of her students had difficulty with literacy and numeracy tasks and were thus behind in grade level. She commented:

Some of the kids are really behind. There are like Grade 8 kids who cannot read, so I’ve experienced this [challenge]. There were also kids who don’t know how to divide, the basic four operations, grouping, multiplication, so they are really behind. I advocate for them. I call the parents and get connected on Facebook. I ask resource [for assistance]. We make home visits.

Indigenous people have historically maintained lower literacy and numeracy rates than non-Indigenous people in Canada. Indigenous people in the three territories—Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut—rank considerably below the national average of literacy and numeracy scores (Statistics Canada, 2015). The literacy and numeracy rates among Indigenous people in Manitoba mirror the national average. Learners with lower literacy and numeracy rates face barriers to further education and training, including a lack of confidence and preparedness (Statistics Canada, 2015), as well as lower earning potential and participation in the labour force (Arriagada & Hango, 2016).

Instead of reinforcing the assumption that Indigenous learners are inherently lacking and deficient, it is essential to analyze why the literacy rates are lower among Indigenous learners. Gillies (2023) determined that teachers from non-Indigenous backgrounds tend to hold systemically low expectations for Indigenous students and hesitate to apply for positions in schools that have a high enrollment of Indigenous learners. Gillies (2023) also determined that, despite an aura of professionalism, some non-Indigenous teachers tend to blame parents for their

children's lack of academic growth. Such practices and beliefs exemplify the deficit thinking that harms the progress of Indigenous learners. While the period of residential schooling has ended, new colonial tactics include the marginalization of Indigenous learners through teacher shortages in northern communities, the faulting of Indigenous parents for their children's poor academic outcomes, and the maintenance of low expectations for the success of Indigenous youth (Gillies, 2023; Macintosh, 2023a). This deficit thinking marginalizes Indigenous learners and helps explain the lower literacy and numeracy rates that afflict Indigenous people.

The COVID-19 pandemic had detrimental impacts on Indigenous students in remote communities, which further exacerbated literacy and numeracy rates. Access to computers and the internet was difficult for Indigenous students (Auger et al., 2023). Many families with children in multiple grades were sometimes forced to share one computer due to financial strain, and the stress of the pandemic affected students as they tried to absorb online course materials. The pandemic also had societal repercussions beyond schooling that affected Indigenous students, including the health concerns of family members, job layoffs, food scarcity, and loss of friendships due to social distancing (Auger et al., 2023; Hawthorn, 2021; Lei & Guo, 2022). Hawthorn (2021) points out that COVID-19 rates were higher among the Indigenous population due to overcrowding and substandard healthcare on reserves. Frequent hand-washing, physical-distancing, and self-isolation were all made more challenging in crowded living spaces such as Indigenous reserves (Hawthorn, 2021; Lei & Guo, 2022). In implementing a CRT-based analysis, it becomes evident that Indigenous Peoples faced barriers to quality education and healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic unearthed the systemic racism inherent in both systems. It underscored how even during a public health emergency, Indigenous Peoples continued to face marginalization in accessing proper education and healthcare (Lei &

Guo, 2022). While COVID-19 placed a significant strain on school systems throughout Canada, it exacerbated learning and social challenges among Indigenous students.

Mitigating Challenges and Embracing Opportunities

Despite the difficulties of residing and teaching in northern and remote communities, the IETs mitigated several of the challenges and embraced new opportunities. Strategies such as open communication, the sharing of food, and caring for the well-being of learners were strategies the IETs used to connect with Indigenous learners and their families. Anchor mentioned that bringing Indigenous families into the school was an important strategy. She rationalized:

I talk to them [Indigenous families]. We have some activities at the school, and I try to involve them. I invite them to report card days and activities. We feed them. And there are door prizes, so it's easier to invite people that way.

Anchor discussed how sharing food is another strategy she uses to develop connections with families. She shared:

I love sharing our Filipino food. Our weakness is food, right? So, I introduce our food like pancit, spring rolls, pork skewers, all those things. For every event we have in the community, we always use our school because they don't have any buildings they can use for events. So, I always see them when parents or community members are coming into the school, and I talk to them. I mingle with them. That way, they always see me, so I became closer to the community.

Catherine mitigated the challenge of being an outsider in an Indigenous community by connecting with Indigenous learners and helping them to understand that she cares for their well-

being. She explained: “I try to prove to the kids that we’re not here just for anything else but to give them our love and care—genuine love, genuine service, genuine care.”

Catherine and Anchor engaged in critical relationship-building to bridge the conflict between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples. LeBaron (2003) explains that conflict mitigation is possible when relationships are strengthened between opposing parties. The ability to problem-solve and communicate are essential measures in this process (LeBaron, 2003). Anchor engages in relationship-building by inviting Indigenous families to her school for activities and providing food. When these events are underway, Anchor mingles with the parents and engages in conversation. Similarly, Catherine facilitates strong relationships by caring for the well-being of her learners and reaching out to them when they are experiencing difficulties. Catherine and Anchor are improving relationships by engaging respectfully with Indigenous learners and their families. Improved relations are imperative in reconciliation (Mueller et al., 2011; Preston et al., 2017). Cordial relationships are also necessary, as Indigenous families and IETs have a shared future in northern communities (Lederach, 1997). As educators, Anchor and Catherine understand their role in improving the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Conclusion

The chapter examined IETs’ perceptions of their work and lived experiences in Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba. I provided an overview of the participants’ communities, including how many First Nations communities are geographically and economically segregated from higher population centres in Manitoba. These remote locations make travel within the reserves challenging, often leading to teacher shortages and interrupted education (Burleigh, 2016; Coubrough, 2017). The chapter also profiled the sacrifices of Filipino IETs, including how many have left their spouses and children behind to accept employment in

the North. Immigrants often work tirelessly and sacrifice to improve their family's financial situation in host countries (Cuevas, 2019). The sacrifices the IETs made, however, are nuanced, as many were furthering their careers as teachers in Canada, albeit in remote locations.

It is essential to identify the number of opportunities available to teachers who explore teaching careers in the North. Instead of focusing solely on the challenges and the sacrifices it takes to live in the region, profiling the many advantages of northern residency and work is important to avoid defaulting to a deficit perspective (Greenslade, 2023; Schmidt, 2008). Several IETs discussed the relationships they fostered, the skills they learned, and the opportunities they had been given to contribute to students' learning. Many participants also discussed the important role they play in mitigating teacher shortages and building stronger relationships with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. The IETs understood the important role they had as teachers in the reconciliation process and in dismantling the effects of colonialism in Indigenous communities.

The chapter also explored the isolation the Filipino IETs dealt with in Indigenous communities. Some teachers encountered skepticism, such as Chloe, who was cautioned against accepting a guidance counsellor position in Deerwood First Nation, and Dolly, was told by an Elder that her presence in Arrow Creek was for financial opportunities alone. The Filipino teachers acknowledged, however, the challenges that Indigenous families deal with, including the intergenerational trauma that accompanies time spent in residential schools and being removed from their homes during the Sixties Scoop. The effects of colonization exposed through a CRT framework are endemic in northern and remote communities and explain some of the difficulties that Indigenous Peoples face in their everyday lives.

To contribute positively to their respective communities, the Filipino IETs made meaningful connections with their students and community members. Sharing food and connecting families with resources strengthened the relationship between the newcomer teachers and community members. Many researchers note the importance of improved relations in mediating protracted conflict (see Alidina et al., 2020; Lederach, 1997; Reynar & Matties, 2019). This chapter suggests that Filipino IETs recognize their crucial role in enhancing relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples. The partnership between Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples in northern communities is a positive step in promoting reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Ultimately, however, the Canadian education system is among the most effective mechanisms for improving relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples and advancing reconciliation across the country. Using the education system to enhance reconciliatory efforts is often contentious, as education once suppressed the epistemologies of Indigenous Peoples and empowered cultural genocide against them (Aitken & Radford, 2018; Dion, 2016; Warrington, 2018). Siemens (2017), however, notes how educators in the education system can dismantle colonial frameworks that continue to oppress Indigenous Peoples. Many people, including newcomers, do not often understand the harmful legacy of colonization in Canada for various reasons, including ignorance and intolerance (Siemens, 2017; Skelton, 2022). New approaches, such as a critical pedagogical approach, have been suggested to challenge mainstream society's views on settler-Indigenous relations and the harmful impacts of residential schooling (see Siemens, 2017).

Filipino IETs and other racialized educators must go beyond simply learning settler-colonial history and work towards building solidarity with the country's Indigenous population

(Shin, 2022). IETs have some unlearning to do and can facilitate improved relations with Indigenous Peoples by incorporating Indigenous perspectives and voices into teaching and by decentralizing colonial ways of knowing (Shin, 2022). The education system has operated historically and contemporarily as a colonial system (Siemens, 2017), but, as an impactful change agent, it can be used to improve newcomer-Indigenous relations and enhance reconciliation within the country. Filipino IETs who teach within the education system play a key role in mitigating the effects of colonialism.

Chapter 9: Advocacy and Leadership in Northern Schools

This chapter profiles the credible work Filipino educators in Northern Manitoba are doing in advocating for and supporting newcomer Filipino teachers. This section explores Filipino educators' strategies for advocating for newly arrived Filipino teachers who wish to re-enter the teaching profession and teach in the North. This chapter aims to learn from the leadership of the Filipino educational diaspora and explain how it mitigates trepidation among newcomer teachers through advocacy and leadership work. The chapter also explores Indigenous leadership within educational settings in the North. To properly decolonize the education system, it is imperative that Indigenous Peoples take control of their school systems (Bell, 2004; Harper, 2000). This chapter profiles how Indigenous teachers and administrators support Filipino IETs and the important role that Elders play in the decolonization process in northern schools.

The Support Provided to Filipino IETs

After the interviews, it was evident that the Filipino IETs received the most significant level of leadership and support from fellow Filipino teachers working in their respective schools. This support was far more significant than any official organization provided, such as the Manitoba Teachers' Society or MAFTI.²⁴ This type of support aligns with Sinha and Hanuscin's (2017) assertion that teachers involved in leadership at the school level provide immense value to school communities. Traditional leadership within schools has often been hierarchical, typically involving the principal and other administrators taking on leadership positions. This viewpoint has shifted, with teachers increasingly taking on significant leadership roles within their school

²⁴ A few participants mentioned joining MAFTI as official members and attending the organization's workshops and presentations. Many participants, however, were not MAFTI members and did not seek support from the organization. None of the participants mentioned having joined the Educators of Colour Network or the Newcomer Education Coalition. None of the teachers mentioned accessing the Manitoba Teachers' Society for support.

communities (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). RJ and Minerva, for example, have influenced their colleagues and have improved practices to best meet the needs of their Indigenous students. As teaching principals, Ripple and Anchor have supported newcomer teachers who are adjusting to life and teaching work in the North. As a principal, Mayette has mentored new IETs and connected them to community members and Elders so they can adjust to life in Northern Manitoba and support Indigenous students in the best way possible. The leadership and advocacy work of the Filipino IETs provides value to their school communities.

The Supportive Filipino Educational Diaspora

During his interview, Juan discussed how the Filipino educational diaspora supported him as he certified to become a teacher in the province. He explained: “Yes, they [fellow Filipino teachers] are very supportive. They said you do not have to worry about getting certified here. You can do that as long as you want because you will still be contracted and paid.”

Chloe echoed Juan’s assertion that the Filipino education community provided the best support. She said:

There is no support system like the Filipino support system, and we are a collective people, you know? We find joy, and we find refuge in being together. That helps with being happy; that helps with the mental state and the camaraderie that we build.

The camaraderie that fellow Filipino educators provide to each other came across strongly in the interviews. Catherine explained that it was not MAFTI that provided the support she needed as a newcomer teacher; it was her fellow Filipino teachers in Northern Manitoba. She explained:

One thing that I must remember is the support coming from the Filipino teachers up North. We call ourselves the “Filipino Teachers in Manitoba.” It is not an organization; it

is not a group. It is a family within the teachers who are experiencing teaching in the North.

Drawing on intersectionality, we can recognize how immigrant teachers desire a supportive diaspora, as they often experience marginalization within both society and the school system. Lee-Johnson (2023) notes how migrant teachers often experience triple or quadruple jeopardy. For example, migrant teachers from non-White backgrounds do not reap the benefits of White privilege in society (Lee-Johnson, 2023). In the education system, this correlates with non-diverse teaching forces and teacher-training programs that lack representation of BIPOC teacher candidates (Martin, 2016; Stephenson, 2020). Immigrant teachers also face marginalization due to being non-native speakers of English. As a result, they are often given less legitimacy by administrators and parents because of linguistic differences (Block, 2012; Lee-Johnson, 2023; Schmidt et al., 2010). Migrant teachers are also discriminated against in school systems based on their immigrant or refugee status. Female migrant teachers face additional barriers due to the caregiver roles they are thrust into (Lee-Johnson, 2023). Viewed through an intersectional lens, it is apparent that immigrant teachers like Filipino IETs face multiple barriers that jeopardize their success in host societies and school systems.

Despite the obstacles, the Filipino educational community does a credible job in supporting newcomer teachers. In the North, Filipino teachers mentor and support newcomer IETs by sharing resources, giving advice, and inviting fellow IETs to communal events. Catherine and Ripple discussed how Filipino teachers regularly support each other and treat fellow teachers like family. They mentioned how Filipinos typically gather during non-teaching times to celebrate important events and spend time together. By sharing the knowledge and skills they possess, the Filipino educational diaspora in Northern Manitoba helps newcomers transition

into their new teaching environments (De Oca & Malaga, 2025). De Oca and Malaga (2025) determined that the ability to transition successfully into host communities hinges on the support and community ties available to migrant groups like IETs. Despite the multiple barriers exposed through an intersectional approach, a supportive diaspora, such as the Filipino education community, can support newcomer Filipino teachers as they adjust to life and new teaching roles in the North.

During Ripple's interview, she elaborated on creating the "Filipino Teachers in Manitoba" group and the vital work the membership does in supporting newcomer Filipino teachers who are working in the North. She offered:

It is not an organization, but it is just a group of teachers. That was the primary connection that we established. So, every year, during Christmas, we get together. During the summer, we get together. That is what we use to create that connection to the other teachers.

Figure 27

A Christmas Gathering With Minerva's Colleagues



Minerva added that her colleagues regularly gather to celebrate special occasions. She shared a picture of a Christmas gathering with her Filipino IET colleagues (Figure 27), and stated:

This is a snapshot of our close-knit Filipino community at my workplace, coming together annually to celebrate Christmas. In addition to the festive gatherings, we mark birthdays with regular get-togethers, and warmly welcome new Filipino teachers who join our community.

Dolly also shared a picture of a Filipino teacher gathering during the holidays (Figure 28), saying: “This is a Christmas get-together of the Manitoba northern community and Winnipeg Filipino teachers held at [name withheld] on December 30th, 2023.”

Figure 28

A Christmas Gathering With Dolly's Colleagues



The interview results suggest that the Filipino group in the North predominantly engages in communal practice outside of the school environment. The Filipino group tends to engage in leadership and advocacy more informally, which is crucial, as working in Northern Manitoba comes with many challenges (Campbell et al., 2022). Northern communities are often isolated and less diversified, possess fewer services and educational facilities, and struggle to maintain stable economies (OECD, 2016). These communities have suffered tremendously under the effects of settler colonialism (Writer, 2008). Through no fault of their own, Indigenous Peoples in northern communities face barriers to employment, education, and essential services (Brass, 2023; Cash, 2023; Muhajarine, 2024). School systems in the North also face teacher shortages, and Indigenous learners face interrupted education (Burleigh, 2016; Macintosh, 2023a).

The advocacy work of the Filipino educational community plays an important role in shaping the future of northern communities. By strengthening ties and supporting newcomer IETs, new teachers are provided with the assistance needed to sustain themselves in these new communities (De Oca & Malaga, 2025). As evident from the interview results, Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples can live together harmoniously. This partnership can help alleviate teacher shortages in the North and ensure that Indigenous learners are taught by qualified teachers who do not vacate their positions after a short time (Monkman, 2017). Providing Indigenous learners with qualified teachers and quality education is an important step in the reconciliation process.

Filipino teachers usually gather and support each other before venturing up North to mitigate the challenging nature of residing in remote communities. Catherine elaborated:

Most of the Filipinos are teaching up North in literally fly-in communities. Before we go up there, we gather as a family, not as an association, not anything that is being registered

with the government. However, it is just a family or a teachers' group with whom we exchange experiences.

What emerged from the interviews is that Filipinos typically rely on informal support rather than the support of official organizations. The mentorship and support come naturally within the Filipino educational diaspora. While IETs face hurdles in the credentialization process and must adjust to living and teaching in the North, the group demonstrates the resiliency necessary to overcome challenges and prosper in host societies. When approached with an intersectionality framework, it is evident that IETs face multiple injustices, including racism, sexism, and class exploitation (Brass & Jenson, 2024). As an analytical tool, intersectionality can address the barriers that affect IETs while also focusing on the resilience and fortitude they possess (Njeze, 2020). Njeze (2020) acknowledges a lack of research that focuses on the positive aspects of identity interactions. An intersectional framework can expose the multiple layers of inequity and the oppressors that disadvantage IETs, namely racism, linguicism, and gender discrimination (Block, 2012; Lee-Johnson, 2023; Njeze, 2020; Schmidt et al., 2010). The theory, however, can also focus on the intertwining strengths-based approaches that diasporas use to promote resilience (Njeze, 2020). For example, through an intersectional lens, the Filipino educational community in the North provides resources to new IETs, initiates supportive conversations, and invites new teachers to join in activities. All the strategies intertwine to support Filipino IETs in northern communities.

Chloe explained that she provides support to newcomer Filipino teachers who come to work in her school, saying:

I am very generous with the information they [new Filipino teachers] need, especially last year when new teachers came and filled my previous position. So, I told them all the

challenges that they would have, gave them all the resources that I had, and distributed everything that I had to them.

Chloe has a strong sense of accountability. She understands the challenges of being a newcomer teacher, having experienced the phenomenon herself. Eckert (2006) notes that accountability and improving upon existing practices are hallmarks of communities of practice. By improving existing practices, the Filipino diaspora is willing to mitigate the challenges faced by new colleagues (Eckert, 2006). This benevolence is a trademark of the Filipino educational community.

Utilizing an intersectional approach, IETs like Chloe, who have experienced marginalization themselves, can lessen the hurdles that fellow IETs face. By focusing solely on the challenges, too much emphasis is placed on the intersecting elements that disadvantage migrant teachers, presenting a deficit perspective and discouraging IETs from credentialing and pursuing teaching assignments in the North (Njeze, 2020). By focusing on the resilience and fortitude that migrant teachers possess and the support the Filipino educational diaspora provides them, the potential of more IETs accepting northern teaching positions is made possible. An intersectional framework enables the identification of the intersecting elements that contribute to successful partnerships between Filipino teachers and Indigenous communities.

Filipino IETs also play an important role as models for fellow racialized teachers. In Chloe's case, she was willing to impart her knowledge and share resources to assist newcomer Filipino teachers hired to assume her position before she took on the role of guidance counsellor. This support likely eases the transition, as research indicates newcomer teachers have few positive experiences to draw on in the early stages of becoming teachers (Skelton, 2023). Caspersen and Raaen (2014) note that beginner teachers are tasked with many lofty expectations,

such as managing a classroom and meeting the needs of all learners. Novice teachers often must meet these expectations without the support of fellow teachers and administrators. Therefore, Chloe's assistance, including sharing resources and best practices, likely lessened the anxiety that those newcomer teachers experienced (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Skelton, 2023). While informal, this leadership is crucial in strengthening the resolve of newcomer teachers.

Filipinos Working as Administrators

As administrators, Ripple, Mayette, and Anchor have assisted newcomer teachers formally and informally. Ripple has supported newcomer Filipino teachers in her role as a teaching principal. She shared:

New teachers asked, "What will we do with those reports?" To help, I will give samples of the statements and how to write them in the report cards—their strengths, needs, and challenges—so that is how I help.

Teaching principals like Ripple and Anchor are tasked with both teaching and administrative duties. These dual-role educators take on a myriad of tasks to best meet the needs of their school communities (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Teaching principals are uniquely positioned, as they can offer both explicit support as administrators and implicit support as teachers (Newton & Wallin, 2013). Ripple and Anchor can make more meaningful connections with their learners than administrators in schools with larger student body populations. In communities with small populations like Honey Lake and Eagle's Creek, teaching principals can also facilitate more meaningful interactions with parents and community members, given the lower administrator-to-student ratios that comprise the student body populations in these communities (Newton & Wallin, 2013). While the role of a teaching-principal comes with challenges, the position serves smaller, remote schools effectively.

Ripple explained that the Filipino teaching community supports newcomer teachers before arriving at their new schools in the North. She provided an example, saying:

There was this teacher who was hired from Ontario, and I was told that a new teacher is coming from Ontario, and I want her to get used to and meet the other teachers who are going. I contacted her, and she was just so appreciative because even before going to the assignment, she had already met the other teachers there, the Filipino teachers. So that is helpful for them.

Ripple explained that newcomer Filipino teachers need to be taught how to promote themselves in job interviews, saying:

Filipinos don't sell themselves. So, I had to train them [newcomer Filipino teachers] to sell [themselves]. I had to talk to a couple of them, many of them, to tell them to sell themselves. Bragging is going beyond our comfort zone—how you sell yourself.

To mitigate this trepidation with the job interview process, Ripple offered this advice: “I gave actual mock interviews and taught them how to answer: This is how you say; this is how you answer the question. Don't be shy. Just tell them about your potential and other things.”

Mayette was encouraged to apply for the principal position in Turtle River by her colleagues, who saw her leadership potential. She recalled:

I would not have applied for this position [principal] if not for my colleagues who pushed me. They said to me, “Please apply for this position.” I was thinking in my head, “Oh no, I don't want to do this because I'm just an immigrant here. Do I have the capacity?”

However, I could feel that they had trust in me, so that's why I accepted the challenge.

The doubt that Mayette had about her ability to assume the principal position in Turtle River is not a unique phenomenon, as immigrants tend to place less value on their employability

in host nations (Muirhead et al., 2020; Nayak et al., 2025). CRT proposes that immigrants typically receive less hierarchical status and privilege in host nations and often take on employment that involves survival-type roles to meet financial constraints (Muirhead et al., 2020). Hiring biases also exist against immigrant teachers, especially those who identify as racialized (Heinz et al., 2023). Older immigrants, including highly educated teachers like Mayette, face numerous intersecting obstacles that hinder their employability, such as ageism and linguicism (Block, 2020; Butrica & Mudrazija, 2022; Schmidt et al., 2010). Several faulty assumptions push older IETs to the periphery in the hiring process, such as the belief that older IETs will be less successful and less willing to engage in training and professional development than younger staff (Butrica & Mudrazija, 2022). Thus, highly educated older teachers face challenges that restrict advancement within their field. These intersecting challenges help explain the hesitation that IETs like Mayette have about assuming higher-level positions in host nations.

In her role as an administrator, Mayette routinely supports newcomer Filipino teachers in her school. She explained how she mentors newcomer teachers, saying:

I go to their classes. I ask them, “What do you need? How can I help you in your class?” I help them settle down. I ask, “Do you need a curriculum? If you are not sure, you come and ask me.” I have an open-door policy in my office. I tell them, “Anytime you can come to my office. If you are missing something, let me know. I am willing to support you. If I cannot do it myself, and you need support from the resource [department], I can direct you to them.” That’s how I support my teachers—open communication. I say, “Please feel free to tell me what you need in your classroom.”

Besides supporting teachers in Turtle River, Mayette assists newcomer teachers in neighbouring schools. She explained:

We share resources, call them sometimes, ask how they are, and visit them, even if they're not from Meadowbrook School Division. Our school is close to three neighbouring schools that are not part of Meadowbrook. They are band-operated schools. We visit them and have food, sing, or play sports. Those are the ways that we support each other.

Anchor also dutifully supports teachers in her school in her administrative role. She explained how she provides support, saying: "Every day, I have to make sure that they [new IETs] are doing well. I also team-teach with them. In case there are times they need something or help, I'm there all the time."

Anchor and Mayette effectively build trust and mutual respect with newcomer Filipino teachers. Mayette routinely checks in with her colleagues to see if they need support, and she makes herself and members of her resource team readily available for consultation. Like Mayette, Anchor checks in on her colleagues and co-teaches with them to make their transitions into a new school system more seamless. This support and encouragement foster meaningful relationships and allows newcomer teachers to feel a sense of belonging (Bouchamma et al., 2018; McCormick & Dooley, 2005). Collaboration and peer support are some of the tangible benefits that the Filipino educational community provides to new teachers. Mayette and Anchor, however, provide support and encouragement to all teachers in their schools, not just newcomer Filipino teachers. Maas et al. (2022) found that administrators play an important role in fostering a positive work environment and helping teachers thrive. The social support provided by administrators is essential to a well-structured and supportive school (Maas et al., 2022). The important role that administrators like Anchor and Mayette play in supporting both newcomer and experienced teachers cannot be overstated.

Anchor advises new teachers to unwind once the school day is over and to not reminisce about any problems that occurred during the day. She explained: “I tell them [new teachers] that once you leave the school, forget about this day. The day is over. Don’t think about school anymore. Just relax. Tomorrow will be another day.”

Women of colour, such as Anchor, Mayette, and Ripple, face several intersecting elements that hinder their employability and ability to ascend the leadership ranks in host countries, including sexism, prejudice, and institutionalized patriarchy. These challenges often result in the underrepresentation of women of colour in leadership positions (Pogrebna et al., 2024; Skouteris et al., 2023). These elements also contribute to the slower pace at which these women are promoted compared to non-BIPOC professionals (Pogrebna et al., 2024). An intersectional lens reveals that women of colour face a phenomenon called “compounded discrimination”—discrimination based on their race and gender (Lam, 2021a; Pogrebna et al., 2024). While an intersectional approach helps analyze the various burdens that women face, it is challenging to quantify intersectional data, as many studies tend to be qualitative, resulting in limited empirical data on the leadership experiences of women of colour (Pogrebna et al., 2024). It is essential to address research gaps to examine how intersectional effects impact women of colour in leadership positions.

Diverse representation and a wealth of experiences are essential in the education field and contribute to the social fabric of society. Organizational success hinges on diverse representation, as minority professionals have demonstrated equivalent or exceeding competence compared to non-diverse staff (Pogrebna et al., 2024). Racialized educators play important roles in schools and classrooms, as they can boost the confidence of BIPOC students and make them see that racialized people are capable of professional success (Othman, 2022). A diverse representation

of teachers and administrators also ensures that the education system is equitable and inclusive (Abawi, 2021b). The work that Anchor, Mayette, and Ripple do as women of colour administrators in Northern Manitoba is crucial for these reasons and contributes to the limited research on women of colour in leadership positions.

The Support of Filipino Teachers

A few interviewees also credited individual Filipino teachers who assisted them and provided the leadership they required. Catherine explained:

I received support from a teacher who is also an international Filipino teacher. She was already the principal. I asked her, “What will I do with those kids who are not listening, not participating?” So, she has experience. She’s been teaching up North for 12 years now, and she became the principal nine years ago. She is the one who’s reaching out to all the other teachers up North. She is our anchor.

Newcomer Filipino teachers benefit when a diaspora is responsive to their needs and aspirations (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2023). Catherine was struggling with students who were not listening and participating in class. However, she received support from a Filipino colleague who provided her with strategies and lessened her anxiety. The kind of leadership that Catherine received is imperative in supporting newcomer teachers.

Minerva supports newcomer teachers in her role as a lead teacher at Fox Grove School. Before assuming the lead teacher position, Minerva received support from her fellow teachers. She stated:

When it comes to my teaching, mostly I got the support from my fellow teachers, from my teammates. I started teaching as a Grade 4 teacher in 2016. There were four of us teaching Grade 4, so every week before we started, we always had a team meeting. We

shared the materials and then we decided which materials to use, so that our students would be on the same page.

Minerva felt that the support she received from her co-teachers was imperative at the beginning of her teaching career in the North. Now, in a leadership position, Minerva reciprocates by supporting new teachers. She said:

For me as a first-time teacher in Canada, I was in a dark place, but with other teachers around me, it helped a lot. When I became a lead teacher, instead of me following, now I'm trying to help the new teachers. As lead teacher, when it comes to the lessons, the curriculum, I'm the one preparing materials, and if there are suggestions from my teammates, then everyone is free to give suggestions, and then we will decide. "What do you think? Did we use this last year?" If there's a new idea, then we'll just put everything together and decide.

Supporting newcomer teachers, like Minerva does, is essential, as teacher shortages often hamper schools throughout Northern Manitoba. Several rural school divisions and northern Indigenous communities in the province have resorted to filling teaching vacancies with EAs and non-certified applicants (Macintosh, 2023a; Monkman, 2017; Searle, 2023). Education officials in Manitoba have attributed the teacher shortage to various factors, including an aging teacher population nearing retirement and an increase in educators seeking employment in urban rather than rural settings (Searle, 2023). Viewed through a CRT lens, however, it becomes evident to us that settler colonialism and the forced relocation of Indigenous Peoples to remote locales in the province have had adverse repercussions on the availability to employ and retain teachers in Northern Manitoba (Burleigh, 2016). Residents in northern communities face obstacles in accessing healthcare, transportation, and essential services in a timely and affordable fashion

(Brass, 2023; Cash, 2024). Inadequate infrastructure spending in the North results in residents having to access vital services and educational institutions in neighbouring cities and communities (Muhajarine, 2024). The effects of settler colonialism have had detrimental effects on teacher retention in the North.

Like Minerva, RJ supports newcomer teachers in his role as a resource teacher. RJ's principal offered him the resource position in 2022, which he happily accepted. He shared:

I like to support teachers because I know the struggles of a first-year teacher. I need to share resources with teachers too because that's how we are supposed to do it. I'm a team player. I like to support students, the administration, and fellow teachers. I usually go to their classroom and find out what they need, especially to help those teachers with students who are with special needs.

Teachers of colour, such as RJ and Minerva, play vital roles in Manitoba's school systems. CRT posits that teachers of colour should be encouraged to share their stories to counter the narratives of Whites that tend to dominate educational discourse (Skelton, 2025). According to Solorzano and Yosso (2002), these "counter-stories" can contest systemic racism and bring marginalized voices to the forefront, such as the voices of Indigenous Peoples. Through much of history, racialized individuals have had their experiences and voices pushed to the periphery in favour of narratives that maintain the White social order (Gómez et al., 2025). It is important to elevate the experiences of racialized teachers like IETs to ensure the education system is equitable and inclusive.

In this study, Filipino IETs discussed how they have been excluded from employment in urban schools and mistreated in staff rooms when substitute teaching. Research by Block (2012) and Schmidt (2010) finds evidence of the mistreatment that IETs typically endure in urban

schools, including discrimination based on accent, names, food choices, and attire. The racial composition of the teaching force shows how the White social order dominates the teaching ranks, which keeps BIPOC teachers employed at a minimal, symbolic level (Skelton, 2025). The benefit of employing more IETs, such as RJ and Minerva, and promoting them to leadership positions when they are deserving, is that BIPOC educators can share deeper, critical insights within the curriculum. These teachers can also incorporate non-Western epistemologies to contest the Eurocentric approach that dominates educational curricula (Yosso et al., 2009). As detailed in previous chapters, many of the IETs have immersed themselves in land-based learning initiatives to counter dominant perspectives in the curriculum. For example, Juan participated in a traditional rabbit hunt, Minerva harvested traditional medicine, and Ripple organized a gardening project for her students. Land-based learning serves as a direct form of contestation against settler colonialism (Wildcat et al., 2014). Employing more IETs has multiple benefits, especially if they receive support from fellow teachers and administrators and engage in curricular practices that incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews.

Indigenous Educational Leadership

Indigenous educational leadership is critically important—a notion well-supported by research (see Da’as, 2024; Donald, 2022; Harper, 2000; Morin, 2016). Indigenous leaders can mentor Indigenous students, allowing them to see that people from their communities can achieve success coming from similar backgrounds (Donald, 2022). Indigenous leaders can also help students feel proud of their heritage and ancestry (Morin, 2016) and ensure that the cultural values of Indigenous Peoples and the true history of Canada are appropriately represented in schools (Da’as, 2024). Henderson (2023) notes how Indigenous learners have been marginalized throughout history through various means. The residential school system, for example, was

created to eradicate Indigenous cultures and languages, and the Sixties Scoop was initiated to forcibly integrate Indigenous learners into mainstream society (Henderson, 2023; Morin, 2016). Indigenous-controlled schools, such as the Manitoba First Nations School System, have been a crucial step to increasing the quality of education and integrating more Indigenous epistemologies and knowledge systems within Indigenous communities (Harper, 2000). Strong Indigenous leadership is crucial to ensuring that Indigenous education is effectively implemented and can thrive in northern communities and schools.

Supportive Indigenous Administrators and Teachers

Several of the Filipino IETs mentioned how helpful and supportive Indigenous administrators, teachers, and Elders were in the schools in which they taught. In her interview, Minerva commented on how helpful the leadership was in Fox Grove School, saying: “As a teacher, the administrators are quite supportive. Our administrators are local. They are Indigenous and from the community. They always tell us, ‘Whatever you need, feel free to reach out.’”

Juan remarked on the positive atmosphere in Beaver Hill School and explained that the school’s Indigenous administration supports teachers well. He elaborated:

I like the atmosphere in the school. The principal is very supportive. Anything that you’d like to request, anything that they can give you, all the information that you need you can get. They will direct you to the people who are in charge of that in case they don’t have that information. They’re very caring.

RJ felt supported when he began working in North Shore. He explained that the Indigenous teaching staff and principal welcomed him and fellow newcomer teachers into the community, saying:

I asked for some assistance from all the previous [Indigenous] teachers that were here for a longer time. And how did they treat me? So far so good. I don't feel any discrimination at all. They were very welcoming. They were very accommodating. I feel supported by the administration as well as by the community.

Like RJ, Suzanna felt supported by the Indigenous administration in Arrow Creek and another community in which she taught. She recalled: "There were several challenges [for newcomer teachers]. However, the best support that I got was from Arrow Creek and from [name withheld]. In Arrow Creek, the director [of education] is very supportive."

Relations are sometimes contentious between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Misunderstandings often lead to conflict and discontentment between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Donald, 2024); therefore, non-Indigenous educators like Filipino IETs must work in harmony with Indigenous teachers and school leaders. Reconciliatory aims, such as addressing some of the TRC's 94 Calls to Action, can be achieved by fostering greater harmony between Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators. These aims include closing the educational gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and eliminating the financial hurdles that prevent Indigenous youth from accessing post-secondary education (Skelton, 2022). Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators can model effective communication and collaboration, demonstrating to all students that Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can work together harmoniously across cultural boundaries (Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Through a CRT perspective, newcomers and Indigenous Peoples are often thrust into competitive positions within the country. The White social order often labels First Nations people as minorities and pushes them into competition for resources with newcomer groups (Skelton, 2022; St. Denis, 2011). Strong Indigenous leadership in schools and effective partnerships with immigrant

teachers can improve relations, advance reconciliatory aims, and demonstrate how Indigenous Peoples and newcomers can work together in harmony.

Funding discrepancies exist, nevertheless, that have detrimental effects on Indigenous schools and the leadership that administers these institutions. Funding disparities often prevent Indigenous schools from offering quality education and professional development (PD) that can enhance teachers' skills and the ability to provide quality instruction to First Nations youth (Drummond & Rosenbluth, 2013). Minerva, for example, mentioned that her employer—Fox Grove First Nation—sends teachers to Winnipeg for PD rather than providing these opportunities in-house. Drummond and Rosenbluth (2013) point out that First Nations schools are often significantly underfunded; as a result, funding remains insufficient to manage these schools and to improve students' academic outcomes effectively. Funding is a singular issue, and various factors intersect (e.g., social, economic, governance) to create poorer learning and teaching conditions in First Nations schools (Drummond & Rosenbluth, 2013). These conditions force bands like Fox Grove First Nation to send teachers elsewhere for PD, even if that PD may be more costly.

As illustrated by CRT, colonization is endemic in society (Writer, 2008). The residual effects of colonization hamper Indigenous schools, the leadership that oversees these schools, and the teachers working within them. Teachers employed by a First Nation or First Nation Education Authority are often designated as associate members of the Manitoba Teachers' Society rather than given full member status (Manitoba Teachers' Society, n.d.). Associate members are not covered by the provincial collective agreement and are not entitled to all the society's services (Manitoba Teachers' Society, n.d.), which limits the PD they can receive. First Nations schools typically suffer from funding shortfalls, which limit the training their teachers

can receive, thus hampering the quality of education offered to Indigenous youth (Carr-Stewart et al., 2011). Carr-Stewart et al. (2011) urge provincial and federal governing bodies to address the situation to ensure equity of educational funding. Mitigating the funding gap through structural policy shifts is essential to alleviating the systemic hurdles that affect teachers employed in First Nations schools.

Elders in the Community

Many of the IETs spoke of the support provided by Elders in their communities and how they learned about the important role that Elders play in Indigenous communities and schools.

Mayette explained:

I'm non-Indigenous, but I have a Cree teacher here [in Turtle River], an Indigenous teacher, and then I have an Elder. We have this Elders group in the school. They are my consultants. I ask them, "Because I'm not familiar with your culture, please help me with this." They are actually my brains, and then I'm the one who's implementing [the suggestions of Elders]. I get all the ideas because they [Elders] know the Protocols. They know how, and then we put all our heads and minds together and that's how we achieve our goals.

Anchor also learned about the important role that Elders have in First Nations communities and schools. Upon this revelation, Anchor made sure new teachers were introduced to the Elders in Honey Lake upon arrival. She said:

I introduce them [IETs] to Elders. Since I've been working with these Elders for a long time, the very first thing I do is introduce them. And I don't just tour them [IETs] around, but I make sure that they are comfortable where they are and help them with whatever they need.

By immersing themselves in their schools and communities, IETs like Anchor and Mayette have come to realize the importance that Elders have in Indigenous communities. The narratives of Whites tend to dominate educational discourse; therefore, sharing stories that counter these majority narratives is essential. Transcultural storytelling, as coined by Senehi (2020), has the potential to disrupt (i.e., counter) majority narratives as participants engage in developing relationships and mutual recognition within a cross-cultural context. CRT posits that counter-stories are an effective way of toppling Western perspectives and epistemologies that have primarily comprised educational curricula (Skelton, 2025). Residential school survivors can share stories of their experiences to remind students of the country's true history and why some Indigenous families suffer from the ill effects of intergenerational trauma today. These marginalized voices need to be heard to counter residential school denialism and the opponents of CRT (Carleton, 2021).

Anchor and Mayette have come to realize the numerous benefits that Elders bring to First Nations communities. Mayette described her Elders as consultants who provide her with strategies best suited to meet the needs of Indigenous learners in Turtle River. Anchor discussed the importance of introducing new IETs to the Elders in Honey Lake, highlighting the wisdom and intergenerational knowledge they possess. The voices of Elders can contest systemic racism and have therapeutic benefits for listeners and orators alike (Ladson-Billings, 2013; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). IETs who take up residence and teaching positions in northern communities benefit from the partnerships of Elders and the valuable counsel they provide.

Conclusion

The results of the present study suggest the Filipino education diaspora provides meaningful social exchanges for its members. Ripple, for example, discussed how she connects

with incoming teachers before they arrive, which makes them feel welcome. Catherine mentioned how Filipino administrators do an adequate job of acclimatizing newcomer Filipino teachers and supporting them throughout their teaching careers. With these essential social exchanges, it is more probable for newcomer Filipino teachers to integrate into unfamiliar school systems (McCormick & Dooley, 2005). Hosting formal and informal events such as workshops and summer gatherings allows Filipino teachers to engage in collective learning and reciprocity (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2023). These gatherings provide a safe space for collaboration, support, and problem-solving (Bouchamma et al., 2018; McCormick & Dooley, 2005). The interviewees shared the importance of being welcomed, checked on, and introduced to other teachers. Hosting informal gatherings such as summer events and Christmas parties brings Filipino teachers together in a space where they can collaborate (Bouchamma et al., 2018). This informal support is likely why many Filipinos are employed in various rural and Indigenous communities. The employment of IETs is vital in mitigating teacher shortages in Northern Manitoba.

The Filipino teachers profiled in this chapter are engaging in important teacher leadership work through collaboration and spreading best practices to familiarize newcomer teachers with the Manitoba school system (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Whether through formal or informal means, this leadership is crucial for supporting newcomer teachers and reducing teacher shortages in northern and rural communities. The Filipino education community in Manitoba exemplifies the collegial system required to support newcomer teachers.

Indigenous educational leadership serves an equally important role in acclimatizing IETs to life in Northern Manitoba. The IETs discussed how helpful Indigenous teachers and administrators were, and how they supported newcomer teachers, warmly welcoming them into their communities. The IETs also recognized that Elders were vital members of First Nations

communities, providing counsel and intergenerational knowledge to best support Indigenous students. The case of Filipino IETs living and working in First Nations communities demonstrates how Indigenous Peoples and newcomer groups can work together effectively to improve schooling for Indigenous children and advance reconciliatory aims.

Chapter 10: Understanding Filipino IET Experiences in Northern Manitoba

In this discussion chapter, I offer an interpretation of the study's findings and explain the significance of Filipino IETs taking up residency and teaching positions in remote Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba. In the first section, I discuss the nuances of teaching in the North—an isolated, picturesque region that offers both pathways and barriers to those pursuing teaching employment. The North is rarely considered a desirable destination for recently certified teachers, likely due to the deficit-oriented discourse that plagues Indigenous communities (Margherio et al., 2023). The narratives shared by the Filipino IETs contrast with the negativity that often surrounds northern Indigenous communities. In the second section, I examine the unlikely partnership between Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples, both of whom have faced racialization and systemic marginalization (Bradford et al., 2017; Czyzewski, 2011; Janusch, 2015; Marom & Xu, 2025). Both groups have benefited from the relationship, as Filipino IETs are able to offer uninterrupted education in Indigenous communities, and Filipino IETs gain purposeful teaching experiences that were largely unavailable in urban centres. In the final section, I explain how Filipino IETs play an important role in positively reframing Indigenous communities, given their unique status within a colonized education system. The work IETs do in Northern Manitoba is vitally important and necessary as newcomers join non-Indigenous residents in reconciling with Indigenous Peoples.

Pathways and Barriers to Teaching in the North

Northern Manitoba offers opportunities for IETs that are largely unavailable in larger urban centres such as Winnipeg and Brandon. Divisions like Meadowbrook School Division and Rolling Hills School System often spend exorbitant sums on teacher recruitment and retention to attract and retain qualified teaching staff (Greenslade, 2023). The teacher turnover rate is high in

Northern Manitoba, as some teachers depart for urban centres when more permanent positions become available (Macintosh, 2023). The high teacher turnover in the North has exploitative implications for Indigenous communities and students, as relationships are harder to develop and connections become fractured when teachers depart after brief periods (Hall, 2012). Disrupted education and high teacher turnover are a disservice to Indigenous learners, who deserve to be taught by qualified teachers, much like their non-Indigenous counterparts.

The Filipino IETs from this study are providing quality instruction and stability to many communities in Northern Manitoba. Unlike some teachers who depart for more urban areas when teaching positions become available, many participants have spent considerable time in their respective communities. Ripple, for example, has been in Eagle's Creek for over nine years. Minerva and Anchor have spent over 10 years in Fox Grove First Nation and Honey Lake, respectively. Mayette has also spent over 15 years in Turtle River. The IETs indicated they had no desire to return to teaching in the city and expressed plans to retire in their communities. Northern Manitoba has offered these IETs opportunities that were largely inaccessible in Winnipeg; as a result, many IETs have pledged to complete their careers in the North. The participants mentioned the welcoming nature of Indigenous communities, the helpfulness of residents, and the support of colleagues and administrators as reasons they decided to live and teach permanently in the North. Indigenous communities have embraced the Filipino IETs and provided meaningful support despite the mistreatment that Indigenous populations have experienced historically (Kasparian, 2012). Kasparian (2012) notes that Indigenous Peoples are known for their hospitality and generosity, even though they have experienced hostile treatment from settler groups and immigrant communities. Despite enduring longstanding colonial injustices, many Indigenous communities cordially welcomed and accepted these Filipino IETs.

The study revealed the conundrum Filipino IETs face upon completing their recertification: hold out for teaching employment in the city or apply and accept teaching employment up North. The decision to accept northern employment was easier for those IETs like Juan and RJ who were single and had no children. For those who had spouses and children, the decision was more strenuous, as IETs like Dolly, Minerva, and Anchor had to contemplate leaving spouses and children behind in a new host society. Such sacrifices are significant but must be considered if IETs wish to extend their teaching careers and improve their financial outlooks (Levon, 2015; Muirhead et al., 2020). The participants all considered northern employment, given the lack of opportunities and the immense frustration they had with securing teaching work in Winnipeg.

The North provides valuable pathways and experiences to those IETs who are systemically excluded from teaching employment in the city. Utilizing a CRT lens, the study pinpointed the racialized hiring barriers that urban school divisions implicitly put in place to exclude IETs. While school divisions typically tout inclusive hiring policies, the statistics confirm the significant gap between the number of students and teachers who identify as BIPOC (Stephenson, 2020). The failure to acknowledge international teaching credentials, xenophobia, and gender discrimination all intersect to make it doubly challenging for immigrant teachers to acquire employment in the city (Niyubahwe et al., 2013; Stephenson, 2020; Szeto, 2022), especially female IETs. Name discrimination and the undervaluing of IET credentials are typical ways that school divisions racially exclude IETs from urban labour markets (Rahman, 2024; Taylor, 2019). Anchor, for example, reported how she applied for more than 50 teaching jobs and secured only one interview. To circumvent this racialized exclusion, IETs took on survival jobs, accepted substitute teacher roles, and settled for EA positions. Many barriers contribute to

the deskilling of IETs, as they are routinely pushed into employment beneath their levels of education and experience (Muirhead et al., 2020; Sethi, 2015; Szeto, 2022). This phenomenon further delays IET integration and reinforces systemic exclusion in urban teaching markets.

Northern schools and communities should be commended for creating meaningful pathways for IETs to continue their teaching careers amid systemic exclusion from urban labour markets. Despite possessing parallel or often superior qualifications to those of domestically trained teachers, IETs do not possess the cultural capital required to secure employment in significant numbers in the urban teaching market (Marom & Xu, 2025). The credentials, experiences, and language that IETs possess are often undervalued and given less priority than domestically acquired cultural capital (Gómez et al., 2025; Marom & Xu, 2025; Schmidt, 2015a). This prioritization systemically excludes IETs from teaching employment and forces them to seek opportunities in more remote and northern communities. Northern Manitoba offers immigrant teachers the opportunity to continue their chosen profession and advance their careers. Many participants advanced beyond the classroom teacher level. RJ, for example, became a resource teacher after time spent as a classroom teacher. Anchor and Ripple both became teaching principals, and Mayette was promoted to a principalship. Northern schools have not only provided meaningful employment opportunities for immigrant teachers but have also recognized their skills and experience by promoting them to leadership and higher-level positions when deemed deserving of advancement. Indigenous communities have recognized the cultural capital of Filipino IETs, valuing their credentials and professional experiences rather than diminishing or dismissing them.

While there are benefits to recruiting Filipino IETs to work in northern communities, the education system is still failing to adequately recruit and train Indigenous teachers to fill teaching

roles in the North. Teaching shortages continue to plague northern and remote communities despite the influx of immigrant teachers (Monkman, 2017). Staffing challenges have resulted in school closures in some communities, and the hiring of uncertified educators and the temporary use of EAs as teachers are strategies northern divisions have implemented to adequately staff their schools and provide continuous education for Indigenous learners (Macintosh, 2023a; Monkman, 2017). Through a CRT lens, the above tactics, albeit noble ones to staff schools, demonstrate how Indigenous Peoples continue to feel the adverse effects of settler colonialism (Henderson, 2023). Persistent staffing shortages are a disservice to Indigenous learners and demonstrate how colonial structures continue to impede the ability to provide quality and continuous education in the North.

The study revealed the need to invest in local teacher development to increase Indigenous representation among teachers in Manitoba. Indigenous Peoples have long been underrepresented in the provincial teaching force (Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Several studies have confirmed the benefits of hiring more Indigenous teachers, including the ability to mentor Indigenous students (Santoro et al., 2011), to stand up against historical and social acts of oppression (Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025), and to increase the confidence of Indigenous learners (Othman, 2022). Looking through a CRT lens, we can see how several systemic barriers, such as interrupted education in Indigenous communities (Macintosh, 2023a; Monkman, 2017), financial constraints (Mardon & Ahmed, 2023; Monkman, 2016), and the education system's Eurocentric focus (Battiste, 2017; Mardon & Ahmed, 2023), have excluded Indigenous Peoples from gaining admission to teacher training programs and certifying as teachers. Staffing schools with more IETs is a worthwhile endeavour, but it does not address the marginal representation of Indigenous teachers in the school system.

Employing more IETs in Indigenous communities may also do little to mitigate colonial structures in place that systematically exclude Indigenous Peoples. Several studies have shared the need for curricular reform, the unlearning of colonial identities, and the discontinuation of Western schooling structures to mitigate colonial dependency (see Cannon, 2013; Kanu, 2005; Korteweg & Fiddler, 2018). Cannon (2013) discusses how non-Indigenous teachers must “challenge their own investment in colonial dominance and self-identification” (p. 24). This means critically examining one’s privilege and role in settler colonialism. Filipino IETs may unintentionally reproduce colonial dependency without strong orientation programming led by Indigenous Peoples and an understanding of their own privileges (Cannon, 2013). While employing more IETs can mitigate teaching shortages and provide quality education in northern communities, critical self-reflection and a commitment to decolonization are essential.

Many IETs have been actively engaged in learning about Indigenous knowledge systems and land-based pedagogy. Ripple, for example, discussed how she involved her students in gardening; Minerva stated that she joined her learners in a traditional medicinal harvest; and RJ shared his progress in learning beadwork, traditional folklore, and filleting fish. While these lessons are valuable, IETs must go beyond learning about traditional knowledge systems and worldviews and reflect upon the privileges they have inherited from a Western, colonial education system (Cannon, 2013; Korteweg & Fiddler). Kanu (2005) argues that teachers who work with Indigenous students must go beyond superficial, multicultural inclusion and ensure Indigenous knowledge systems and pedagogy are at the centre of their teaching. In other words, IETs need to go beyond the status quo and work toward positively transforming Indigenous pedagogy so that it receives the legitimacy it deserves (Kanu, 2005). In this way, IETs can have pivotal rather than symbolic roles in supporting decolonial measures in the North.

Filipino IETs as Unexpected Allies in Reconciliation

Filipino IETs occupy a unique position within reconciliation efforts between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada. Understood through a CRT lens, settler colonialism has had detrimental effects on Indigenous Peoples, including inequitable treatment within the court system, biased policing practices, and disproportionately high incarceration rates (Skelton, 2022). The dire effects of residential schooling are still being experienced through intergenerational trauma, elevated levels of domestic violence, and higher rates of mental health issues (Bradford et al., 2017; Czyzewski, 2011). While newcomers and their ancestors are not directly responsible for these harmful effects, immigrant teachers hold unique positions within a primarily Western, Eurocentric education system (Skelton, 2022). Like every other educator, IETs are tasked with improving relations and advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples (Dion, 2016; Reynar & Matties, 2019; Skelton, 2022). Unlike non-racialized educators, however, IETs are not immune to systemic racism and injustice. This positioning speaks to the enormity of an IET's role within an Indigenous community as they engage in reconciliatory efforts while simultaneously navigating systemic marginalization.

The Filipino IETs of this study arrived in Indigenous communities after being largely excluded from the urban teaching market in Winnipeg. Anchor revealed the sizeable number of applications she sent without being interviewed, Dolly discussed only being able to secure an EA position, and Catherine shared that she accepted non-teaching-related work because it was easier to obtain. While the IETs were frustrated in their attempts to secure employment in Winnipeg, many were grateful for the opportunities they have been afforded in Indigenous communities to continue their careers. Catherine explained how relieved she felt to be teaching again, Dolly shared how meaningful her work was as a resource teacher, and RJ expressed appreciation for

the craftsmanship Indigenous community members have taught him. Indigenous communities have provided IETs with a strong sense of community and a sense of home. By feeling welcomed and at home in their new communities, feelings of social exclusion and anxiety among IETs are decreased (Camilleri et al., 2023). A strong sense of home is essential for increasing integration, togetherness, and life satisfaction (Camilleri et al., 2023; Parro, 2018). A strong sense of home also has therapeutic benefits, as it can restore relationships, facilitate healing, and foster resilience (Parro, 2018). Ultimately, Indigenous communities have provided IETs with renewed purpose and validation as they navigate exclusion within urban centres.

There are several reasons for the successes IETs have experienced in Northern Manitoba. A primary determinant of IET success in the North is the strong level of support the teachers have received from the Filipino educational diaspora. Fellow Filipino teachers have banded together in the North to support new IETs as they adjust to unfamiliar ways of life in northern communities and to a new schooling system. Lee-Johnson (2023) explains that this type of communal support is imperative for IETs, who experience a wide range of intersectional challenges, including linguistic discrimination and anti-immigrant sentiment (Block, 2012; Schmidt et al., 2010). Female IETs face the above-mentioned challenges in addition to gender-role stereotyping (Lee-Johnson, 2023). To combat these hurdles, the Filipino educational diaspora distributes resources, invites IETs to communal events, and shares advice with members to lessen anxiety. Such strategies are necessary to help newcomer IETs transition successfully and develop stronger ties within their communities (De Oca & Malaga, 2025). The Filipino educational diaspora plays a pivotal role in helping IETs navigate systemic barriers and provides the connections necessary for them to thrive in remote, northern communities.

The support provided by Indigenous communities is an equally strong determinant of the Filipino IETs' successes in the North. The IETs commonly mentioned supportive Indigenous residents, teachers, and administrators as among the primary reasons they have adapted and succeeded in the North. Chloe mentioned receiving help getting her stuck vehicle out of the snow; Ripple recalled receiving fish from her neighbours; and Juan and RJ told how they were transported on hunting and fishing excursions throughout their communities. Greater harmony can advance reconciliatory efforts between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (Donald, 2024). Improved relations can also negate the misunderstandings and contention that often characterize Indigenous-newcomer relations (Donald, 2024). Strong community relationships are a strong determinant of successful integration and advancing reconciliation efforts between Indigenous and immigrant populations.

The Filipino-Indigenous partnership profiled in this study exemplifies the type of collaboration that can improve education for Indigenous students in northern communities. Filipino and Indigenous teachers can model effective communication and demonstrate that different cultural groups can work together effectively and harmoniously (Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Chloe, for example, mentioned that after a dispute with an Indigenous colleague, the two teachers worked through the disagreement and restored mutual understanding. A CRT framework identifies how newcomers and Indigenous Peoples are often thrust into competition because of the White social order that fuels competition among marginalized groups while upholding White dominance (Skelton, 2022; St. Denis, 2011). The collaborative partnerships that Filipinos and Indigenous Peoples are forming in northern communities can counter the competition and division that colonial structures perpetuate (St. Denis, 2011). This cross-cultural solidarity is key in advancing reconciliation efforts.

An additional indicator of the success of the Filipino and Indigenous partnership is the similarities and uniqueness of the relationship between the two groups. As BIPOC members, Filipinos and Indigenous Peoples have long faced systemic discrimination and exclusion. Spanish and American colonization of the Philippines and European colonization of North America have led both groups to share a history of colonialism and historical maltreatment (Eliot, 2021; Elizalde, 2022; Go, 2004). Despite this shared history, newcomer groups like Filipinos and Indigenous Peoples are often thrust into competition as marginalized groups under a White social order (Skelton, 2022; St. Denis, 2011). As a result, negative stereotyping and passive-aggressive tensions often characterize interactions between the two sides (Adam & Hogue, 2015). The literature, however, suggests that knowledge acquisition, cultural sharing, and increased community exchanges and dialogue are means to improve newcomer-Indigenous relations (see Adam & Hogue, 2015; Alidina et al., 2020; Reynar & Matties, 2019). Improved, prosperous relations can be mutually beneficial for both newcomer groups and Indigenous Peoples.

Many of these positive encounters are taking place in Northern Manitoba between Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples. RJ, for example, is learning about the Northern Lights and Indigenous folklore and sharing what he learns with his students. He is also appreciative of Indigenous Elders for teaching him beadwork and other traditional crafts. Suzanna appreciates learning how to clean and debone a fish from Indigenous community members, and Juan is thankful for being taken on hunting and boating excursions in his community. Filipino IETs have formed a collective bond with Indigenous Peoples, which can be used to mitigate societal oppressions (Sumerau et al., 2018), such as being excluded from urban teaching markets. This collective bond can also be used to mitigate deficit-oriented discourse that often forms around

Indigenous communities (Margherio et al., 2023), as Filipino IETs can share the positive experiences they have had in these communities with family, colleagues, and researchers. By sharing their successes and the positive connections they have made with Indigenous Peoples, Filipino IETs play a pivotal role in fostering a strengths-based discourse surrounding Indigenous communities.

The profile of the typical Filipino IET can also explain the successes these immigrant teachers have experienced in Indigenous communities. While not universal, the participants were all mature teachers over 35 years old. Some research suggests that mature teachers often provide the stability that learners need to excel academically and emotionally (see Hall, 2012; Moon & Berger, 2022). Mature teachers often demonstrate a strong commitment to their profession and the resilience to overcome challenging situations (Hall, 2012). Chloe, for example, after being told that an Indigenous educator would do a better job as a guidance counsellor, was assertive and shared that any teacher, regardless of cultural background, could be successful in the guidance position. In Fox Grove First Nation, Minerva's welcoming greetings went unanswered by many community members. Minerva did not take this personally and, over time, developed strong connections with residents. The experiences of Chloe and Minerva demonstrate how maturity and perseverance can overcome challenges and culminate in strengthened relations with Indigenous Peoples.

A teacher's longevity is often an indicator of the strength of the relationships they can make (Moon & Berger, 2022). As the principal in Turtle River, Mayette is greeted warmly by students and residents when she is in the community. An educator like Mayette, who works for an extended period in a remote community, is often able to build stronger, more meaningful relationships with students and residents than a teacher who departs after a short period (Moon &

Berger, 2022). Stability, commitment, and longevity all contribute to the successful affiliation between Filipino IETs and Indigenous communities (Hall, 2012; Moon & Berger, 2022). As mature teachers, Filipino IETs have provided the stability, commitment, and longevity that Indigenous schools desire.

Reframing Northern Indigenous Communities

The Filipino IETs shared positive experiences of their time residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities. They described how residents were welcoming, hospitable, and supportive. Many shared how they were presented with food on multiple occasions, invited on outings, and taught the skills necessary for northern life, such as snowmobiling, hunting, and boating. Despite these positive experiences, Indigenous communities have historically been burdened by deficit-oriented narratives and harmful stereotypes (Anderson & Robertson, 2011; Henry & Tator, 2002). The media commonly depicts Indigenous communities as places awash in violence, poverty, and alcoholism (Henry & Tator, 2002). Indigenous communities are also commonly stereotyped as inferior (Henry & Tator, 2002), and residents are typically portrayed as depraved, stubborn, and unyielding to progress (Anderson & Robertson, 2011). This discourse erroneously frames Indigenous Peoples in terms of what they are lacking instead of the strengths, knowledge, and resilience they possess.

A CRT framework can show how a deficit-oriented discourse, as described, positions settlers as superior while diminishing the systemic inequities that exist within society (Ahluwalia, 2012; Gahman & Legault, 2017; Mohamed et al., 2020; Writer, 2008). Schooling systems in Canada have historically marginalized Indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies (Gahman & Legault, 2017). As an example, prioritizing the English language, especially within Indigenous schools, is a colonial tactic that dismisses the importance of

Indigenous languages (Mohamed et al., 2020). A CRT framework can demonstrate how colonization is endemic in society and marginalizes Indigenous Peoples and communities (Ahluwalia, 2012; Writer, 2008). This frame can also show how the lived experiences of the Filipino IETs contrast with the negative, deficit discourse that characterizes portrayals of Indigenous communities. Chloe and Ripple, for example, spoke of the hospitality they have been shown. RJ and Juan shared how supported they have felt in their communities. Other IETs like Minerva and Suzanna explained how appreciative they felt to be taught important cultural lessons from Elders. All these experiences led the IETs to discuss their long-term commitments to northern communities, and some IETs even brought their spouses and children to join them. The positive and meaningful experiences profiled above contrast with the deficit-oriented discourse that tends to circulate regarding Indigenous communities.

While the Filipino IETs shared many meaningful experiences and spoke about how culturally vibrant Indigenous communities are, it is naïve to romanticize these communities by only sharing positive lived realities. The structural inequities that exist in these communities are unintentionally pushed to the periphery by focusing solely on celebratory accounts. Understood through a CRT lens, White settler society tends to blame Indigenous Peoples for the problems and inequities that exist in northern communities (Ahluwalia, 2012; Writer, 2008). This tactic defocuses attention on the remnants of settler colonialism and the harmful effects it has had on Indigenous Peoples and communities. By sharing their experiences, Filipino IETs can counter the narratives that depict Indigenous communities as dysfunctional (Hodler & Batts Maddox, 2021; Mohamed et al., 2020; Perez-Marin et al., 2024). These counter-stories can amplify marginalized voices (Hodler & Batts Maddox, 2021), mitigate power imbalances (Mohamed et al., 2020; Perez-Marin et al., 2024), and alleviate the harmful effects of settler colonialism

(Stewart & Thompson, 2023). Filipino IETs can use their positive experiences to persuade fellow IETs—Filipino and non-Filipino—to take on employment in the North and experience the generous and hospitable nature of Indigenous Peoples.

This study shows how Filipino IETs can be unexpected allies of Indigenous Peoples as Canadian society works toward decolonization and dismantling the detrimental effects of settler colonialism. This decolonial work is essential to reframing Indigenous communities in a positive light. Filipino IETs share similar cultural traits with Indigenous Peoples that bind the two groups together in solidarity. Juan, for example, pointed out how Filipinos and Indigenous Peoples prioritize family life and typically live together with grandparents, siblings, and children. Chloe shared that she found many similar character traits between Filipinos and Indigenous Peoples, namely the reserved nature of the children. Minerva can relate to the Indigenous people in Fox Grove First Nation because she identifies as Indigenous herself. Minerva is a member of the Igorots, a group whose traditional lands have been stripped away by the Filipino government (Madjaco, 2023; Santiago, 2021). The Igorots have fought against resource extraction from their lands, much like Indigenous Peoples have fought the federal Canadian government over oil extraction and pipeline expansion in Western Canada (Eliot, 2021; Santiago, n.d.). Minerva can relate to the people in her community because she has been in their position, having experienced traditional lands being taken away by governing bodies. Filipino IETs can draw on these shared experiences, strong family networks, and cultural vibrancy to challenge deficit-based narratives that negatively frame Indigenous communities.

Shared experiences of marginalization can bind Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples but should not be conflated. In other words, the experiences of these marginalized groups are not identical, nor should their experiences of systemic injustice be treated equally. Filipino IETs

have experienced racialization within mainstream society (Cho, 2010; Janusch, 2015; Schmidt, 2010), marginalization within urban teaching markets (Marom & Xu, 2025), and been relegated to survival employment (Muirhead et al., 2020; Sethi, 2015; Szeto, 2022). Indigenous Peoples have also experienced racialization within society and continue to feel the harmful effects of settler colonialism (Bradford et al., 2017; Czyzewski, 2011; St. Denis, 2007). These effects are most noticeable in Indigenous communities, which suffer from educational inequities, like teacher shortages and interrupted education among Indigenous learners (Burleigh, 2016; Macintosh, 2023a), and societal barriers, such as inadequate infrastructure and exorbitant food costs (Bradford et al., 2017; Cash, 2024; Muhajarine, 2024). While the above challenges and barriers are not identical, IETs and Indigenous Peoples can still form allyships so that Indigenous communities are framed more positively. The counter-narratives that ally groups share can mitigate negative perceptions of Indigenous communities (Miles, 2019; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Filipino IETs contribute to reshaping the deficit perception that frames Indigenous communities.

Despite the benefits of a newcomer-Indigenous partnership in the North, Filipino IETs should be cognizant of not perpetuating settler colonialism in northern communities. To accomplish this objective, IETs must break away from the dominant, Eurocentric curriculum and incorporate Indigenous worldviews and epistemologies (Montero & Dénommé-Welch, 2018; Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025; Wildcat et al., 2014). The IETs profiled in this study have taken meaningful initiatives to incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems and land-based pedagogy into their teaching, such as Ripple, who has undertaken a garden project with her learners, and Minerva, who has engaged her class in traditional medicinal harvesting. As very little to no research has been conducted on Filipino IETs working in the North, the stories from

this study can help humanize northern communities and mitigate the deficit discourse that surrounds these locales (Margherio et al., 2023). Collectively, Filipino IETs can offer quality, non-interrupted education and disrupt the deficit-oriented discourse that has long marred Indigenous communities.

While the study reported mainly affirming relations between Indigenous Peoples and Filipino IETs, not all encounters were positive. It is naïve to assume that conflict would not arise between newcomer teachers and Indigenous Peoples, two groups with differing life experiences and worldviews. Chloe, for example, was engaged in a verbal altercation with an Indigenous teacher over a guidance counsellor position. Anchor and Mayette also mentioned the frustration they experienced with encouraging parents to regularly send their children to school. Filipino IETs should understand the history of residential schooling in Canada and how forcing Indigenous learners to attend school can have traumatic repercussions among families who continue to suffer the ill-effects of intergenerational trauma (Czyzewski, 2011; Wilk et al., 2019). An increase in immigrant teachers can play an important role in mitigating teacher shortages in northern communities and the harmful effects of interrupted education (Macintosh, 2023a; Monkman, 2017). An increase in immigrant teachers cannot replace the need for more Indigenous teachers in the North; however, IETs play pivotal roles in positively reframing Indigenous communities.

Conclusion

From the findings, it is evident that school divisions in Northern Manitoba struggle to fill teaching vacancies and provide uninterrupted education in many communities. Northern school boards are commonly plagued with teaching shortages and must pay higher salaries and bonuses to entice teachers to live and teach in northern communities (Greenslade, 2023). Younger

teachers accept positions in the North but typically depart after short stints once positions become available in urban areas such as Winnipeg and Brandon (Burleigh, 2016). These departures are a disservice to Indigenous learners who require stable, uninterrupted education to excel academically and socially (Mueller et al., 2011; Woolfolk, 2019). Despite barriers such as limited infrastructure, costly transportation, and elevated food costs, the North offers many rewarding opportunities for teachers of all types, including IETs (Bradford et al., 2017; Cash, 2024; Muhajarine, 2024). Permanent, high-paying jobs with advancement potential are readily available for qualified and experienced educators (Greenslade, 2023). Many of these opportunities, due to systemic inequities, are not available to IETs in the urban labour market.

Filipino IETs play unexpected yet vital roles in reconciliation. The Filipino IETs profiled in this study were presented with a unique situation, having been pushed out of the urban teaching market and faced with systemic marginalization much like Indigenous Peoples (Marom & Xu, 2025; St. Denis, 2007). Common experiences, albeit negative, have united the two groups. The Filipino IETs are providing quality instruction to Indigenous learners, and Indigenous community members and Elders are reciprocating by teaching Filipino IETs valuable lessons for life in the North. This reciprocity has strengthened relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples. Although it is an unexpected partnership, Filipino IETs have become powerful allies of Indigenous Peoples. Interpreted through a CRT lens, the formation of allyships among BIPOC groups can strengthen marginalized communities and mitigate societal oppressions (Luedke, 2023; Margherio et al., 2023; Sumerau et al., 2018). Such partnerships can be vital in negating the deficit discourse that afflicts Indigenous Peoples and reframing their communities more positively.

Chapter 11: Conclusion

In the concluding chapter, I revisit the research questions and consider all the research results, including participants' commentary, and provide three recommendations to improve the experiences of Filipino IETs and facilitate their adjustment to northern communities. These recommendations aim to enhance the experiences of all IETs, enabling immigrant teachers to more easily adjust, achieve successes, and contribute positively to northern communities. As understood through CRT, northern and Indigenous communities have felt the ill effects of settler colonialism, including inadequate infrastructure spending in the North (Cash, 2024; Muhajarine, 2024), chronic teacher shortages (Monkman, 2017), and the interrupted education of Indigenous youth (Burleigh, 2016). Indigenous communities and residents deserve quality education, and this case study in Northern Manitoba suggests that Filipino IETs and other immigrant teachers can effectively serve these communities.

In this concluding chapter, I also discuss future research possibilities and the study's limitations. Due to the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges of accessing Northern Manitoba, I did not travel to the communities profiled in this study and instead conducted semi-structured interviews via Zoom and phone. This limitation prevented me from observing Filipino IETs in their classrooms as they interacted with Indigenous students. Observational data adds value to the research process, particularly in participatory research studies (Stake, 2010). Future research is discussed in the latter sections of the chapter, including calls to action to conduct research with IETs in northern communities that incorporate observations and participatory elements. Conversations with Indigenous students, educators, and community members will also be discussed as important future research needed to illuminate the relationship between immigrant teachers and Indigenous communities.

Research Questions Revisited

It is vital to revisit the original research questions as stated in the introductory chapter to highlight the key findings of the study. In the following section, I offer commentary on the three research questions in turn.

1. How do Filipino IETs experience residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba? How do IETs experience being welcomed in Indigenous communities?

From the participants, it is evident that most Filipino IETs have had positive experiences living and teaching in northern Indigenous communities. Many were frustrated by being denied interviews when applying for positions in the city. Dolly felt that the resumes of immigrant teachers are often cast aside in favour of recent teacher graduates. The research supports the assertion that the credentials of IETs are often overlooked and accorded less preference than those of domestically trained candidates (Gómez et al., 2025; Marom & Xu, 2025; Schmidt, 2015a). Observed through a CRT lens, the school system implicitly favours teachers who have been certified domestically, which means knowledge acquisition from a Western, Eurocentric education system. While school divisions tout inclusive hiring policies, the significant gap between the numbers of students and teachers who identify as BIPOC suggests that these policies are more symbolic than substantive (Stephenson, 2020). This practice channels a significant number of immigrant teachers into remote, rural areas of the country to continue their careers.

While many IETs were denied teaching jobs in urban areas, northern communities have embraced immigrant teachers and provided them with meaningful opportunities to continue their careers. Many participants expressed appreciation for being given permanent teaching positions and the chance for advancement. Many of the IETs indicated that survival-type employment

could not sustain them financially and emotionally. Ripple, for example, felt embarrassed about having a doctoral degree and working in a fast-food restaurant, while Juan expressed frustration with his call-centre job and yearned to continue his role as a teacher. The participants also frequently mentioned the welcoming and hospitable nature of Indigenous communities. They acknowledged the efforts of Indigenous teachers, administrators, and Elders to provide the necessary supports to succeed in their roles. An effective partnership between IETs and Indigenous educators offers many benefits, including advancing reconciliatory aims and demonstrating that newcomer groups and Indigenous Peoples can collaborate harmoniously for the greater good (Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). Collectively, the findings indicate that Indigenous communities offer Filipino IETs hospitable, welcoming, and professionally and personally rewarding experiences in Northern Manitoba.

2. What opportunities are there for IETs in northern Indigenous communities? What challenges have Filipino IETs experienced? What strategies have they used to adapt to life in northern communities?

There are numerous benefits for teachers willing to move and teach in the North. While the urban teaching market tends to push immigrant teachers away in favour of domestically trained candidates, the North is more welcoming of these educators. Understandably, northern school divisions cannot be as selective in hiring given the number of vacancies. Nevertheless, the IETs from the study possessed admirable credentials. For example, Catherine, Ripple, and Mayette possessed PhDs, and Suzanna and Juan held master's degrees. Schmidt (2015) notes how immigrant teachers often possess superior qualifications compared to their non-IET counterparts. The hiring of IETs in the North demonstrates that IETs are not simply hired to fill

vacancies but because they possess the necessary qualifications and experiences to succeed as educators.

While the successes of the Filipino IETs are documented throughout the study, challenges are certainly evident. Many participants mentioned the isolation they felt in the North and the difficulty of being away from their families. Minerva, for example, mentioned how difficult it was to be away from her young children, and Anchor shared how upsetting it was when her son called and asked her to come home. Dolly was upset that she had to live apart from her children as they grew up, and Catherine mentioned that moving to Honey Lake was the first time that she had spent any significant time away from her husband. IETs face many intersectional hurdles (Butrica & Mudrazija, 2022; Nayak et al., 2025), and the time they spend away from their families to make a living compound these challenges.

Adapting to the perceptions some Indigenous families have of schooling was also identified by participants as a major hurdle. Some of the IETs mentioned the frustration they experienced in encouraging students to attend school regularly, and that their pleas to parents to send their children to school went unanswered. The contentious relationship that some Indigenous families have with the education system was an aspect of schooling that the IETs struggled with. Residential schooling and its intergenerational effects on Indigenous families were perhaps not fully understood by some of the IETs. Alidina et al. (2020) note that newcomers are often unaware of the harms perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples, such as residential schooling. Some IETs did not understand that certain cultural activities, such as hunting, berry picking, and visiting family in neighbouring communities, often took precedence over schooling. This speaks to the need for further orientation for IETs before they enter northern communities, so they do not remain unaware of the impacts of intergenerational trauma (Alidina

et al., 2020). A CRT framework suggests that the lingering effects of residential schooling are very much evident in northern communities (Preston et al., 2017; Skelton, 2022), and the lack of trust that some Indigenous families have in the school system is understandable. This challenge was one of the most significant in the study and demonstrates the need for IETs to understand the historical and ongoing effects that colonialism has on Indigenous families and educational experiences.

Despite the significance of some of the challenges, the Filipino IETs implemented strategies to mitigate some of the hurdles. Consulting with fellow Filipino teachers and gleaning advice were mentioned as common strategies. Catherine shared how Filipino administrators provided the guidance she needed to excel as a new teacher in the North. Seeking guidance from Indigenous teachers and Elders and engaging in cultural and land-based activities were also mentioned as ways to integrate successfully in northern schools. RJ, for example, spoke of the importance of learning Indigenous folklore, familiarizing himself with the Northern Lights, and learning beadwork from Elders. He mentioned how these activities brought him closer to the residents in North Shore and that he could pass on the information that he learned to his students. Juan spoke of participating in smudging ceremonies in Pelican Grove and joining his students on traditional rabbit hunts. Strengthened relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can contest the ill effects of settler colonialism (Datta, 2019). A strong partnership between Indigenous Peoples and Filipino IETs can also advance reconciliatory efforts within the province of Manitoba (Adam & Hogue, 2015; Donald, 2024). By involving themselves in their communities, respecting and learning from Elders, and engaging in land-based pedagogy, the Filipino IETs are doing a credible job of integrating and positively contributing to northern life.

3. How do Filipino IETs experience residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba? How do Filipino IETs experience being welcomed in Indigenous communities?

The Filipino educational diaspora is doing a credible job of supporting the professional and personal successes of IETs in the North. Filipino teachers who have been living and working in the North for longer durations provide newcomer teachers with support to acclimatize them to a new school system and way of life. New IETs are provided with resources, consultation, and regular check-ins. An intersectional lens reveals the multiple barriers IETs face in their host society, including racialization, linguistic discrimination, and ageism experienced by older IETs (Block, 2012; Lee-Johnson, 2023; Schmidt et al., 2010). Racialized IETs such as Filipinos do not reap the advantages of White privilege available to other IETs from Western countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States in the Canadian context (Lee-Johnson, 2023). Therefore, the support and community ties available to IETs are imperative for successfully transitioning these teachers and easing the adaptation process (De Oca & Malaga, 2025). In addition to professional integration, the Filipino diaspora supports IETs with their personal integration in northern communities. The North can be a remote and isolating place, especially for IETs who have left spouses and children behind in the city. The Filipino community in the North typically engages new IETs in many social events such as karaoke, movie nights, and potlucks. These social activities are important for strengthening social relationships, reducing anxiety, and improving mental health and well-being (Reyes, 2016). This study shows how the Filipino diaspora in Northern Manitoba works diligently to ensure the professional and personal success of Filipino IETs.

Indigenous teachers and leaders are also welcoming of newcomer Filipino IETs who arrive in their communities. RJ described the encouragement he received from Indigenous administrators in North Shore, and Juan commented on how supported he felt by Indigenous colleagues in Pelican Grove. Elders play a pivotal role in acclimating newcomer teachers and working with them to ensure that Indigenous youth receive quality education. Elders often possess wisdom and intergenerational knowledge and can support IETs in delivering lessons that embed Indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies (Bradford et al., 2017; Reynar & Matties, 2019). Indigenous leaders can support Filipino IETs in sharing unfortunate moments in Canada's history, such as residential schooling, and explaining why some Indigenous families continue to suffer from intergenerational trauma because of these schools. The strong working relationship between IETs and Indigenous leaders can uplift marginalized voices and de-emphasize the Western perspectives that often permeate education curricula (Skelton, 2025). Ultimately, the guidance and wisdom provided by Indigenous teachers and leaders have helped Filipino IETs become more effective educators in Indigenous communities.

Recommendations

While challenges exist in terms of adjustment and forging strong relationships with Indigenous residents, the recommendations that follow can improve experiences and better support IETs in the North. The study results suggest that northern and Indigenous residents are welcoming of teachers willing to reside and teach in their communities. The Filipino diaspora in Northern Manitoba supports newcomer teachers, and Indigenous administrators and teachers are equally supportive of these newcomers, indicating that successful partnerships can alleviate teacher shortages and provide the best education possible for Indigenous youth. Improving the

educational experiences of First Nations students is a crucial step toward achieving reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Orientation for IETs

Some research indicates a need for orientation programming to support IETs in working effectively in Indigenous communities (see Alidina et al., 2020; Reynar & Matties, 2019).

Reynar and Matties (2019) outline the many concepts that newcomers should learn about in order to understand Indigenous Peoples and the history of Indigenous-settler relations. Many non-Indigenous people fail to realize the diverse composition of Indigenous communities and the nuanced relationship that has existed between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people since first contact (Alidina et al., 2020). Many Indigenous groups, such as the Cree, are highly spiritual and believe in the interconnection of all living things (Reynar & Matties, 2019). Traditional ceremonies and celebrations are of vital importance to Cree communities, and the sharing of stories and the passing down of life lessons are important components of Cree life (Reynar & Matties, 2019). The above information is vital for IETs to understand, so that Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives are preserved and celebrated in classrooms rather than pushed to the periphery.

The interview results indicate a need for orientation programming to better prepare IETs for life and teaching work in Indigenous communities. Chloe, for example, spoke of the misunderstandings she dealt with in Deerwood First Nation, saying: “I’m not sure if it was cultural or if it was just human dynamics, but there were times when I had misunderstandings, for a lack of a better word.”

Mayette found it difficult to comprehend the hesitation that Indigenous parents had in sending their children to school. She explained:

Attendance is one of our challenges here [in Turtle River]. It's so hard to get the kids to come to school, so that's why when I had a meeting with my staff I said, "We have to step up, we have to put our heads together and find ways where we can get the students back to school." It's really hard.

Anchor shared similar thoughts: "Of course, parents—parent support [is a challenge]. Because it's a First Nation community, and you know their history about schools, and they're still struggling about that, about trust, about sending kids [to school]."

The prevalence of stereotypes supports the notion that education in Indigenous history and the impact of colonization is vital for IETs to possess before venturing up North (Haig-Brown, 2012). This knowledge is essential so that IETs do not replicate negative stereotypes and downplay harmful events in Canada's history, such as residential schooling. Alidina et al. (2020) suggest that effective orientation programming should focus on the history of Indigenous-settler relations, including pre-colonial life and the devastating effects and legacies of colonization, such as the impacts of residential schooling, treaties, and the Sixties Scoop. This information is necessary for IETs to build a concrete understanding of Indigenous history in Canada.

Calls 93 and 94 from the TRC's 94 Calls to Action pertain to newcomers and the need to provide a more inclusive history of Indigenous Peoples, including information about treaties and residential schooling (Government of Canada, 2024c). Facilitators can successfully share Indigenous traditions and practices with IETs through settlement and integration programming and work toward achieving Calls 93 and 94 (Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014). Negating stereotypes such as the belief that Indigenous parents do not adequately support their children in school should also be emphasized in orientation programming (Alidina et al., 2020). Safe spaces should be provided for IETs to discuss stereotypes openly without censorship, such as the assumption

that Indigenous communities are plagued with alcoholism, poverty, and violence (Alidina et al., 2020; Henry & Tator, 2002). Providing accurate information in orientation programming can minimize harmful stereotypes and create mutual understanding between newcomers and non-Indigenous people (Gyepi-Garbrah et al., 2014; Haig-Brown, 2012).

Orientation programming should also facilitate conversations about the positive stories and alliances that have emerged between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples. Too often, the mainstream media focuses on the harms arising from newcomer-Indigenous relations (Alidina et al., 2020; Anderson & Robertson, 2011; Henry & Tator, 2002). Newcomers like IETs should be aware that Indigenous Peoples are the native inhabitants of Canada who had their lands stolen from them by settler colonialists. Despite the harms of settler colonialism, Indigenous Peoples continue to act as receiving communities that welcome immigrants to their traditional lands (Gyepi-Garbrah, 2014). Orientation programming can provide the pertinent information that all newcomers, including IETs, need to live, teach, and create meaningful partnerships in Indigenous communities.

In recent years, credible work has been done to properly orient newcomers to the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Various organizations, including Immigration Partnership Winnipeg, the Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO), the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba, and the University of Manitoba, have partnered to create a toolkit that educates newcomers about Indigenous Peoples (MANSO, n.d.). The Indigenous Orientation Toolkit (IOTK) provides essential information about Indigenous Peoples, including regarding their histories, cultures, and contemporary realities (MANSO, n.d.). The information is intended to challenge stereotypes and debunk falsehoods, such as the myth that all Indigenous people receive free post-secondary tuition (Monkman, 2016) and that Indigenous communities

are awash in poverty and violence (Henry & Tator, 2002). Some common themes in the toolkit include information about the Métis Nation, Indigenous worldviews and spirituality, land and treaties, and historical assimilative policies (MANSO, n.d.). The IOTK can be shared with IETs and is an important step to eliminating some of the negative stereotypes that persist about Indigenous Peoples.

A Call to Teach in the North

All the participants unequivocally noted that they would recommend teaching in the North. Despite the challenges of moving to a remote community, being away from families, and navigating a new culture and school system, all the participants said that teaching in the North has been beneficial to their teaching careers. Ripple noted:

A northern community personally gave me confidence. It gave the opportunity to find myself. You can feel successful in your career, but you should still find a balance there [in a northern community]. I am a person who always encourages that if they [fellow IETs] are in the position where they can leave their family, the spouse is okay, then come and teach up North.

Mayette admitted that she and fellow IETs who have been teaching in Northern Manitoba for many years regularly promote the region as a positive destination to resume one's teaching career. She explained:

We've been trying to promote the North. We have a get-together every December or summer. Especially, we identify those [IETs] who never had an experience teaching, we try to encourage them, saying, "Why don't you try teaching up North?" So that's what we do. We are not a formal organization, but we have this group where our intention is to

really encourage, and to really advocate for them [IETs] to try and come and work up North, which we did. Now we have lots of Filipinos working up North.

Like Mayette, Suzanna encourages IETs and other educators to venture up North to begin or resume their teaching careers. She implored: “Try it first. Because if your heart is there, your devotion is the students, and if you want to make a difference, be there [in an Indigenous community]. Don’t mind the administrators. Don’t mind the parents. Mind the students.”

Incorrect assumptions by settlers often plague northern and remote communities. The belief that Indigenous children are challenging to manage in classrooms (Cushing, 2026) and that violence, poverty, and alcoholism are rampant are examples of assumptions that commonly affect First Nations communities (Alidina et al., 2020; Henry & Tator, 2002). These fabricated issues, rooted in a position of privilege, can be a reason why prospective teachers refrain from teaching in the region (Lawrence & Tator, 1998). Several intertwining factors, identified through an intersectional approach, disadvantage Indigenous communities. Unfamiliarity with the region, ignorance on behalf of non-Indigenous people, and the media’s negative depictions all intersect to create an unfounded portrayal of Indigenous Peoples and their communities (Henry & Tator, 2002; Skelton, 2022). Calls to live and teach in the North from Filipino IETs, therefore, are essential in mitigating the inaccurate narratives that affect Indigenous communities.

Indigenous communities often experience a “come and go” syndrome respecting teachers. The duration some non-Indigenous teachers spend in northern communities is typically measured in months rather than years (Hall, 2012). The short duration has exploitative outcomes for Indigenous learners. For example, some research has shown that interrupted education is linked to poorer academic outcomes for Indigenous students (Hall, 2012). A lack of Indigenous teachers also hinders First Nations learners’ access to inclusive and equitable education (Abawi,

2021b). Indigenous teachers, on the other hand, often spend longer durations in northern communities—a phenomenon called “stay and stay” by Hall (2013). Teachers who remain committed to Indigenous communities can provide stability and quality education to Indigenous learners (Hall, 2012). Indigenous students have been marginalized by settler-colonial practices, including the understaffing of schools, inadequate infrastructure spending, and unreliable access to employment and healthcare services (Cash, 2024; Monkman, 2017; Muhajarine, 2024). This case study has demonstrated that Filipino IETs possess the aptitude, resolve, and commitment to thrive in the North and can be the “stay and stay” teachers that northern communities are very much deserving of.

Advance Reconciliatory Efforts

The partnership between Filipino IETs and Indigenous communities can catalyze improved relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Advancing reconciliatory efforts, mitigating stereotypes, and improving perceptions of the North can be achieved through strong partnerships between immigrant teachers and Indigenous communities. False assumptions are far too prevalent among mainstream society, which hinders reconciliation efforts and dampens relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Even before venturing up North, many of the IETs in this study heard negative stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples and northern communities. Catherine, for example, encountered hostility from some of her friends when she mentioned that she was considering a teaching career in the North. Catherine understood the stereotypes she heard were unfounded, however, and wanted to take advantage of a new opportunity, explaining:

I’m not a person who can easily get discouraged based on what others say. I told myself that if this was my calling, then I could go there [an Indigenous community], and then I

would try it for myself. Whether what they are saying is true or not, then it's me who can decide. I prayed hard. My husband and I decided to go there.

Catherine was pleased with her decision, and once she met the community members and the children that she would teach in Honey Lake, she knew she had made the correct decision: "We looked at the place [Honey Lake First Nation]. I saw the people. I saw the kids, especially the kids, and I told myself I would be here, not for anything else but for a mission. It's my calling."

Like Catherine, Minerva was hesitant to move up North, as she had heard negative stereotypes about First Nations people. She shared some of the negative commentary that she heard, saying:

At first, they [unnamed people] said like, "First Nations, they are scary." That's the first one. They keep saying here [in Winnipeg] if there's a drunk person on the street, "Oh, probably it's First Nations." For a first-timer here in Canada, it's like I have yet to learn, not any background information about them [Indigenous Peoples]. When I went for an interview, 10 people did the interview, and they were all First Nations, but after that interview, it was like, "Oh, they are friendly." It changed my thinking and my insight about them.

Ripple also recalled some stereotypes that she heard about Indigenous communities. Her physician in the city advised her not to venture up North based on hearsay, saying: "The fact that there are many suicides there, the fact that there are a lot of negative things happening in that place, it's a sad place for you to be."

Issues with alcoholism, poverty, and violence are some of the common stereotypes that affect popular images of Indigenous Peoples. Negative stereotypes are so ingrained in society

that non-Indigenous people and newcomers like Catherine, Minerva, and Ripple typically need to engage in substantial unlearning (Henry & Tator, 2002). Catherine's co-workers, for example, assumed that she would not be able to function and would be unhappy in an Indigenous community. They felt that life in an Indigenous community would be desolate based on hearsay. Minerva had heard that First Nations people were frightening. Some people also told her that an intoxicated individual on the street was likely to be Indigenous. Similarly, Ripple's doctor advised her not to move up North, stating that Indigenous communities were negative places to reside. All the negative stereotypes combine to create a false perception of Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba.

While these IETs were inundated with harmful stereotypes, they pushed them aside and have since experienced welcoming, support, and appreciation in Indigenous communities. Filipino IETs can serve Indigenous communities effectively and can be strong advocates for Indigenous students. IETs who take up teaching positions in the North can mitigate teacher shortages and provide stability to northern schools, which are often understaffed and lacking in qualified teachers (Coubrough, 2017; Hall, 2012; Monkman, 2017). The interrupted education of Indigenous learners is a phenomenon in northern communities that hurts reconciliatory efforts and prevents the achievement gap from being minimized between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners (TRC, 2015).

Indigenous Peoples have long felt the ill effects of settler colonialism, as recognized through a CRT lens. Henderson (2023) notes that even today, noble intentions do not suffice in making amends with Indigenous Peoples and achieving reconciliation. Filipino IETs and other immigrant teachers can advance reconciliatory efforts by taking up teaching positions in northern communities and providing the quality education that First Nations youth are deserving of but

are not always able to access. In partnership with Indigenous teachers, IETs can challenge harmful stereotypes, address curricular gaps, and provide the quality education that Indigenous students deserve (Schnellert et al., 2022; Skelton & Flett-McMahon, 2025). These aims go a long way in advancing reconciliatory efforts with Indigenous Peoples.

Future Research

While Filipino IETs can effectively serve Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba, as determined by this study, further research is required to strengthen relations between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples and advance reconciliatory efforts. Many scholars have noted the nuanced relationships between newcomers and Indigenous Peoples (see Alidina et al., 2020; Adam & Hogue, 2015; Reynar & Matties, 2019). While strides have been made in recent years to improve these relationships and create orientation materials, additional research can further strengthen relationships. Immigration demographics in Manitoba are evolving as the province sees newcomers from various backgrounds and conflict-stricken regions seeking residency. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, for example, has resulted in over 29,000 displaced Ukrainians taking up residence in the province (Woelk, 2024). Increasing immigration numbers mean that further research is needed regarding how to strengthen orientation programming about Indigenous Peoples and deliver it to newcomers in a concise and timely manner.

While Manitoba has typically been welcoming and supportive of newcomers, orientation programming about Indigenous Peoples is still lacking and not reaching all intended parties (Anwar, 2025). Newcomers typically have little understanding of Indigenous Peoples and the complex history of Indigenous-settler relations, albeit through no fault of their own (Alidina et al., 2020; Reynar & Matties, 2019; Skelton, 2022). Additional research is needed to strengthen

relationships, improve orientation programming, and teach newcomers about Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Anwar (2025) notes that newcomers need information about land acknowledgements, Indigenous terminology, and treaty education. Far too often, immigrants have significant gaps in their understanding of Indigenous Peoples, including little understanding of residential schools and the intergenerational trauma that resulted from them (Anwar, 2025; Reynar & Matties, 2019). Newcomers tend to acquire false information about Indigenous Peoples through the media and their own communities (Adam & Hogue, 2015; Anwar, 2025; Henry & Tator, 2002). These assumptions are often rooted in ignorance and racism and create division, misunderstandings, and an inaccurate perception of Canadian history (Anwar, 2025). Further research is needed to uproot these misunderstandings.

As some immigrants have limited English language proficiency, additional research is required on how to offer simplified orientation programming and orientation about Indigenous Peoples in multiple languages. Scholars can research how to support English-language service providers who facilitate lessons on Indigenous Peoples through settlement instruction in EAL classes for newcomers (Anwar, 2025). It would also be helpful for researchers to identify where newcomers are forming false assumptions about Indigenous Peoples (e.g., in schooling, community, workplace, or media). This study determined that Filipino IETs heard negative stereotyping from friends, co-workers, and members of their communities. Deriving the origins of these assumptions could help researchers in uprooting them at the core through orientation programming and anti-racism training led by Indigenous Elders.

Study Limitations

A limitation of the study was my inability, as a researcher, to visit some of the Indigenous communities profiled in this thesis and observe Filipino IETs in their classrooms. It would have

been beneficial to observe Filipino teachers interacting with students and facilitating lessons on Indigenous issues and knowledge systems. Stake (2010) notes how data that can be seen, heard, and felt by the researcher is often a valuable component of the research process. It would also have been preferable to interview various stakeholders in the partnership between Filipino IETs and northern communities, including Indigenous students, teachers, administrators, and community members. The COVID-19 pandemic, nevertheless, played a significant role in my not venturing up North. The cost of travelling to the region and the feasibility of conducting interviews and observations in multiple communities also factored into the decision. Therefore, a future call to action is for researchers including myself to venture up North to conduct interviews and observations to better understand the impact that immigrant teachers are having in Indigenous communities, hear how they are supported, and listen to what can be done from a policy standpoint to support and encourage IETs to take up teaching positions in northern communities. This future research stands to benefit Indigenous communities and students who see the brunt of teacher shortages and interrupted education in Manitoba.

Conclusion

The presence of Filipino IETs residing and teaching in Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba is a unique phenomenon. The Filipino IETs interviewed for this study are committed to their profession and respective communities and see themselves teaching in these locales for extended periods, or until retirement. Teaching in remote communities takes patience and resilience—qualities some teachers do not possess. Some teachers remain in Indigenous communities for short periods for various reasons, including the availability of jobs in more urban areas and the challenge of adjusting to life in the North (Burleigh, 2017; Monkman, 2017). Filipino IETs, however, possess the traits to live and teach in northern communities for long

durations and become “stay and stay” teachers (Hall, 2012). These types of educators bring immense benefit to Indigenous schools and students.

Filipino IETs have been successful in northern communities for several reasons. One reason is the resiliency Filipinos possess. Catherine shared how Filipinos have great willpower to succeed in their endeavours. The group’s ability to build strong social connections and support fellow teachers may be linked to the collective nature of Filipino culture (Hufana et al., 2020). Another factor to explain the success of Filipino IETs in northern communities is the similarity between Filipino and Indigenous cultures. Several commonalities unite the groups, including a shared history of colonization and assimilation tactics by settler colonialists (Eliot, 2021; Elizalde, 2022; Go, 2004), as well as more positive commonalities, such as shared values of family and togetherness (Alidina et al., 2020). A final reason for the success of Filipino IETs is the immense support they receive from both the Filipino diaspora and Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba. Filipinos tend to offer informal support that newcomer IETs desire, and Indigenous administrators and teachers have been equally supportive, assisting and providing leadership to Filipino IETs. All these factors intertwine to create a resilient, supportive teacher who can succeed in the North.

The partnership between Filipino IETs and Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba creates a blueprint for policymakers interested in mitigating the teacher shortages and interrupted education that plague Indigenous and remote communities. Support is crucial in the adjustment process for newcomer teachers; however, this support can come from various stakeholders, including one’s own diaspora and Indigenous communities. Maintaining one’s physical well-being and mental health is also crucial, as northern communities are often isolated places to reside for outsiders (OECD, 2016). Identified using a CRT lens, many factors have

contributed to the teacher shortages affecting Indigenous communities, including inadequate infrastructure spending, high transportation costs, and the far distance to essential services (Brass, 2023; Cash, 2024; Muhajarine, 2024). To mitigate these challenges, policymakers must consider how to improve living conditions in northern communities and reduce costs to attract qualified teachers to the region as well as embed homegrown Indigenous teachers.

In the pursuit of reconciliation, it is crucial to empower Indigenous Peoples with greater autonomy and self-determination in education. Settler colonialism has created an education system that has oppressed Indigenous Peoples for generations (Aquash, 2013; Ugwuegbula, 2020). The residential school system resulted in a cultural genocide against Indigenous Peoples (Ugwuegbula, 2020), and the current education system largely upholds Eurocentric norms and values, expecting Indigenous Peoples to assimilate within (Aquash, 2013; Czyzewski, 2011). Aquash (2013) notes how the current system tends to label Indigenous education as “archaic” and pushes Indigenous graduates into post-secondary studies or military service instead of transmitting intergenerational knowledge that is vital towards cultural retention and renewal. The Eurocentric system, and even Indigenous teachers working within it, tend to emphasize academics and minimize the significance of Indigenous knowledge systems (Aquash, 2013). Ugwuegbula (2020) argues that an Indigenous-controlled education system can create a greater sense of identity and self-confidence among Indigenous Peoples. An Indigenous-controlled education system can also revitalize Indigenous languages, help youth develop stronger connections to the land, and increase social connectedness among Indigenous Peoples (Ugwuegbula, 2020). The Manitoba First Nations School System exemplifies an education system that caters to Indigenous students, as it was established and governed by Indigenous Peoples (Manitoba First Nations School System, 2025). To respect the cultural autonomy of

Indigenous Peoples, a greater shift toward Indigenous-controlled education systems is recommended to governing bodies, provincially and federally.

Besides greater self-determination for Indigenous Peoples, CRT scholars argue that an increased focus on racial demography is required to diversify the teaching force and meet the needs of the diverse student body (see Heringer, 2023; Milner et al., 2021). Including more IETs in the teaching force is a means to accomplish this aim. BIPOC students often become disinterested, unmotivated, frustrated, and disconnected from the education system due to the disparity between the number of BIPOC students and teachers (Heringer, 2023; Milner et al., 2021). White teachers sometimes struggle to adequately support BIPOC students, as they fail to take the needs, worldviews, and experiences of BIPOC students into strong consideration (Milner et al., 2021). CRT scholars also advocate for greater dialogue and the centring of voices of those students and teachers who have been marginalized in the education system (see Gómez et al., 2025; James & Shah, 2022; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Research should focus on why schooling has often failed to meet the needs, interests, and aspirations of BIPOC students (James & Shah, 2022). Solorzano and Yosso (2002) point out that counter-stories can contest systemic racism and bring marginalized voices to the forefront, which White narratives have historically silenced. From a CRT perspective, amplifying marginalized voices and diversifying the teaching force are necessary to create a more just, equitable education system.

The Indigenous Peoples in Canada have been marginalized from mainstream society, including being forcibly removed from urban settings to remote areas of the province. It is now immigrant teachers like Filipinos who are relocating to northern communities to provide the qualified instruction that Indigenous students are deserving of but have difficulty accessing due to settler colonial practices (Henderson, 2023). Filipino IETs have mitigated the challenges of

adjusting to life in remote communities through the support of the Filipino diaspora and supportive Indigenous communities. Now, they are providing quality teaching in the North to minimize interrupted education and ensure that Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives are celebrated and preserved. Policymakers can apply the successful partnership between Filipino IETs and Indigenous Peoples to other regions experiencing teacher shortages, such as Quebec and Saskatchewan (Authier, 2023; Peterson, 2023). The Filipino IETs in Northern Manitoba deserve credit for mitigating teacher shortages, providing quality education to Indigenous learners, and advancing reconciliatory efforts. These teachers also deserve immense credit for their efforts and dedication to northern Indigenous communities.

Appendix A: Study Recruitment Document



Are you an internationally educated teacher from the Philippines?

Are you residing and working in an Indigenous community or reserve in Northern Manitoba?

If you answered “yes” to these questions and are wishing to share your teaching experiences, this study may be for you.

Study for internationally educated teachers (IETs) to Manitoba from the Philippines living and teaching in Northern Manitoba

I am looking for IETs from the Philippines who wish to share their experiences of residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities and reserves in Northern Manitoba. I want to learn about the strengths and limitations of Indigenous communities being able to welcome, integrate, and support the adaptation and cultural adjustment of Filipino IETs. I also want to know about the strengths and attributes that Filipino IETs bring to the teaching profession that allow them to contribute positively to these communities.

IETs often face systemic barriers and unique challenges in Manitoba schools despite being provincially certified and possessing high qualifications. This research seeks to address these challenges and also the current shortage of teachers in northern Indigenous communities by exploring the phenomenon of Filipino IETs living and teaching in these communities and whether fellow IETs can be encouraged to take up residence and fill teacher vacancies in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba.

Participants will be asked to participate in:

- A pre-interview/orientation meeting (20 minutes)
- Primary interview (90 minutes)
- A post-interview (60 minutes)
- A photovoice exercise (1–2 hours)

*All interviews will be audio recorded

Participants will receive:

- A \$50.00 gift card (from a local business or store; Amazon, etc.)

Location:

The interviews will take place online via Zoom. A link for the interviews will be sent to each participant by email.

Are you eligible?

- 25 years or older
- Internationally educated teacher from the Philippines
- Presently employed as a teacher and living and working in an Indigenous community or reserve in Northern Manitoba

Researcher Contact Information:

If you're interested in joining the study, please set up an initial meeting to discuss your participation and the next steps of consent with the researcher:

Researcher: Mr. Lucas Skelton (PhD student, Faculty of Education)

Email: umskelt2@myumanitoba.ca

Phone: [REDACTED]

Advisor Contact Information:

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study, please contact my advisor:

Advisor: Dr. Clea Schmidt (Professor, Faculty of Education)

Email: Clea.Schmidt@umanitoba.ca

Phone: [REDACTED]

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus.

Appendix B: Consent Form



Research Project Title: An investigation into the experiences of internationally educated teachers from the Philippines who are living and teaching in Indigenous communities in Northern Manitoba

Principal Investigator (PI) and contact information:

Lucas Skelton, PhD student, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

(phone) [REDACTED] (email) umskelt2@myumanitoba.ca

Research Supervisor and contact information:

Dr. Clea Schmidt, Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

(phone) [REDACTED] (email) Clea.Schmidt@umanitoba.ca

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you a basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned or information not included here, feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and understand any accompanying information

Project Description:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the teaching and learning experiences of Filipino IETs who are residing and teaching in northern Indigenous communities and reserves in Northern Manitoba.

The objectives of this research study include:

- To inquire how Indigenous communities perceive Filipino IETs.
- To understand the strengths and limitations of Indigenous communities in being able to welcome, integrate, and support the adaptation and cultural adjustment of Filipino IETs.
- To determine the strengths and attributes that Filipino IETs possess that allow them to contribute positively to northern Indigenous communities.
- To note the challenges the IETs have faced residing and teaching in these communities and how such challenges are mitigated.
- To understand what the future holds for IETs exploring teaching opportunities in northern Indigenous communities.

Inclusion/Ineligibility Criteria:

- 25 years of age or older
- An internationally educated teacher from the Philippines

- Presently employed as a teacher and living and working in an Indigenous community or reserve in Northern Manitoba

If it is determined that a participant does not meet the inclusion criteria or if eligibility becomes an issue during the study, then the PI may ask the participant to withdraw during the course of the study. The following procedures will be followed if a participant becomes ineligible during the duration of the study:

- The participant will be asked to withdraw from the study
- The participant's hard copy data will be returned to them, their digital data will be destroyed and won't be used in the study
- The participant will receive their compensatory gift card within one week of their withdrawal date.

Participant Involvement:

Each participant is being asked to participate in a primary interview (90 minutes), and a post-interview (60 minutes). During the primary interview, the participants will be asked a series of questions (approximately 18 questions in total) about becoming a teacher, their teaching experiences in the Philippines, certification and employment experiences, and experiences of living and teaching in northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba.

All interviews will be recorded using UM Zoom. All recordings will be audio recordings, not video. The interviews will be conducted in English. The recordings will be shared with participants through One Drive approximately one week following the interview. The recordings will be sent to the participants via email.

All recordings will be transcribed by the researcher manually. Transcripts will be sent to the participants approximately three weeks following the interviews. I will provide the participants with two weeks to review their transcripts, and if they are satisfied with the information that is presented, they will let me know. If some information is faulty or was interpreted inaccurately, then I will discuss this with the participant(s) and revise the transcript. If the participants do not provide feedback within two weeks, then I will assume the transcripts are acceptable and proceed.

The photovoice component of the study will consist of participants taking photos in their classrooms and community. The participants will use their own devices to take photos (e.g., iPhone, camera, etc.). Participants are asked to take approximately 10–15 photographs of important things and places. For example, the participants may take photographs of their classrooms, teaching resources, students' work, homes, important places in the community, favourite places to relax, etc. Participants are encouraged to take photographs that are meaningful and that hold special importance to them. After the photographs are taken, the participants will be asked to write a summary about each photograph to identify the photograph (e.g., This is a picture of my teaching diploma) and to explain the importance or significance of the photograph (e.g., I took a picture of my teaching diploma because becoming a teacher was one of my proudest accomplishments). The photographs taken are intended to foster an increased understanding of what it is like for an IET to reside and teach in a northern Indigenous community, the possible strengths of the community, and the possible concerns that need to be addressed going forward to possibly encourage more IETs to taking up residence and filling

teacher vacancies in northern Indigenous communities. During the post-interview, the participants will share the photographs they collected and their summaries. The participants will share these photographs with the PI through One Drive.

Benefits and Risks:

This research has the potential to contribute to the literature on IET integration and galvanize more research on the integration of IETs in Indigenous communities and how internationally educated teachers can contribute to and reciprocally learn from life on northern reserves. The study will also hopefully unearth some of the challenges Filipino IETs experience living and teaching in Indigenous communities and offer some strategies to thrive in a new way of life, an unfamiliar rural and northern locale, and an education system that differs from the education system in the Philippines and the one found in more urban Canadian settings. My goal in conducting the study is to also explain what can be done to better support IETs who choose to reside and continue their careers as teachers in northern Indigenous communities.

There is a possibility that participants may become emotional by sharing negative experiences and by sharing moments in their teaching careers in which they have felt discriminated against and wronged by administrators, fellow teachers, and students. To mitigate this risk, the participants can omit from answering any questions. Breaks will be provided during the interview at the interviewee's request. A list of resources will also be provided to participants should they feel the need to access support services. Some participants may also feel wary of taking photographs in their communities (e.g., community members/officials questioning why they are taking photos). The participants will be encouraged to explain that they are participants in a research project and that they are being tasked with taking photos of meaningful places and things in their communities. The participants will relate to people that the photos are for research purposes only and that individual communities and schools will be anonymized for privacy.

Confidentiality and Privacy:

The participants will be given the choice to have waive their anonymity. If they choose to remain anonymous, each participant will be provided or allowed to select a pseudonym to protect his or her anonymity and to ensure that personal information is kept confidential. The participants will be directly quoted in the final thesis. Data that is collected from this project will only be viewed by myself, my research supervisor, and members of my research committee. The recordings will be downloaded from UM Zoom and transferred to the PI's computer. One Drive will be used to store and transfer the data. Downloaded files on the PI's computer will be encrypted and will be kept separate from linked files. The computer will be in my residence and will be password-protected. To maintain participant confidentiality, I will use pseudonyms for each participant.

The PI will instruct the participants to not take photos that have identifying information (e.g. students' work with name, building with address, etc.). If the participants submit photos that contain identifying information, then the PI will ask the participants to delete the picture(s). The participants will be given the option to retake the photo without identifying information if they wish.

All confidential data relating to this project including all electronic and hard copy data will be safeguarded during the project's entirety and destroyed by December 31, 2024.

Compensation:

You will not be financially compensated for participating in this project, but to show my appreciation for your involvement, a gift card will be presented to each participant upon completion. The gift card will be from a local grocery store in the community or from an online vendor (e.g. Amazon, Visa). The gift card will be \$50.00 and will be sent to the participants via email. Participants choosing to withdraw from the study will still receive the gift card and their data will be destroyed.

Withdrawal and Feedback:

If at any time you would like to withdraw from this study, participants may do so by calling, texting, or emailing the researcher. There are no consequences for withdrawing from this study. The deadline for withdrawal will be 08/2023. If you wish to withdraw during any of the interviews, please let the PI know. If you decide to withdraw, the interview will stop, all of your hard copy data will be returned to you, your digital data will be destroyed, and none of the information that you provided will be analyzed or included in the final research.

I expect research results from this project will be tentatively finalized by December 2023. Following the completion of the data collection phase of this study, the participants will be provided a non-technical summary of the research findings (1–3 pages) by 12/2023. The participants will be able to choose the method in which they prefer to receive the research summary (e.g., mailed report, email summary, oral overview by Zoom, etc.).

Dissemination:

The study results may also be disseminated to interested members of Manitoba's education community, including the Manitoba Teachers' Society, Manitoba Education, and the Professional Certification Unit. This thesis will be deposited into the Thesis collection of the University of Manitoba's repository MSpace (<https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca>) and publicly available. I have intentions to publish or present my research findings in research journals and at educational conferences if the opportunity arises.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done safely and properly. This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator at [REDACTED] or e-mail humanethics@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

I consent to be audio recorded (please check): ☐

Do you wish to waive your anonymity? *Please circle.* Yes No

If yes, which name do you wish to be referred to in the study?

If no, which pseudonym do you wish the researcher to use?

Participant's Signature _____

Date _____

Researcher and/or Delegate's Signature _____

Date _____

Photovoice: Photography Release Form:

Permission to use photos:

I grant to _____ (Researcher's Name) the right to use photographs that I have taken in connection with the research project - The experiences of internationally educated teachers working in Northern Manitoba.

I have read and understood the above.

Name of Research Participant: _____

Signature of Research Participant: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C Interview Guide (Primary Interview)

Interview Questions

1. Becoming a teacher

- Why did you decide to become a teacher?

2. Teaching experiences in the Philippines

- Tell me about your teaching experience in the Philippines.
- Explain some similarities between teaching in your home country versus teaching in Canada.

3. Completing certification, PBDE, graduate courses, Academic and Professional Bridging Program

- What post-secondary courses have you taken?
- Can you share some of the information that you learned in these classes that have been helpful as an educator?
- Can you talk about making personal and professional connections in these classes?
- How were you treated by your classmates and instructors?

4. Experiences with the teacher certification process in Manitoba

- Tell me about your experiences with the teacher certification process in Manitoba.

5. Applying for jobs in Manitoba

- How many jobs have you applied for? How many “callbacks” have you received?
- Besides teaching positions, what other jobs have you applied for, if any?
- How many interviews have you had?
- Can you describe the interviews that you have had? What questions were you asked?

6. Teaching experiences in Indigenous communities

- Can you share some of your classroom teaching experiences within Indigenous communities? How have you been treated by students, other teachers, and the administration in these communities?
- Can you share some of the challenges of being a classroom teacher in an Indigenous community? How do you mitigate such challenges?
- Can you relate a positive story about being a classroom teacher in one of these communities?
- How have you been supported in your role as a teacher in these communities? How can you be better supported as a teacher in these communities?
- What do you think you have contributed to the community? Would you define your teaching experience in this community as a successful one? Explain.
- Would you recommend that fellow Filipino IETs and IETs from other countries consider working in northern Indigenous communities? Explain.

7. Mentorship, advocacy, and leadership

- Have you received support from the Filipino diaspora/community in Manitoba in terms of recertifying to become a teacher? What have fellow Filipino educators done to assist you in your work as a teacher in Manitoba?
- Has MAFTI (Manitoba Association of Filipino Teachers) assisted you in your journey of becoming a teacher? If yes, explain how.
- Have you mentored and supported newcomer Filipino teachers yourself? How? Have you mentored and supported new teachers (non-Filipino) in your school/community? How have you done so?

Appendix D: Photovoice Guide



Research Project Title: The experiences of internationally educated teachers working in Northern Manitoba

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to better understand the experiences of Filipino internationally educated teachers (IETs) who are residing and teaching in northern Indigenous reserves and communities in Northern Manitoba. The project will provide an overview of the experiences of several teachers and detail why they decided to continue their careers as educators in these communities. The photographs taken are intended to foster an increased understanding of what it is like for an IET to reside and teach in a northern Indigenous community, the possible strengths of the community, and the possible concerns that need to be addressed going forward to possibly encourage more IETs to taking up residence and filling teacher vacancies in northern Indigenous communities.

Process:

The participants will use their own devices (e.g. iPhones, cameras) and tasked to take photographs that best illustrate their experiences with residing and working/teaching in northern Indigenous communities and reserves in Manitoba. The Filipino IETs from this study could take photos of their classrooms, their educational resources, their homes, and their favourite places in the community.

The photographs:

The pictures taken will be used as part of the data for this research study and will be presented as part of the thesis defence for the Faculty of Education. In addition, the findings may be presented in academic conferences and/or published in academic journals. Names will not be attached to identify individuals in the photos. Participants who wish to have their names attached to the photographs will be provided with a waiver form to sign.

For further information on this project, please contact:

Principal Investigator (PI) and contact information:

Lucas Skelton, PhD student, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

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Research Supervisor and contact information:

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Appendix E: Privacy and Confidentiality Waiver



Project Title: The experiences of internationally educated teachers working in Northern Manitoba

Principal Investigator: Lucas Skelton, PhD Student, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba.

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Research Supervisor: Dr. Clea Schmidt, Professor, Faculty of Education.

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I, _____, hereby give permission for the above-mentioned researcher to present the research data concerning my identifiable information in a public manner for being used in Photovoice project and disseminated in photovoice exhibit and launch, in an academic thesis article and academic conferences.

By signing this form and checking “yes” in the following boxes, I voluntarily and knowingly waive my rights to the confidentiality of the following personal information that I have provided to the researcher and research participants (please check “yes” to the items that you agree to waive confidentiality of):

	Yes	No
My name on my photograph	()	()

Also, please specify what you do NOT want to be revealed to people other than the research team:

I understand that this waiver signed by me automatically overrides the protection for my confidentiality in the Consent Form that I have signed earlier, although other information in the Consent Form remains applicable.

I understand that signing this form does not waive my legal rights nor release the researchers from their legal and professional responsibilities. I have the right to revoke this waiver at anytime by notifying the researchers in writing or verbally. However, the researchers will not be

responsible for any consequences of previous disclosure of my information up to the time of my revoking this waiver.

Signature of participant taking photos _____

Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix F: Interview Guide (Post Interview—Photovoice)

Interview Consent Preamble

Hello {Participant's name}. It is nice to meet with you again. I hope your first interview went well. I hope your photovoice exercise also went well. During this interview I will ask you to share the pictures you have taken. This interview will be approximately one hour in duration. During the interview, I will ask you to describe each photograph you have taken. If you have written down a summary of the photograph, then please feel free to share that summary. I will also ask you to discuss the importance of the photograph and explain why you took it.

This interview will be recorded. I may also take notes to ensure that no information that you provide is lost during our conversation. Please let me know if a question needs to be repeated or rephrased. Please also let me know if you are not comfortable in answering a certain question or sharing a particular photograph. You may skip any question(s) that you do not wish to respond to. You may also skip over a photograph that you do not wish to share or answer questions about. I would like to remind you that the information that you provide me with today is confidential. I would also like to let you know that you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, including during this interview. If you need a break during the interview, please let me know and we can pause for a period of your choosing.

Do I have your verbal consent to proceed with the interview?

Interview Questions about Photovoice Exercise

1. Please describe the picture you have taken (i.e., please read your summary)
2. Please discuss the importance of this photo and why you took it.

*The questions will be repeated for each photo taken by the participant

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