THE SOLIDARITY EXPERIENCE OF LNU'K KTAQMKUKEWAQ PARTICIPATING

IN A SOCIAL NETWORKING GROUP

By

Terri Louise Darrigan

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Abstract

Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq (Indigenous Newfoundlanders) face extraordinary challenges, resulting from an extensive period of assimilationist federal, provincial and colonial policy. This qualitative, phenomenological study seeks to examine how Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq participating in a social network group experience solidarity. Email interviews were conducted with four study participants. Data from the researcher's experience as a participant in the social networking group was also included. Results demonstrate that social networking can provide ways for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq to build solidarity by being a source of information sharing and support. Social networking is limited, however, in its ability to build spiritual solidarity. The existence of a collective Lnu identity was evident in the data, and appears to be a yet untapped basis for building solidarity. Recommendations are made as to how social networking can be optimally used for solidarity development and social work practice with Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, and other Indigenous groups.

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This would also be a good time for me to express my appreciation to others who have worked hard to keep the Lnu identity alive in Ktaqmkuk. Calvin White, Bernard (Bern) White, Linda Wells and the late Ross Compagnon are individuals who have positively affected my life as a result of their work in our communities. There are many other people who could also be included on this list. Please know that you are respected for your contributions.

Special thanks to my grandfather George Joyce, who kept our family's Lnu identity alive. As well, thank-you to my mother, Louise Darrigan, who picked up the torch that my grandfather passed to her, and continued to carry it. Thanks also to my extended family members for their efforts to do the same.

Deepest thanks to my son, Corban. Every second I spent on this, was time taken away from him. I pray this work is worthy of the sacrifice it entailed.

Dedication

To my mother, Louise Darrigan.

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Chapter I

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the experience of solidarity of

Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq (pronounced 'ul-noog da-hum-goog-u-wah') participating in a social

networking group. Chapter One details the theoretical framework to be employed in the study,

the research questions this study seeks to answer, the purpose and significance of this research,

assumptions made, definitions used, and limitations of the study. Background information

regarding the problems facing Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq is also provided. Chapter Two provides a

review of related academic literature of concepts central to this study. In this section, the

concepts of solidarity, Indigenous identity and the use of internet communication technology as

it relates to Indigenous People, is examined. Chapter Three details the methodology of the study.

Information is provided regarding research design, participants, data collection and analysis

methods, as well as the role of the researcher. Chapter Four presents the findings of the study.

Chapter Five offers a summary of the study, and discusses the findings in relation to the

literature presented in Chapter Two. A discussion of the findings' implications for social work

practice, and recommendations for future research, is also provided.

Background of the Problem

This study focused upon a social networking group developed for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq.

The information that follows provides some background information regarding recent political

developments for this Indigenous group, which led to the development of the social networking

group under study.

Although federally unrecognized and a relatively unknown group of people, Lnu'k are one of two Indigenous groups that inhabited the island of Ktaqamkuk (Newfoundland) at the time of colonial encounter (Anger, 1988). They are now the only group remaining, the other having been completely extinguished through violent genocide (Jackson, 1993). The *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian policy (The White Paper 1969)* started a trend of political mobilization for Indigenous People across Canada, including Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, which resulted in the establishment of the Native Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (NANL) in 1973 (Hanrahan, 2003). The Federation of Newfoundland Indians (FNI), an organization whose roots stem from the NANL, fought for thirty-five years for recognition under the Indian Act.

Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949. Up to that time, Newfoundland had been a colony of Great Britain, and for a short duration, an independent country. The terms of confederation did not, however, include any reference to the Indigenous People residing there. The deliberate decision was made to omit us from the terms of the agreement. Instead, the Canadian government opted to continue the assimilationist policy already in place by the Newfoundland and British governments (Anger, 1984; Hanrahan, 2003). Further, when the Canadian government undertook a national census in 1951 of the national Indigenous population, Newfoundland was excluded (Hanrahan, 2003). Hanrahan (2003) has indicated that though they were not brought under Canada's Indian Act, the Indigenous People of Newfoundland unknowingly received services from the province that were partially subsidized by transfer payments from the federal government, intended for its Indigenous People.

Hanrahan (2003) has indicated that the FNI initiated a court action in 1982 to obtain recognition under the Indian Act. An agreement was made in 1983 and the community of Conne

River (henceforth referred to as Miawpukek First Nation), became a federally recognized band in 1984, in part due to its concentrated population of Lnu'k. After obtaining federal recognition, Miawpukek left the FNI and the bands of Elmastogoeg, Corner Brook, Flat Bay, Indian Head, Port au Port, St. George`s, Gander Bay, Glenwood and Sple`tk remained.

At the time of this agreement with Miawpukek First Nation, the Minister of what is now referred to as Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) indicated in a letter to leader of the FNI Mr. Calvin White, that the federal government would continue with establishing the eligibility of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq outside of Miawpukek First Nation and conclude the process by 1986. This did not occur, as a new minister to AANDC was named and the provincial government of Newfoundland declined his offer to enter negotiations with the FNI and AANDC. Newfoundland's failure to join these negotiations was indicative of the political thought at the time. Premier Peckford had voiced publicly that Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq were no more Indigenous to the province of Newfoundland than his settler ancestors were (Hanrahan, 2003), a position supported by a report released by the Department of Justice of Newfoundland in 1982.

Hanrahan (2003) has further indicated that in 1988 AANDC advised the FNI that they would not be proceeding with registration for the remaining communities and would stop funding further research. No reasons for this decision were given. In response, the FNI launched a court action suing the federal government for breach of fiduciary duty, a duty which the government had already acknowledged by way of the previous transfer payments and written promises made but not kept.

These events culminated in 2008 with an Agreement in Principle (AIP). In exchange for the creation of a band comprised of the remaining FNI communities, the FNI agreed to withdraw

its court case against the federal government. A land base was not awarded, nor was any natural resource harvesting rights. Though the agreement does not preclude further negotiation of such entitlements, Hanrahan (2003) has indicated that setting aside a land base may be problematic for most of the bands of the FNI, as the communities are geographically embedded in larger, non-Lnu'k communities.

The initial process for enrollment under the AIP indicated that people of Lnu ancestry without Indian Status that had ties to a pre-Newfoundland Confederation community could become registered under the Indian Act under a newly formed landless band, called Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation (Federation of Newfoundland Indians, 2008, Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band section). Band formation is a two stage process, with members advised of acceptance by November 30, 2010 comprising a 'First Founding Members' list, and others subsequently accepted after this date being added as members "Second Founding" members three years later (Federation of Newfoundland Indians, 2008, Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band section). It should be noted that previous registration in one of the bands that comprised the FNI was not a requirement, nor a consideration for acceptance into the newly forming Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation.

Initial estimates of the number to be registered under the AIP (based on the number of registrants with bands not recognized before its signing) were placed at 7800; however, as of the November 30, 2009 cut-off date for the first phase of the enrollment process, approximately 24,000 applications had been received. Chief Brendan Sheppard publicly announced that approximately 10,000 applications had been approved by this date, thus exceeding the proportion of membership required for ratification of the AIP, and that the proposed Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation would be formed as early as February 2010 (Application numbers, 2010).

With such a large unanticipated number of applicants, difficulties were apt to arise with the enrollment process. The enrollment office was not staffed to deal adequately with the volume. Complaints were that applications received before the designated cut-off date was not reviewed and that entire communities had been excluded from the review process (Stephenville woman, 2009). What followed Mr. Sheppard's announcement regarding formation of the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation, were questions about the fairness of the enrollment process itself (Sheppard, 2010). People were concerned that the two stage process itself was not fair, and would permit the development of an administration that could potentially make lasting policy changes on the new band before the remaining membership were even included and had an opportunity to voice their opinions (Jesseau wants, 2010).

As a result of these concerns, Elder Calvin White, a former Chief of the FNI during its early development stages, established a watchdog group (Elder Calvin, 2010). An online petition was circulated to support changes to the enrollment process that would permit all applications submitted up to the November 30, 2009 deadline to be reviewed and included as part of the First Founding Members list (Online petition, 2010). Divisiveness emerged between those who were already accepted and those who had submitted applications, but had not been considered before the November 30, 2009 deadline. Media statements were made, representative of both sides of the argument.

Subsequently, a court case was initiated by Mr. White requesting an injunction on the formation of the band, until such time as concerns regarding the enrollment process were heard. In response, the federal government and the FNI made concessions regarding the enrollment process, agreeing to review all applications up to the November 30, 2009 deadline, and to include those accepted on the First Founding Members list by adding such members to the

registry once the band was formed, and every four months thereafter (Accelerated membership, 2010). In June 2011, the judge residing dismissed Mr. White's case, with substantial legal costs awarded to the plaintiffs.

Problem Statement

Given the past and present struggles Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq have had to contend with, many worry for the future and what it may hold for our newly amalgamated community. As a member of Qalipu, I have wondered if we can regain a sense of collective purpose and collective identity. Outside of Miawpukek, Lnu Ktaqmkukewaq identity has been sustained as family identity (Hanrahan, 2003), as opposed to community identity.

One individual, Charlie Oliver, formed the Facebook® social networking group called 'Qalipu First Nation L`nu ( Mi`Kmaq)'. The group indicated that it was for "ALL L`nu of Ktaqmkuk (Newfoundland) At home & living elsewhere!" (Qalipu First Nation Lnu (Mi'kmaq), personal Communication, October, 20, 2008). The name of the group has since been changed to 'Msit No'kmaq The Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland'. Msit No'kmaq is a traditional phrase meaning, 'all my relations'. The spirit of this group, and my experience as both a participant and member of Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation, stimulated the idea for this research.

The Purpose of the Study and Research Question(s)

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the experience of solidarity of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq participating in a social networking group. The central question of this research is: What is the solidarity experience of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq participating in a social network group?

To answer this central question, this study asks the following sub-questions:

1. Can social networking services impact participants' sense of Lnu identity?

2. Can social networking services provide participants opportunities for connecting with others about issues important to Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq?

3. Can social networking services motivate participants to get involved in activities that promote the interests of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq?

Rationale/Significance of the Research

This research is unique in its approach in that I know of no other insider social work research done with Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq on the subject of solidarity and social networking. Results from this research may provide valuable information about how social networking services may be used to unify and strengthen this particular group of Indigenous People. Thus, this research may provide a unique contribution to understanding and supporting this particular group during an important, pivotal time in history. Further, this research may be used as a starting point for similar inquiries with other Indigenous groups.

Assumptions

Certain assumptions are implied by the selection and application of the Indigenous theoretical lens through which this study has been developed. Specifically, an Indigenous theoretical framework necessitates the recognition of the effects of colonization upon Indigenous People. More information regarding the theoretical framework selected for this study is provided in the next section.

As well, the methodological choices made for this study imply certain philosophical assumptions. Specifically, an interpretive phenomenological, or hermeneutic, perspective suggests the importance of history, culture and context in understanding a situation. Further, subjectivity is recognized as being unavoidable. Instead of attempting to remove subjectivity in pursuit of an unattainable objectivity, one's own perspective as researcher is clearly stated and

the researcher's experience with the subject is incorporated in analysis. This philosophical standpoint values an emic perspective (Ellerby, 2006; Struthers & Peden-McAlpine, 2005), such as the one I hold with the research subject as both a member of Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation and a participant of the social networking group under study. It does, however, require the researcher to place oneself in relationship to the research subject, thus highlighting the assumptions that may accompany one's relationship with the subject. My relationship to the subject is described in detail below.

I am a woman of mixed Lnu'k and British heritage. I am a member of Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation, one of the two federally recognized Lnu'k First Nations in Ktaqmkuk. My original membership was with Elmastogoeg First Nation, until it was amalgamated with nine other bands to form Qalipu. I spent the first 18 years of my life in Ktaqmkuk, with brief periods away due to familial economic necessity. The last 20 years of my life have been spent in Ontario, also due to economic necessity. I have maintained close ties with my family and community over these many years through frequent visits home, gifts through the mail and many, many telephone calls. More recently, I have come to use social networking services to assist in maintaining my connection with family and community.

My research interests reflect my upbringing, life experience and cultural background. For me, undertaking research means being sensitive to the needs of my Indigenous group. It means taking into consideration the colonial injustices we have experienced that have led to the erosion of our language and cultural presence in Ktaqmkuk, and seeking ways to strengthen and restore that which has been damaged and lost. I am also a participant of the social networking group under discussion. I joined the group prior to focusing upon it as a research subject, and after observing that other friends and extended family members had joined. I have posted and responded to posts in the group, and read many posts by other members. I hold no position of

power or authority within the social networking group. Further, I intend to continue to be a participant of this social networking group after the research has been completed. As such, there is a possibility that research participants in this study may come from my First Nation or geographic community, may be members of my extended family system, may know members of my extended family system, or may know me from our mutual interactions within the social networking group.

Further, I am a social worker and have about ten years combined practice experience in the areas of child welfare, medical social work, and social work education. Just as phenomenology crosses many disciplines (Fortune, 2009; Howard, 2008), the discipline in which a researcher is positioned influences how phenomenology is employed (Embree, 2010). Indeed, my social work background has impressed upon me the need to be sensitive to the needs of different cultural groups, particularly Indigenous People. It has also sensitized me to the use of power in professional relationships. As such, my tendency is to lean toward employing methodologies that are sensitive to the needs of Indigenous People and that embrace a more collaborative approach between researcher and research participant. An interpretive phenomenological approach can allow for these preferences (Struthers & Peden-McAlpine, 2005).

Further, phenomenology itself holds an attraction for me because of its ability to undertake examination of practice situations and real life experiences that can become the focus of social work practice. As such, learning this particular methodology has practical utility for developing my skill set as a scholarly practitioner. Such practice-based phenomenology, however, tends toward focus on the experience of the individual, instead of the experience itself (Schweitzer, 2002). This study reflects this practice-based orientation. While general themes

were identified as part of the data analysis process, the experiences of individual participants were highlighted through excerpts of participant's responses.

Theoretical Framework

In this section, I specify the theoretical framework that will guide my inquiry, choice of research methodology and interpretation of research findings. Specifically, a discussion is provided regarding an Indigenous theoretical framework that will be used to guide this study from development to completion. Additional theoretical ideas pertaining to solidarity development within Indigenous groups and social networking services are discussed in the Literature Review section of this study.

McKenzie and Morrisette (2003) provide an Indigenous theoretical framework, based on an Indigenous worldview, through the articulation of five integral principles. McKenzie and Morrisette have indicated that these principles should be used to guide social workers working with Indigenous People. Though the writers' have described these principles as a theoretical framework, it has much in common with a conceptual framework, given that its intended purpose is to act as a road map for practice. These principles are:

1. An understanding of the worldview of Aboriginal people and how this differs from the dominant Euro-Canadian world view;

2. Recognition of the effects of the colonization process;

3. Recognition of the importance of Aboriginal identity or consciousness;

4. Appreciation of the value of cultural knowledge and traditions in promoting healing and empowerment;

5. An understanding of the diversity of Aboriginal cultural expression. (p. 258)

A discussion is provided here of how these theoretical principles relate to Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. With respect to the first point, recognition of a unique Indigenous worldview, it should be recognized expression of worldview can vary greatly between and within Indigenous groups. For example, McKenzie and Morrisette (2003) have provided a 'cultural continuum' that describes how 'degrees' of colonization/decolonization can impact an Indigenous person's worldview expression. This cultural continuum is presented on page 40. The information presented illustrates how expressions of Indigenous identity and worldview expression are inextricably linked. For example, a contemporary traditional expression of Indigenous identity represents expression of an integration of both Indigenous and mainstream worldviews, while other 'categories' of Indigenous identity represent some degree of conflict between the two. It should be noted, however, that there can be movement between various 'categories' of Indigenous identity. This also implies that expression of worldview and identity is not necessarily fixed for Indigenous People, and that this can change over time as one moves across the colonized/decolonized dichotomy. This suggests that worldview and identity expression is influenced not only by factors of colonization and assimilation, but active efforts of individuals and Indigenous groups to work toward decolonization. Thus, expression of worldview and identity may vary greatly among Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq.

Second, the effects of colonization for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq have been devastating. Colonization of Lnu'k of Ktaqmkuk has resulted in almost complete erasure of our Indigenous language (Anger, 1988). It is important to understand that the identity of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq is situated from within this place of linguistic annihilation.

Third, Lnu identity was once very socially stigmatized in Ktaqmkuk (Anger, 1988). In the past, many people were forced to deny their heritage in order to avoid negative repercussions

from their non-Indigenous neighbours (Anger, 1988; Hanarahan, 2003). Despite this, Lnu'k identity has been retained (Anger, 1988), passed on within families (Hanrahan, 2003). Indeed, it is a testament to the importance of our Lnu identity, that it has been retained despite such a difficult history.

Fourth, it should be noted that the denial of significant aspects of self, such as Indigenous identity, language and culture has had devastating effects on Indigenous People (Hart, 2002). Likewise, revitalization of Lnu identity, language and culture is needed in order for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq to heal from the colonial stigmatization of Lnu identity, which led many people to publicly deny significant and important parts of self in order to survive. As such, revival of cultural knowledge, traditions and language are paths to healing for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq.

Finally, it is important to recognize the unique history of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. For example, our eastern location meant that the first recorded colonial contact occurred on our shores, not long after Columbus (Prins, 1996), which has essentially exposed Indigenous People on the eastern coast to a longer period of colonial influence (Lawrence, 2004). This extensive period of colonial intrusion and deliberate assimilationist policy on behalf of colonial governments has had devastating effects upon Lnu culture, language and identity. Indeed, it is a wonder that any Lnu identity has been retained at all (Hanrahan, 2003). Thus, while colonial oppression is a commonality among most Indigenous Peoples (Niezen, 2003; Young, 2003), it is important to acknowledge the differences in colonial policy and experience that have come to bear upon Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq.

Definitions

The term Indigenous will be used when discussing fundamental concepts that may be applicable across Indigenous groups, and exceptions to this include when other terms are used in

quoted works from another author, or when referencing specific legislation that may use terms other than Indigenous.

The word Indigenous means, "Produced, growing, living, or occurring naturally in a particular region or environment" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online, Indigenous section, n.d.). The United Nations (2004) has defined Indigenous People and communities as those "Having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them" (p. 2). Corntassel (2003) has provided the following definition that assists in articulating "The impact of historical and colonial legacies on contemporary Indigenous communities and as a policy guide in the current global Indigenous rights discourse" (p. 91). It is this definition that will be employed for this study:

1. People who believe they are ancestrally related and identify themselves, based on oral and/or written histories, as descendants of the original inhabitants of their ancestral homelands;

2. Peoples who may, but not necessarily, have their own informal and/or formal political, economic and social institutions, which tend to be community-based and reflect their distinct ceremonial cycles, kinship networks, and continuously evolving cultural traditions;

3. Peoples who speak (or one spoke) an Indigenous language, often different from the dominant society's language- even where the Indigenous language is not 'spoken', distinct dialects and or uniquely Indigenous expressions may persist as a form of Indigenous identity;

4. Peoples who distinguish themselves from the dominant society and/or other cultural groups while maintaining a close relationship with their ancestral homelands/sacred sites, which may be threatened by ongoing military, economic or political encroachment or may be places where Indigenous People have been previously expelled, while seeking to enhance their cultural, political and economic autonomy. (p. 91-92)

Other references to specific Indigenous groups will use the self-identifying terms used in the Indigenous language of the people being discussed. For example, 'Lnu'k (plural)' or Lnu (singular) is the original self-identifier used by the Indigenous People commonly referred to as 'Mi'kmaq' (Hornborg, 2008). Though Mi'kmaq is widely accepted, the former term will be used in this study to identify the Indigenous People of Ktaqmkuk and other communities usually identified as Mi'kmaq. The reason for this is because the Mi'kmaq language distinguishes between these terms, with Mi'kmaq meaning "my friends", and Lnu/Lnu'k meaning "the people". When viewed from the lens of our Indigenous language, Lnu/Lnu'k is the more appropriate term, reflecting the fact that "the names of most Native Peoples in heritage languages mean "Our People" or "Human Beings" or "Us" (Harjo, 2005, p. 32). Further, it is our pre-colonial name, thus using Lnu/Lnu'k symbolizes a move away from colonial definitions of 'other' and a move toward Indigenous self-determination. This in itself is an act of decolonization (Harjo, 2005). Similarly, the term 'Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq' will be used at times to refer specifically to the Lnu'k inhabitants of Ktaqmkuk.

Other concepts included in this study are solidarity, identity, Web 2.0 technology, internet communication technology and social networking services. These concepts are reviewed in detail in the Literature Review section in the next chapter. A brief definition of each is provided next, based on the information provided on the Literature Review:

1. Solidarity- defined as a feeling of unity and agreement that can result in engagement in activities that provide support to others with whom one identifies and has shared interests.

2. Identity- defined self-perception that emerges from a combination of both internally and externally perceived similarities and differences.

3. Web 2.0 technologies- defined as World Wide Web innovations that began occurring around 2004, that marked increased interactivity in web applications. Social networking services are such an innovation.

4. Internet communication technology (ICT)- defined as all communication technology that uses internet technology in order to function. This includes web pages, email, list serves, social networking services and more recent in cell phone applications.

5. Social networking services- defined as internet sites that provide users the opportunity to connect and network with others. Common examples include Facebook®, MySpace® and LinkedIn®.

Chapter Summary/Organization of the Study

This chapter has introduced the purpose of this study, the questions this research seeks to answer, the background of the problem it seeks to explore, the assumptions made, the limitations of the study and the theoretical foundation upon which the study rests. As well, definitions were provided of concepts used in this study. These concepts will be discussed in greater detail in the Literature Review section of this study in Chapter Two.

Chapter Three will provide information about the methodology of this study, including a description and justification for the selected design, a section that describes the participants of the study, as well as the population from which they were drawn and the setting of the research.

A discussion is also included regarding data collection, data analysis, ethical considerations and the role of the researcher in the study. Chapter Four will present the findings of this study. Chapter Five will offer a summary of the study and findings, and a discussion of the findings in reference to the literature discussed in Chapter Two. A discussion of implications for social work practice and possible directions for future research, are also provided.

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the experience of solidarity of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq participating in social networking groups. A review of the literature written on key concepts used in this research is presented in this chapter. The first section explores the concept of solidarity, with a short discussion on the available research on Indigenous solidarity. The second section discusses the concept of identity and its relationship with solidarity, as well as issues pertaining specifically to Indigenous identity. The final section explores the literature concerning online social networking, with particular emphasis on the impacts and implications of internet communication for Indigenous People(s).

This review covers a broad spectrum of scholarship, particularly with respect to the concepts of solidarity and social networking. Solidarity and internet communication are subjects of focus in a number of disciplines and this is reflected in this review. One many note that social work itself is informed by a broad, interdisciplinary knowledge base. This literature review embraces this social work characteristic by drawing upon a variety of disciplines as information sources.

Particular emphasis, however, is placed upon Indigenist research perspectives. That is, research that privileges Indigenous voices, has a decolonization purpose, and is accountable to Indigenous People and communities (Martin, 2003; Rigney, 2006). The purpose for this is two-fold. First, such emphasis reflects the Indigenous Theoretical Framework of this study. Second, this emphasis reflects the Indigenous epistemological and ontological foundations upon which this research (and researcher) rests.

Solidarity

Solidarity can be learned through information communication technology (ICT), as such technologies often facilitate cultural sharing and connection (Winter, 2008). Consequently, understanding of the impact of ICT is important because it is a tool used to share culture and maintain our connection with others. Given this influence and the fact that it has not been the focus of much research (Winter, 2008), the importance of research focusing on solidarity development on the internet is clear.

Solidarity suffers conceptual difficulties, in that it is used often, yet often not clearly defined (May, 2007). Chan, To, and Chan (2006) have indicated that for analytical purposes, minimal definitions are best. That is to say, only those qualities of the concept itself, and not the conditions and causes of the concept, should be included in a definition. Further, the definition should be close to the everyday usage of the term. Such a definition is informative by nature of how narrow it is and how much it excludes, useable across different cultural contexts and is intuitive (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006, p. 279-281).

Solidarity is commonly defined as, "Unity (as of a group or class) that produces or is based on a community of interests, objectives, and standards" (Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary, Solidarity section, n.d.). Steinar (2005) (as cited in van Hooran, 2007) provided a general definition that, "Solidarity means a readiness for collective action and a will to institutionalize it through the establishment of rights and citizenship" (p. 326). Rippe (1998) has indicated that solidarity is both a feeling and an action felt by someone who provides assistance to anything with whom one identifies. Wilde (2007) has indicated, "Solidarity is the feeling of reciprocal sympathy and responsibility among members of a group which promotes mutual support. As such it has subjective and emotional elements..." (p. 171). Wilde has gone on to say that,

"Solidarity develops in struggles against systematic discrimination…" (p. 174), and that it is recognized for its:

> Paradoxical character…On the one hand, it has connotations of unity and universality, emphasizing responsibility for others and the feeling of togetherness. On the other hand, it exhibits itself most forcefully in antagonism to other groups, often in ways, which eschew the possibility of compromise. (p. 173)

From a post-modern perspective, Fenton (2008) describes solidarity as:

A morality of cooperation, the ability of individuals to identify with each other in a spirit of mutuality and reciprocity without individual advantage or compulsion, leading to a network of individuals or secondary institutions that are bound to a political project involving the creation of social and political bonds…There must be a commitment to the value of difference that goes beyond a simple respect and involves an inclusive politics of voice and representation. It also requires a non-essentialist conceptualization of the political subject as made up of manifold, fluid identities that mirror the multiple differentiations of groups. Chosen identities at any one time cannot be taken as given or static – political identities emerge and are expressed through an ongoing social process of individual and collective identity formation. (p. 49)

One of the most well-known discussions of solidarity is provided by 'father of sociology,' Emile Durkheim. Durkheim's *Division of Labour in Society*, written in 1863, identified two types of solidarity: Mechanical and organic. Each was defined as the opposite of the other. Mechanical solidarity occurred in 'primitive' tribal societies and was based on similarity. Organic solidarity was evident in more 'advanced' modern societies and was based

on the difference and mutual interdependence that was created as a result of the division of labour. Organic solidarity was presented as the stronger, more evolved type of solidarity.

Yet, Durkheim's framework is riddled with ambiguity and conceptual difficulties (Pope & Johnson, 1983). For example, Durkheim indicates that solidarity increases under conditions of shared similarities, while at the same time suggesting that differences created by the division of labour creates a stronger organic solidarity (Pope & Johnson, 1983). As well, he does not provide a clear method of measuring the increase of solidarity to test his theory that solidarity has increased over time, in conjunction of with the development of organic solidarity and the division of labour (Pope & Johnson, 1983).

There are other problems evident with this system. From an Indigenous perspective, Durkheim's system of classification is decidedly eurocentric, reflective of the modernist time and European cultural context he wrote in. For example, his suggestion that tribal societies are more 'primitive', and that the division of labour occurring in European societies during Industrialism was 'more advanced' and representative of later evolution (Pope & Johnson, 1983), underscores an assumption of European supremacy over tribal cultures. It is interesting to note that Durkheim appeared to have abandoned his idea of organic solidarity in his subsequent work, in that further discussions of solidarity were limited to solidarity as was described in his definition of mechanical solidarity (Pope & Johnson, 1983). He made no further mention of organic solidarity in his later work. A discussion of solidarity from an Indigenous perspective is provided in the section titled, 'Indigenous Solidarity', on page 27.

Blum (2007) has indicated that solidarity is similar to community, but implies something much more political, and more action and commitment. Blum (2007) further indicates that solidarity implies joining together in the face of real or perceived adversity, whereas community

does not. Further, shared solidarity can exist without shared community. As well, solidarity does not require the other members to be known to a person, in order for it to occur.

Blum has also differentiated between "in-group" and "out-group" solidarity (p. 54). In-group solidarity is characterized by solidarity that develops within a shared group, while out-group solidarity occurs between members of different groups. Based on these definitions, this study would be focusing on the development of in-group solidarity among Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq.

Blum (2007) has further indicated that out-group solidarity holds value that in-group solidarity does not, in that it can permit access to greater strength and resources than would be otherwise available to a group. Conversely, in-group solidarity brings value that out-group solidarity does not, specifically a sense of "loyalty" and "trust" (p. 56). Of further interest is that Blum has asserted that solidarity is more difficult to develop within groups representing a diversity of identities.

Solidarity is sometimes seen to be synonymous with social cohesion (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006; Vasta, 2010). Yet, Vasta (2010) has differentiated solidarity from social cohesion in that social cohesion has assimilatory undertones, suggestive of maintaining social order, and integrating the minority other with the dominant majority. In contrast, solidarity is inclusionary and rooted in struggle. Vasta has further indicated that solidarity can be strengthened by incorporating the following to overcome difference:

1. The drive for equality and a fair distribution of power;

2. Having the willingness to subordinate private concerns to public interests;

3. Expanding public rituals of sharing, including the sharing of resources;

4. Recognition of the other, or mutual recognition;

5. Engaging with our differences;

6. Developing a protocol of duties to outsiders. (p. 510)

Juul (2010) has indicated that social cohesion is a possible outcome of solidarity. Solidarity, "Means recognizing the person in question as an equal and worthy partner of interaction" (p. 266). A society, which might be characterized by the term solidarity, is based on a just distribution of possibilities for recognition. Juul indicated that this "Just order of recognition" was a necessary condition for development of social cohesion (p. 266). In other words, solidarity is a required precondition for social cohesion.

Given the information provided by Vasta (2010) and Juul (2010), solidarity can be seen as distinct from social cohesion. Further, the assimilatory tone of social cohesion makes this concept inappropriate for inclusion in this research. Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq have resisted such assimilation. As discussed in the section titled "Background of the Problem", this has had profound negative consequences on multiple generations of Lnu'k.

Bhabba (1994) has also noted the inadequacy of using social cohesion masqueraded as solidarity when discussing marginalized populations, in that, "A solidarity founded in victimization and suffering may, implacably, or sometimes violently, become bound against oppression; or a subaltern or minority agency may attempt to interrogate and rearticulate the 'inter-est' of society that marginalizes its interests (p. 191). Clearly, the current and historical marginalized positioning of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq places any solidarity developed among us as being founded, at least partially, within the victimization and suffering described by Bhabba. Alfred (2005) provides a discussion of such an Indigenous solidarity in his section titled "The Ethics of Courage" (p. 45).

Discussions of 'moral' solidarity abound in the literature. May (2007) has cited his earlier work in indicating that solidarity that emerges from a "moral motivation" is comprised of "Conscious group identification, bonds of sentiment, interest in the group's well-being, shared values and beliefs and readiness to show moral support (p.194)". May has also indicated that a moral solidarity can only occur when group interests are elevated to the importance of individual interest.

Discussions of the moral and intrinsically good nature of solidarity can be misleading, as solidarity can exist under conditions that are arguably immoral and unjust, such as in the prison system (Elliot, 2006), or in drug culture (Kavanaugh & Anderson, 2008). As well, philosophical discussions about moral solidarity are tangential to the focus of this research. Further, appeals to a moral solidarity are based on a need to maintain peace and order. Such solidarity approaches the meaning and implications of social cohesion, with its attendant difficulties as discussed above. That being said, May's definition of solidarity and discussion of the possibility of group interests being elevated to the importance of individual interests is interesting, and is included here for that reason.

Vasta (2010) has suggested that the emerging dominance of ICT in everyday social life has created greater social space between people, thereby changing the phenomenon of solidarity itself. The difficulty with Vasta's argument that solidarity has changed since the ICT has become an integral part of social life, is that he does not indicate how it is has been changed. Further, Vasta did not provide any data to support this argument, or the suggestion that ICT has created greater social space between people. Vasta's position is a philosophical argument, based on the notion that ICT permits people to interact with one another at a distance, thus people are

not placed in a position that necessitates face-to-face interaction. He equates this ability to interact across distances as increased social space.

There are a number of questions that arise from Vasta's arguments that need further clarification. What constitutes "social space"? Does increased geographic distance between people interacting with one another constitute increased space? Does flexibility around time and space for interacting constitute greater social space? Does decreased face-to-face interaction with others constitute greater social space, or is it all these things? Further, how is solidarity changed by ICT? Is it diminished, increased, or the experience of solidarity qualitatively changed in some other way? These questions are not adequately addressed by Vasta (2010).

In contrast to Vasta, Wellman and Gulia (1999) have indicated that "social" uses of ICT can develop and maintain communities through the sharing of information and creation of virtual spaces for socializing and communication. From a post-modern perspective, Fenton (2008) has argued that given the fragmented identities of the postmodern world, solidarity becomes important to create alliances, and ICT can facilitate the communication necessary to create such alliances. She has added, however, that this technologically aided communication must be coupled with corresponding in-person work. In other words, if a group is to accomplish goals discussed in online format, it requires "going beyond the click of a mouse" in order to put ideas into action (p. 52). Important as well is developing an understanding of all the other kinds of communication media that preceded internet technology, as the "relationships between people and things, social realities and forms of cultural solidarity" are changed by newer forms of media (Winter, 2008, p. 76).

Scheff (2008) focuses upon moral solidarity and offers some interesting commentary on the characteristics of solidarity as well by indicating that complete solidarity is total mutual

agreement or agreement to disagree. Scheff's (2008) work is interesting in that it suggests that agreement is not necessary for the development of solidarity, however, at points of disagreement members must be able to "agree to disagree". As such, discussions of disagreement among group members should not be interpreted as a lack of solidarity, per se. Rather, the ability to permit one another to voice varying opinions with patience and consideration may be yet another indication of solidarity.

Although Dawson's (2009) work dealt specifically with black Americans, the concepts of thick and thin ties, and linked fate he has presented may be useful in the analysis of solidarity among other groups. Dawson indicated that thick ties are ties that are the strongest, a parent's ties with their children, for example. Ties become 'thinner' as the bond becomes less strong. Dawson cited Appiah (2005), and stated that solidarity "Gives rise to moral concerns (i.e. concerns about social justice) because it carries with it a positive ethical obligation to be partial toward those with whom one has thick ties" (p.184). For example, one will feel a stronger sense of obligation toward a son or daughter than a neighbor. In other words, sharing thick ties are a basis for a feeling obligated to support another and to act in their interests. As ties become thinner, this supportive commitment decreases.

When applied to the focus of this research, this concept suggests that the degree to which Lnu'k feel 'thick ties' to other Lnu'k will impact sense of solidarity. Since Indigenous groups are linked by kinship and also by other shared identity markers such as common history, spiritual belief, ethnicity, territory, culture, language and politics, the likelihood of sharing thick ties with at least some other group members would appear to be strong. Yet, this also implies that strength of ties will vary a great deal within the group itself. For example, this suggests that I would likely have thicker ties with someone who is a member of my band and immediate family.

These ties would be somewhat thinner for someone who is a member of my band and a member of my extended family and thinner again for those who are members of my band but not significantly related. The ties would be even thinner for someone who is a member of a different band.

There may be implications of this to the development of solidarity within the group overall. Saunders (2008) found that a strong sense of collective identity helped develop a strong sense of solidarity within a group, but that such groups also developed opposition to other groups within the larger movement. Though Saunders points to strong collective group identity as being the cause of faction development, I believe the use of the concept of thick and thin ties may provide a more useful explanation.

Dawson (2009) has also provided the concept of "linked fate" as a concept of importance to the development of solidarity. Dawson cited his earlier work in 1994 and stated that linked fate is defined as, "The perception on the part of individual African Americans that their own fate was 'linked to the fate of the race'" (p. 185). His work has also suggested that there may be differences between ethnic groups as to the extent which members feel their fate is linked to others whom they share an ethnic identity. Therefore, it is important not to assume that a shared ethnicity implies a belief in a shared linked fate.

In summary, linked fate goes beyond identity markers such as ethnicity, culture, kin, religion and territory as a basis of solidarity and suggests a common burden, or perhaps conversely, a common optimism, among members of a group delineated by such markers, as a basis for solidarity. Not all identity markers will form a basis for a sense of linked fate, and thus not all groups will be able to draw upon linked fate as a (re)source for the development of solidarity.

Blum (2007) has offered a discussion on the kinds of solidarity that can develop within racial groups. He has looked at the kinds of solidarity that develop within racial groups, based on the commonalities that the group shares. First, "identity groups" can develop solidarity based on shared racial identity (p. 56). Conversely, a member of an identity may not develop solidarity with other members of their solidarity group. Blum (2007) has suggested this can occur if identification with the group is weak. Further, solidarity may not develop if a member views other members of the group as being unworthy of such expression.

The second type of commonality among racial groups that can develop among racial groups is "shared experience," such as adversity, or marginalization. The third type of solidarity that can develop in racial groups is "political commitment" (p. 58- 61). This can occur between members with different identities and experiences, and is based on shared values. Shared values are not a requirement for solidarity development in the other two. For example, Indigenous People across many different identity groups may share a sense of solidarity that emerges from the shared commitment to advancing the UN Declaration of Rights for Indigenous People.

It is important to note that a high degree of racial mixing is present within Indigenous People(s) of Eastern Canada. This is reflective of the longer period of colonial contact (Lawrence, 2004), and assimilationist policies to which these territories have been exposed. As noted in the Findings chapter of this study, this also applies to Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq.

Indigenous solidarity. There is limited information available on the study of the development of solidarity among Indigenous People. This is surprising, given there are so many current and historical examples of Indigenous People joining together for common causes. Historical examples include confederacies and inter-tribal councils. Current examples range from pan-Indigenous activist movements such as AIM (American Indian Movement), to political

bodies such as the Assembly of First Nations, to political activism by specific First Nation communities that are lent support by members of other First Nation communities, and warrior societies (Alfred, 2005).

One good example of an exploration of building Indigenous solidarity is Alfred (2005). Speaking mostly from a North American Indigenous perspective, Alfred has suggested that Indigenous People need to act now in order to avoid the threat of impending extinction. He has indicated that much of the political systems currently in place for First Nations self-government are actually neo-colonial tools of assimilation, developed for the purpose of limiting Indigenous rights and freedoms and supplanting an authentic Indigenous identity with that of the colonially-defined 'aboriginal'.

Further, Alfred (2005) has indicated that "The potential power of a unified Indigenous identity (one new layer on top of others that already exist) as the foundation for political organization and action lies untapped" (p. 144). Alfred has further suggested that this is largely due to Indigenous People buying into colonial definitions of our identity as separate bands (First Nations), isolated on small geographic pieces of land. Further, the day-to-day struggles that accompany living within the framework established by colonial governments take up most of our time and energies and divert us from using a pan-Indigenous identity to our collective political benefit. Essentially, we have accepted the colonial strategy of divide and conquer.

Alfred (2005) has indicated that the movement toward authentic, decolonized existence for Indigenous People lies in a spiritual reawakening. Further, he has indicated that such a spiritual reconnection requires a reconnection to the lands, which are the basis of Indigenous spirituality, wellness and economic sustainability. As well, by reestablishing ownership of traditional land bases, Indigenous People will thereby have the ability to develop their

independence from the political machine that currently governs Indigenous lives and keeps us in a constant state of dependence. Vitally important also is the need to protect and promote Indigenous languages, as they actively demonstrate Indigenous understanding of the world and relationships with all things in it (Alfred, 2005).

Alfred's call for a reconnection to the land and language, applied to Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq makes clear the need to for Lnu'k solidarity development. Given that the current federal recognition agreement makes no allowance for a land base or for traditional hunting and fishing entitlements, and that our Indigenous language has been almost completely eroded through colonization, the development of solidarity relationships is vitally important to call attention to these inequities.

Indeed, the "spiritual disconnection" that Alfred (2005) has called for Indigenous People to overcome, is a fundamental problem of colonization and it has created pain that is manifested in destructive behaviours and psychological difficulties (p. 162). The psychologically destructive nature of colonialism has also been discussed in detail in Hart (2002). Yet, Alfred (2005) has indicated an individual suffering from the pain and anguish of an inauthentic, colonized existence can address these ills and becoming "re-rooted" in an authentic existence as an Indigenous person through, "Strong family support, traditional teachings and culture, and caring mentorship" (p. 175). Though current government approaches to health and healing attempt to limit understanding of the ills of colonialism to being only individual, personal processes and problems, it is important to understand that these ills emanate from larger social and political causes (Hart, 2002). As such, effective intervention to address these issues requires moving away from blaming individuals to action at the broader societal and political levels.

Alfred (2005) has provided an analysis of the various actions that Indigenous People can undertake to advance a decolonizing, anti-colonial agenda that would lead to true independence and authentic lives and identities and for Indigenous People. For example, his work suggests that there are limits to passive resistance, in that when engaging passive resistance one must be ready to meet the application of force from opposing forces. As such, Indigenous activism requires accepting the possibility that one may have to defend the struggle through the act of force. Yet, aggressive force in itself is not an effective means to achieve the goals of true independence and authenticity, as a society built upon unnecessary force contains within it the seed of its own destruction, much the same as how the current relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous People in Canada was developed. Rather, in order to develop a new relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous People that is mutually respectful, non-Indigenous People need to develop a better understanding of the genocidal history upon which this nation was built, and respond to current injustices toward Indigenous People with the democratic fairness that this country so readily portrays as part of its mythological identity.

Alfred (2005) has further indicated that the following conditions must be met in order to create an environment ripe for Indigenous activist mobilization:

1. The movement must have access to institutional power, such as government organizations and the media;

2. There must be political and social divisions among the Settler elite, in terms of either political parties, economic classes, or ideologies;

3. The movement must have the support and cooperation of allies in the Settler society;

4. The states' ability or capacity for repression must be in decline, in either physical terms or due to legal constraints or the political or social context; and,

5. The movement must be capable of advancing its claims and delegitimizing the state in the mass media. (p. 64)

In summary, Alfred (2005) has suggested Indigenous existence is at serious threat and that immediate action is needed. The required response to this threat is a call for solidarity across Indigenous communities and groups to recognize the mutual need to break free from the current imposed political structures in order to achieve true independence and existence. The basis of this resurgence is a spiritual reawakening, based on our traditional beliefs and relationship with the land, and evidenced in our traditional languages. Certain conditions must be met for effective mobilization of people to action, including access to mass media tools.

There are also discussions about developing solidarity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups. In a discussion about the difficulties developing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, Benjamin, Preston, and Leger (2010) have indicated that the solidarity and support of non-Indigenous People and organizations was vitally important to the goal of international recognition of the human rights of Indigenous People. Though Alfred (2005) has recognized the potential role of non-Indigenous groups in aiding the causes of Indigenous People, he has indicated that such roles should be limited to work done within their own communities in order to raise awareness of the issues and develop relationships that are more equitable between Indigenous and non-Indigenous People. As well, though external support may be vital, it should be noted that the development of solidarity between external people and groups with Indigenous People goes beyond the subject of this research. Indeed, in order to ensure Indigenous voice and control over Indigenous matters, solidarity must start from within. Within the context of this study, given that, federal recognition for Lnu'k

Ktaqmkukewaq is so recent, building solidarity from within is perhaps the first step that should be undertaken.

Identity

Identity is a ubiquitous concept plagued by ambiguity (Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, & McDermot, 2009; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; duGay, Evans, & Redman, 2000; Hollinger, 2006; Levi & Dean, 2003). That being said, identity still has practical conceptual utility in understanding group solidarity (Dawson, 2009; Levi & Dean, 2003), and holds a special place in postcolonial discourse (Yadav, 2000). Webster's Online Dictionary defines identity as both "sameness of essential or generic character in different instances" and "The distinguishing character or personality of an individual" (Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary, Identity section, n.d.). In a discussion about Indigenous identity, Weaver (2001) defines it as, "A combination of self-identification and the perceptions of others" (p. 243).

Identity and solidarity are related in that solidarity is a possible outcome of shared group identity (Saunders, 2008). Moreover, not only does shared identity lends itself to the development of solidarity, but also solidarity movements lend themselves to strengthened shared identity (Dawson, 2009). Indeed, though solidarity created by means of appeal to a shared identity has caused concern over whether solidarity is an exclusionary practice that denies difference, many have agreed that solidarity is an important concept that can and should transcend difference (Allen, 1999; Dawson, 2009; hooks, 1986; Min, 2005; Vasta, 2010).

Indigenous identity. Current and historical political influences come to bear upon Indigenous identities that greatly complicate the process of both external identification and self-identification. Historically, assimilatory policies of colonial governments have aimed to strip Indigenous People of their cultures and languages, in an attempt to reduce difference between the

Indigenous and the Colonizer (Alfred, 2005). Today, the public policy of 'inclusivity' is employed as a more 'subtle' means to achieving the same end under the advancement of a neo-colonialist agenda (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). As such, Indigenous identity is a highly politicized issue, with ramifications for collective rights and entitlements (Lawrence, 2004).

McKenzie and Morrisette (2003) have indicated that the colonial process of "mystification" has been instrumental in the devaluing of Indigenous culture on both an individual and group level (p. 262). Mystification is defined as a colonial process whereby the dominant culture is perceived to be superior and the only appropriate expression of culture, and difference from this is perceived to be inferior. For Indigenous People, mystification has contributed to the proliferation of stereotypes as the only accurate portrayal of Indigenous culture, and the marginalization of Indigenous People. This results in a disconnection with one's own culture and that of the mainstream. The consequences of cultural disconnection are often internalized and expressed through damaging behaviours (Hart, 2002). Yet, these behaviours are treated as symptoms of defectiveness of the individual and used to reinforce and justify the damaging stereotypes created by colonialism (Hart, 2002).

Further, in order for Indigenous People(s) to heal from the negative effects of colonialism, a "reculturation" process needs to take place (McKenzie & Morrisette, 2003, p. 263). Reculturation is the process whereby Indigenous People(s) are encouraged to reconnect with their culture as a source of support. This reconnection with culture provides communities and individuals the opportunity to regain their sense of identity as Indigenous People, and helps address the effects colonialism has had upon Indigenous People(s).

Education is yet another "utilitarian tool" used to exert control over Indigenous People (Yadav, 2000, p. 78). A notable and obvious example is the residential school system that

removed children from families and their communities and robbed them of their language and traditional customs, in an attempt to 'educate', but with implicit purpose to assimilate (Sinclair, 2004). Yet, education has also been used as a tool to undermine Indigenous language, identity and culture in more subtle ways. Academic discourse prior to the latter part of the twentieth century reflected the perspective of the colonizer, indicative of the lack of active participation of Indigenous People in academia during this time period (Wilson, 2008). As indicated by Bhabba (1994):

> Around the turn of the century there emerges a mythic, masterful silence in the narratives of the empire, what Sir Alfred Lyall called 'doing our Imperialism quietly'…Around the same time, from those dark corners of the earth, there comes another, more ominous silence that utters an archaic colonial 'otherness', that speaks in riddles, obliterating proper names and proper places. It is a silence that turns imperial triumphalism into the testimony of colonial confusion and those who hear its echo lose their historic memories. (p. 123)

An example of earlier academic writing on Indigenous identity is Gates (1938). His work reflected the dominant political thought of his time; that being the dominance of blood quantum measurement as the political definition of indigeneity, and the intent to render the Indigenous identity obsolete through various policies of assimilation. This study examined the physical features of the children of a particular First Nation community in Nova Scotia. Children not possessing phenotypic features of straight, dark brown or black hair, dark brown eyes and dark brown complexion were considered to be aberrant of an authentic Indigenous identity. The existence of children with some degree of racially-mixed heritage was presented as support for the author`s thesis that L`nu were no longer an authentic Indigenous group. For example, Gates

declared that Lnu'k of Nova Scotia "Are long since extinct, while the mixed-bloods have survived and considerably increased since 1860" (p. 284). Those that hang on to the identity of being an Aboriginal persons, mixed or otherwise, are considered by to be "hangers-on" to Treaty and government hand-outs (Gates, 1938). Further, he italicizes the words "Micmac[1]" and "Indian" throughout his paper when referencing the children of his study, subtly suggesting that neither term truly applies.

Though the actual content of Gates (1938) study is not of interest here, his work does illustrate two important points. First, the impact of work such as Gates' continues to impact Indigenous People today, as educators trained during his period have influenced the thoughts and writing of countless Indigenous and non-Indigenous People (Wilson, 2008). Wilson (2008) has indicated that the period around the time of Gates' writing can be marked as part of the Traditionalist and Assimilationist periods of Indigenous research. The Traditionalist phase can be characterized as an effort to record Indigenous People on the verge of "'extinction'", and to record traditional culture in an effort to preserve the "'noble savage'" (p. 48). The Assimilationist period was marked by research influenced by government policy that sought to integrate Indigenous People with mainstream society. In practice, this meant attacking Indigenous culture, language and traditional community and familial structures in order to replace them with non-Indigenous, mainstream practices (Wilson, 2008, p. 49-50).

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[1] Micmac is the English enunciation of the word "Mi'kmaq', and was the term used to describe Lnu'k for some time. It is not considered an appropriate term, as it represents the renaming of an Indigenous group by a colonial power, taking away our power to name ourselves (Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005)

Second, the 'authenticity' of Lnu'k has been a matter of external debate for some time. This is the case, even with respect to communities that were given federal recognition under the Indian Act during that policy's early development, such as the one studied by Gates. Therefore, one may wonder how much more difficult it is for a newly federally recognized communities, such as Ktaqmkuk`s Miawpukek First Nation and Qalipu Mi`kmaq First Nation, to maintain a sense of Indigenous identity against similar debates about blood quantum, which continue to permeate identity discourse today.

Alfred (2005) has also indicated that Indigenous People are at threat of extinction, but for very different reasons and purposes. Whereas Gates (1938) makes the suggestion that the Lnu are extinct to support further assimilation, Alfred's (2005) work is a wake-up call for Indigenous People to develop deeper understanding of our current perilous and very misunderstood position. He has indicated that we are endangered because of historical and current restructuring of cultural, economic and community structures, and the redefining of identities that have permeated the consciousness of Indigenous People to such an extent that we have bought into these colonial structures of control, such as current policies of 'aboriginalism' and self-government. Indeed, we have come to view such mechanisms of control as advances and victories, when in fact they move us further along toward final defeat. Alfred (2005) has asserted that these structures serve only to limit Indigenous rights and freedoms and reinforce Indigenous dependence. For example, he has indicated that the term 'aboriginal' is often considered less derogatory than 'Indian'. Yet, he has indicated that a closer look at the term aboriginal illustrates yet another attempt at erasing authentic Indigenous identity by replacing it with the externally defined, legalistic category of aboriginal, and is actually an attempt to limit

Indigenous rights and freedoms. Alfred (2005) has named the, "Imperial forces causing our demise" as:

> Destructive forces, which cause discord and imbalances in our lives that lead to sickness; deceptive forces, which cloud our minds and prevent us from seeing and thinking clearly about our situations; and useless forces, which are simply distractions that use up our time and energy to no good effect with wasteful and self-indulgent behaviours that prevent us from realizing our true potential as Onkwehonwe. (p. 164)

McKenzie and Morrisette (2003) have cited Green and pointed out that racial identity can be formulated in both "categorical" and "transactional" terms (p. 263). Categorical racial identity is based upon outward expressions and appearances. This notion of identity limits Indigenous People to stereotypical expressions of identity. Transactional racial identity is more fluid, in that it identifies racial groups in terms of "social boundaries" (McKenzie & Morrisette, 2003, p. 263). Thus, changes within groups may occur over time; it is the differing perceptions and differential treatment that serves as the line of demarcation.

Weaver (2001) has provided a good discussion about the complexities and controversies surrounding Indigenous identity, best encapsulated the following excerpt"

> There are widespread disputes about who can assert a Native identity and who has the right to represent Indigenous interests. Such conflicts occur when self-identification and the perceptions of others are at odds. Some people who assert Indigenous identity do not appear phenotypically Native, are not enrolled, and were not born on reservations or in some other Native communities. Some of these individuals indeed have Indigenous heritage, and others do not. Other people are enrolled or have Native heritage but know little about their cultures. This may be because they have no interest or no one to teach

them or because of factors such as racism and stereotypes that inhibit their willingness to

pursue an Indigenous identity. Some Indigenous communities, such as the Mashpee,

have experienced significant racial mixing…This raises the question, Did the Mashpee

and similar Indigenous communities absorb outsiders, or were they absorbed into the

American melting pot? (p. 243-244)

Clearly, then Indigenous identity represents a wide spectrum of experience. This may be

apparent both across and within Indigenous groups. Figure 1 provides a pictorial representation

of the spectrum of Indigenous identity, as discussed in Sinclair (2007).

High

| High Traditional
Low
Acculturation | High Traditional
High
Acculturation |

Low ———————————————— High

Acculturation

| Low
Acculturation
Low Traditional | High
Acculturation
Low Traditional |

Low
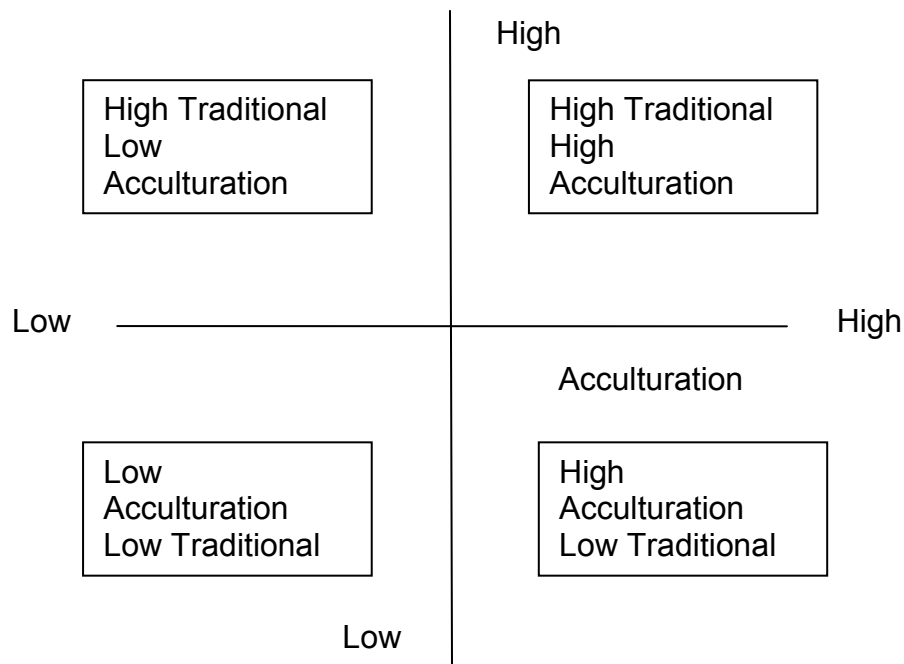
Figure 1. "Adapted from R. Sinclair (2007), Aboriginal Cultural Identity Matrix" (Building

Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources, n.d.)

McKenszie and Morrisette (2003) have also provided a visual illustration of Indigenous identity differences. This illustration is shown in Figure 2, and provides more explanatory detail regarding the cultural differences between Indigenous People than the one provided by Sinclair (2007).

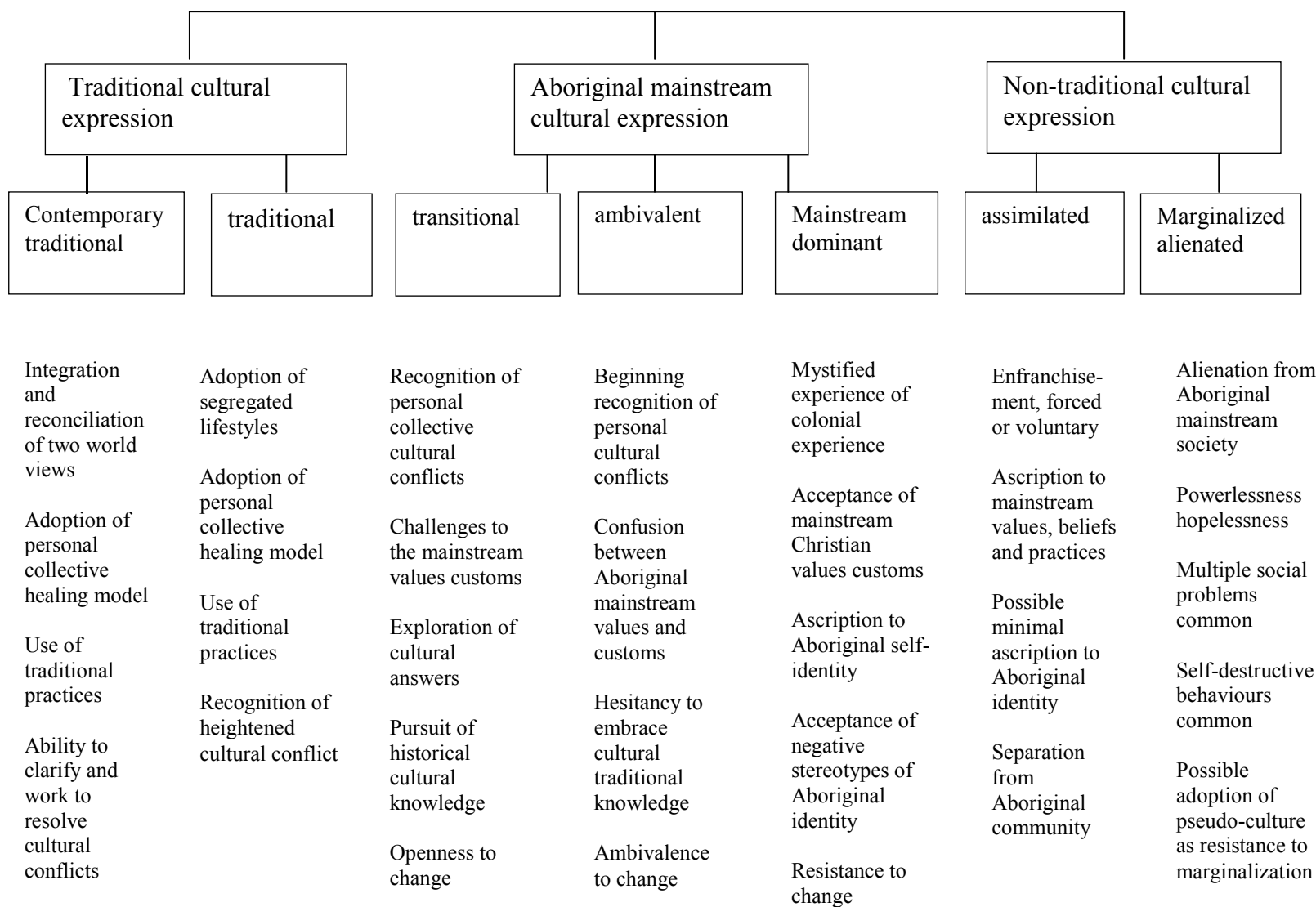| Traditional cultural expression		Aboriginal mainstream cultural expression			Non-traditional cultural expression	
Contemporary traditional	traditional	transitional	ambivalent	Mainstream dominant	assimilated	Marginalized alienated
Integration and reconciliation of two world views Adoption of personal collective healing model Use of traditional practices Ability to clarify and work to resolve cultural conflicts	Adoption of segregated lifestyles Adoption of personal collective healing model Use of traditional practices Recognition of heightened cultural conflict	Recognition of personal collective cultural conflicts Challenges to the mainstream values customs Exploration of cultural answers Pursuit of historical cultural knowledge Openness to change	Beginning recognition of personal cultural conflicts Confusion between Aboriginal mainstream values and customs Hesitancy to embrace cultural traditional knowledge Ambivalence to change	Mystified experience of colonial experience Acceptance of mainstream Christian values customs Ascription to Aboriginal self-identity Acceptance of negative stereotypes of Aboriginal identity Resistance to change	Enfranchise-ment, forced or voluntary Ascription to mainstream values, beliefs and practices Possible minimal ascription to Aboriginal identity Separation from Aboriginal community	Alienation from Aboriginal mainstream society Powerlessness hopelessness Multiple social problems common Self-destructive behaviours common Possible adoption of pseudo-culture as resistance to marginalization

Figure 2. "Contemporary Expressions of Aboriginal Identity" (McKenzie &Morrissette, 2003, p. 266).

Another tool of colonialism that has impacted Indigenous identity in North American are the various versions of legislation developed to determine who is and is not Indigenous. Weaver (2001) has indicated that such policies have served to assimilate the Indigenous population into the mainstream and break connections to culture. As such, external identification is not sufficient to determine who may be considered to be Indigenous (Weaver, 2001). Weaver (2001) has not limited her critique of external identification systems to government policies, but has also indicated that Indigenous should not be placed in positions of determining the indigeneity of other Indigenous groups. Indeed, Weaver (2001) has indicated that Indigenous People are often our own harshest critics. This can be due to competition for scarce resources, differing levels of acculturation that contribute to mistrust, and fear of appropriation of material cultural knowledge by non-Indigenous People after centuries of being denied practice of these same rituals and beliefs (Weaver, 2001).

Further, Indigenous People with non-phenotypic features can choose to "hide", or to assert their identity with those around them. Without some sort of 'official' recognition however, asserting Indigenous identity without stereotypical physical features can be problematic without support of one's community of origin (Lawrence, 2004; Weaver, 2001).

More important is that an individual's community identifies and accepts them as Indigenous. "Given the strong emphasis on the collectivity in Indigenous cultures, it is problematic to have an individual who self-identifies as Indigenous and yet has no community sanction or validation of that identity" (Weaver, 2001, p. 7). For people who have become disconnected from their community, this may mean involvement in cultural activities in other communities or urban areas, or they may attempt to reconnect with their community in an attempt to reassert their Indigenous identity (Lawrence, 2004; Weaver, 2001).

Despite the complexities bearing upon Indigenous identity, Alfred (2005) has asserted that a pan-Indigenous identity does indeed exist. He has indicated that a broader Indigenous identity:

> Is one layer among the multiplicity of layers that form peoples' sense of self- from the individual, to the clan, village, nation, and then on to our participation as Onkwehonwe in a more expansive conversation that links us to other Indigenous People in other parts of the world who share our thoughts, feelings and plans of action. This is another part of being Onkwehonwe: the transcendence of national and patriotic identities to a sense of self and relationship based on the commonality of belief that is shared among Onkwehonwe in other nations. (p. 140)

Further, Alfred (2005) has indicated this pan-Indigenous identity is a potential source of unification for potential action, and thus far, it has been underutilized. Central to this commonality in Indigenous belief is our spiritual relationship with the land (Alfred, 2005; Young, 2003).

Niezen, (2003) has indicated that a pan-Indigenous identity can also be articulated by examining the commonalities Indigenous People share in their relationships with state governments. These commonalities in relationship between Indigenous People and state governments are sources of "Common experience, unity and identity among Indigenous People and organizations" (Niezen, 2003, p. 91). In other words, the shared experience of colonization and our responses to this experience of oppression is a commonality that binds us as a group. While it is vitally important for Indigenous People to not be limited to being defined solely by the colonial experience, as such limitation serves to internalize harmful definitions as 'the other' (Memmi, 1991), developing an understanding of racial identity in terms of our unequal

treatment, has served to increase solidarity across Indigenous groups (McKenzie & Morrisette, 2003).

One of these commonalities is the experience of mainstream education as a tool of assimilation. Such education often focuses upon vulnerable children, as a method of eradicating traditional spiritual and cultural strength and knowledge, and breaking Indigenous ties to the land its resources (p. 87). Another commonality among Indigenous People globally is the "loss of subsistence" (p. 89). This loss has come through a variety of actions that aim to remove Indigenous People from the lands traditionally accessed for material, as well as spiritual sustenance. Such actions include relocation or complete removal from traditional land bases, allocation of resources on Indigenous lands to "extractive industries" (Niezen, p. 90), placing limitations upon access to traditional subsistence activities, and the eradication of traditional food sources.

A third commonality found in relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous People globally is the "state abrogation of treaties" (Niezen, 2003, p. 90). These treaties serve as agreements between two sovereign bodies, Indigenous People and state governments, and are intended to recognize Indigenous People as distinct, with certain rights and entitlements afforded to them. Yet, despite supposed reassurances provided to some Indigenous groups in treaties, Niezen (2003) notes that "The most significant sources of Indigenous identity are broken promises, intolerance, and efforts to eliminate cultural distinctiveness or the very people that represent difference" (p. 91).

Finally, Niezen (2003) identifies a fourth commonality as a source of unification and global identity for Indigenous People, and that is our common goals. Indigenous People across the board have the goal of achieving recognition for both their inequitable treatment, and the

recognition of the right to self-determination. Discussion thus far has focused on collective identity. I conclude this section with a discussion of identity roles that within Indigenous groups are co-determined by individuals and the community.

Alfred (2005) provided an interesting discussion regarding traditional identity roles. Alfred (2005) has indicated that the traditional role of warrior has often been over-looked *from within* Indigenous culture, with more emphasis placed on that of the Elder. It is important to note here Alfred is not referring to fictitious warrior character that Hollywood created in the 20th century. Instead, Alfred (2005) has indicated that the warrior role speaks to "struggle" as an integral aspect of traditional Indigenous identity (p. 81). Further, though this role was traditionally prescribed to males and to physical defense and safety of the tribal group, today's modern context requires a redefining of the role of warrior in order to reflect current needs and opportunities. For example, with modern changes in work relationships, women are also able to fulfill the role of warrior. Indeed, Alfred (2005) noted that successful modern movements have all "depended on and are led by women" (p. 82). Moreover, acting as a warrior on behalf of one's tribal group goes beyond bearing arms and can incorporate such methods of resistance and defense as mentoring, teaching, writing, research and non-violent political activism.

Within the modern neo-colonial context, the traditional struggle for a "good life" has become action guided by "An instinctual sense of responsibility to alleviate suffering and to recreate the conditions of peace and happiness" (p. 86). From an individual perspective, this means undertaking the following in order to develop our own modern warrior identity:

1. *Mental reawakening* through the promotion of knowledge and the reassertion of a social environment where children and youth are encouraged to seek out and listen to knowledge , to learn from it, and to practice it;

2. *Emotional fortitude* and the instilling of emotional and psychological stability leading to a generalized state of courage where Onkwehonwe can again persevere against the fears that are used so cynically to oppress us;

3. *Purifying and strengthening* our bodies by returning to traditional diets and regular hard physical labour and exercise so that we can be rid of the scourges of diabetes and obesity that create total dependence on the colonial state's health bureaucracy;

4. *Rediscovering meaning* outside of shallow materialism and our hollowed-out existences as consumers by reviving ceremonial and ritual cycles as a means of restoring social connection and spiritual rootedness, thus making life sacred again" (p. 87).

This section has provided a review of the literature on the concept of solidarity and its counterpart, identity. Specific attention was provided to literature pertaining to Indigenous solidarity and Indigenous identity.

The next section provides an overview of the technology aspect of this study. A brief description of Web 2.0 innovations, followed by a discussion of social networking services (SNS), is provided. A review of the literature discussing the special circumstances of Indigenous People(s) use of Internet Communication Technology (ICT) is also given. This section ends with a review of available research on the combined concepts of solidarity, identity and online social networking.

The World Wide Web, Web 2.0 Innovation and Social Networking Services.

The World Wide Web (WWW) was developed in 1989 to run on already- established internet communication technology (ICT) (Berners-Lee, 1989). Since then, it has globalized information sharing (Knights, 2007). More recent WWW innovations that fall under the term "Web 2.0", include social networking sites (SNS), instant messaging, wikis, and other interactive

interfaces that permit users to go beyond the static information receiving typical of the preceding

WWW. Web 2.0 innovations do not represent any substantial changes to the initial WWW

platform, but instead implies a marked increase in interactive functioning for users (Knights,

2007; Treese, 2006). Figure 3 illustrates the evolution of ICT and the subsequent technologies

dependent upon it.
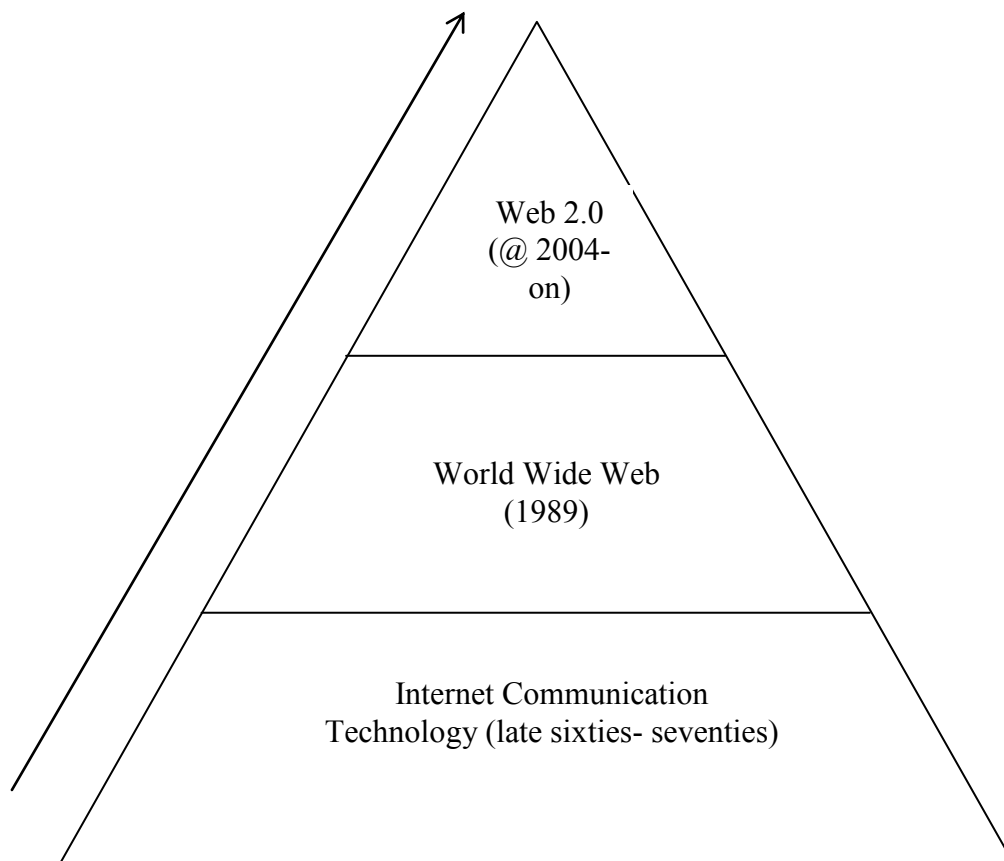
Figure 3. Evolution of Internet Communication Technology

Web 2.0 innovations have demonstrated an enormous capacity for information sharing, not only for social and business purposes (Knights, 2007), but also in the areas of education (Hung & Yuen, 2010; Lester & Perini, 2010), healthcare (Lukes, 2010), politics (Uldam, 2011), and activism (Wilson, 2011). In addition, these innovations have blurred the line between information producer and recipient, transforming users into both senders and receivers (Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006; Thompson, 2011; Winter, 2008).

Yet, such widespread information sharing has also give rise to concerns about content accuracy and accountability (Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006). Thus, while Web 2.0 has made information sharing more accessible and wide-spread than ever before, users of this technology need to be aware of its drawbacks and undertake necessary background checking to ensure accuracy of information (Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006). One of the most widely used innovations of Web 2.0 technology are Social Networking Services (SNS) (Knights, 2007). Indeed, Tim Berners-Lee, WWW developer, noted early that one of the most promising aspects of WWW were its possible social applications (Berners-Lee, 1996). SNS have developed from being used mostly by technically skilled youth, to a norm that is changing the way people perceive and conduct interaction with others (Lukes, 2010). By 2008, SNS' have overtaken email in terms of minutes of monthly user time, and by 2009 have surpassed email in terms of number of users (Morgan Stanley, 2010). [2] Further, though email has demonstrated little growth in time-spent users through the period of 2006-2009, SNS have demonstrated an increasingly upward spike over time (Morgan Stanley, 2010).

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[2] "User" in this instance refers to number of 'unique' users recorded as logging in, not the total number of users.

One of the most promising aspects of SNS is the possibility they hold for "personalizing" Web searches (Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006, p. 204). This occurs as a result of information sharing becoming attached to certain individuals (Gherab-Martin, 2011). For example, someone may look to individuals within their social network for information or references to information, thereby eliminating a degree of the anonymity, and lack of accountability inherent in the mass of information sharing provided by the internet.

One of the most popular SNS today is Facebook®, developed by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004. It presently has over 750 million active "users"[3] worldwide, with 50% of those using the program daily (Facebook®, n.d.). Other popular general purpose SNS include MySpace®, Friendster®, and Twitter®. Further, in addition to general purpose SNS, there are others that specialize in specific areas. For example, LinkedIn® provides networking capacities for business relationships, Gays.com provides social networking specifically to the LGBTTQIA community, and Youtube™ provides video sharing capabilities. McClard and Anderson (2008) have noted that Facebook® differentiates itself from other social networking programs in the way it provides constant updates and information from users.

Identity on Facebook® is defined by user postings, updates and various other interactions, rather than demographic data (McClard & Anderson, 2008). It follows then, that interaction with a user on Facebook® may be qualitatively different from in-person interaction, where visible demographic data such as age, race and gender may be more readily apparent.

One of the strengths of SNS such as Facebook® is that they are free to use and do not require ongoing funding to maintain. Lack of ongoing funding has been a difficulty encountered

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[3] A "user" is a user id, as created on Facebook®. It should be noted that one person might have one or more user ids.

by projects that develop internet websites for Indigenous People for the purposes of strengthening Indigenous culture and communities (Freeman, 2010; Hodson, 2004; Wemigwans, 2008). Yet though the "front-end costs" may have decreased, the general increased popularity of internet communication has meant an increase in the volume of communication, making the role of moderating sites much more onerous in terms of time and effort (Nielsen, 2009. p. 268)

Yet, it should be noted that though Facebook® is free to access for users, privacy concerns exist in how the service handles personal information of its users (Lukes, 2010). Indeed, users of all SNS should be aware of the privacy issues accompanying their use (Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006), and to post personal information accordingly. Hargittai (2011) has noted that the ability to understand privacy policies, their implications and the ability to arrange SNS privacy settings to tailor to the needs of users, is largely determined by the users' skills. Indeed, variation in skill level points to a "digital inequality" that exists beyond availability of ICT infrastructure, yet also limits the ability of many to use SNS and ICT in general to enhance their lives and communities (Hargittai, 2011, p. 233).

LaMendola (2010) has indicated Facebook® is a worthwhile subject for social work to study, given its enormous number of users and potential impact upon how people interact with one another. Further, its potential use as an activism tool (Gardels, 2011; Wilson, 2011), reaffirms the importance of social work undertaking research on the use and impacts of Facebook® and other popular social networking platforms. As well, SNS may be pertinent area for social workers to explore, given the potential to use these as tools for cultural sharing, and community formation and maintenance (Wellman & Gulia, 1999; Winter, 2008). Further, there is a need for research that does not make claims to the "universality of processes" in SNS and ICT usage, and instead seeks to explore the social influences that may come to bear on users

representing a broad spectrum of human experience (Hargittai, 2011). From this perspective, research should be culturally relevant and rooted in experience. Social work may be well placed to provide such a socially sensitive approach to SNS and ICT usage research, and may benefit from such a body of research to inform various fields of practice.

Indigenous People and Internet Communication Technology.

Internet communication technology (ICT) is one of many recent information and communication developments that have permitted cultural experience to move beyond the limits of time and space (Humphreys, 2010; Winter, 2008). Indeed, the very development of the global Indigenous movement has come about as a result of advances in information technology (Daes, 2001). Further, the communication networks ICT have created "Imply a reduction of power of the nation-state" (Harmann, 2008, p. 138). Thus, the development of these technologies may have special implications for Indigenous People who by definition, are ancestrally tied to certain lands and territories, and who have historically been dominated and controlled by centralized state power.

Winter (2008) identified four types of media in the evolution of technology. "Primary media" refers to media that does not use any technology, but utilizes the person to transmit information (p. 75). Story telling would be an example of primary media. "Secondary media" refers to media that use technology to produce the transmitted information. For example, written text in a hard copy format, such as a book (p. 75). "Tertiary media" is media that is dependent on technology to not only make, but also receive information (p.75). Radio and television fall into this category. "Quaternary media" is different again, in that it is dependent upon technology to create and receive information, but also changes the relationship of transmitter-receiver by

permitting the receiver to become a transmitter of information as well. ICT is an example of quaternary media (p. 75).

Yet, Patterson`s (2010) discussion on internet from an Indigenous perspective, rooted in the experience of Indigenous educators, would suggest that the evolution and relationship between forms of communication are more complex than the linear framework suggested by Winter (2008). Patterson (2010) has quoted the work of Zimmerman, Zimmerman, and Bruguier (2000), indicating that learning through ICT is compatible with learning styles found within oral traditions of teaching. In particular, education using internet communication tools provide a more inclusive, flexible and interactive approach to learning, with the instructor taking on the role of knowledge "facilitator", as opposed to the "top-down" approach to knowledge dissemination found within older, non-Indigenous approaches to education (p. 150). Further, Ludert (2011) has indicated that oral history and storytelling can be facilitated through ICT to wider audients. This can create political support with a broader audience.

Winter (2008) argues for the need to develop an appreciation of the importance of the older forms of technology in order to grasp the cultural significance they carried and to place ourselves in the best position to use the newer technology forms beneficially. Yet, up until recently, Indigenous People have not been well represented in older forms of non-traditional media such as print, radio and television. Indeed, Indigenous representations in these media forms have been dominated by non-Indigenous interpretations of indigeneity (Wilson, 2008).

From an Indigenous standpoint, appreciation of older forms of media may mean an appreciation and understanding of traditional methods and community roles for knowledge transmission, as well as cultural content. In addition, a critical understanding of those forms of media whereby Indigenous People have not been adequately or appropriately represented, may

be useful. Indeed, without this critical understanding and appreciation of traditional knowledge

transmission, one may wonder what exactly will be transmitted in newer modes of

communication technology. Certainly, it may be very difficult to harness these new technologies

to help communities revitalize Indigenous culture without an understanding of the traditional

forms of communication that have been the cornerstone of our culture for millennia.

Use of ICT for Indigenous discussion and connection started relatively early with World

Wide Web development. As indicated by Zimmerman et al. (2000):

> Bulletin boards and 'listervs' were among the first new technologies available to allow
>
> rapid, relatively open-format, multi-user communication of American Indian issues. As
>
> the Internet grew and the World Wide Web developed, many of the early formats made
>
> adjustments, some becoming Web 'chat-rooms' where several users could discuss issues
>
> in near real time, with multiple discussion threads possible. (p. 72)

Yet, it may be noted that using newer media to share Indigenous cultural content has been a

matter of debate. Indeed, during the early days of internet development, concerns regarding the

misrepresentation of Indigenous People and appropriation of traditional knowledge by

unsanctioned groups or individuals on the internet arose, and intense debate emerged about the

ownership of Indigenous traditional culture and knowledge (Iseke-Barnes, 2003; Martin, 1995).

These concerns continue to be voiced by Indigenous People today (Patterson, 2010).

Conversely, it may also be noted that Indigenous People have been prevented from taking

more active roles within newer forms of media such as ICT by "The limiting stereotype of

traditionalism" (Pratt, 2010, p. 166). Such a primordial view interprets Indigenous culture as

unchanging and frozen in time (Lawrence, 2004). As rigid and unrealistic as this may be, it must

be recognized that the adoption of modern, mainstream lifestyles (such as new communication

technologies) places us at risk of being interpreted as "less Indigenous". This results in dangerous implications for Indigenous collective rights and entitlements within current policy frameworks, as these arguments have been used in a legal context to support the extinguishing of Indigenous rights (Lawrence, 2004).

Despite these dangers, other writers have noted the possible positive benefits of ICT. For example, ICT holds the promise of more "democratic" representation and participation for Indigenous People than previous media forms (Wemigawns, 2008, p. 33). Also, "adopting a proactive stance" toward technology can serve a number of community needs for Indigenous People (Pratt, 2010, p. 167), such as preserving Indigenous cultures, engaging in "two-way talk-back" as a decolonizing activity, and challenging community political monopolies. Such a proactive stance also ensures that Indigenous People are fairly represented, and have voice and presence in these new modes of media (Iseke-Barnes, 2003). As well, ICT may serve as a medium for developing Indigenous resistance, demonstrated first by the Zapatista movement in Mexico in the early 1990s (Patterson, 2010). Further, ICT offers the possibility of uniting Indigenous communities that have become scattered and isolated (Wemigwans, 2008).

Yet, Patterson (2010) also noted the irony of ICT being used as a resistance tool, as the proliferation of internet communication is both process and product of the globalization of that the Zapatista`s were protesting against. Internet communication technology is not simply the result of the inevitable advancement of technology. Rather, these innovations have come about as a result of responding to political will and economic needs (Winter, 2008), namely neo-liberal, globalization forces. Such forces threaten Indigenous People traditional, sacred connection to the land, and sources of subsistence (Young, 2003).

Summary

This chapter has provided a review of the literature regarding the central concepts of this research. The concept of solidarity was discussed, with some attention paid to the concept of Indigenous solidarity. The concept of identity, as it relates to group solidarity, was also reviewed. An exploration of the key issues pertaining to Indigenous identity was also provided. This chapter concluded with a discussion of internet communication, with particular emphasis on its use and impacts upon Indigenous People. A short discussion was provided regarding the social networking program Facebook®, as well as a description of the Facebook® group from which the participants of this study will be drawn.

The third chapter will discuss the Methodology of this study. A description and rationale for the chosen study design is provided, as well as a discussion of the population, study participants and research setting, a description of data collection and data analysis methods to be employed, and a discussion of the role of the researcher. An overview of ethical considerations for this study is also included.

Chapter III

Methodology

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the solidarity experience of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq using social networking services. This chapter provides information regarding methodology considerations and choices for this study.

Research Design

Choices about a methodological framework are governed by a number of factors. In this particular study, methodological issues that needed to be considered included Indigenous cultural considerations, the internet communication context within which this study occurred, and the kinds of research questions that were asked. That is, the chosen methodology needed to be sufficiently sensitive and responsive enough to the needs of the Indigenous People undertaking and participating in the research. Further, the chosen methodological framework needed to provide the focus to be able to explain the solidarity experience of the social networking group participants, from an emic perspective. Finally, the methodology needed to offer methods that were useable within a virtual space. As the context of the study is the social networking group from which the study participants are drawn, this had geographical implications for data collection.

An interpretive phenomenological framework was chosen as the methodology that best meets these needs. First, the use of Internet Communication Technology as a communication medium for data collection is possible within phenomenology because of its flexibility (Giorgi, 2008). Glendinning (2007) has indicated that a major strength of phenomenology is that it represents varied philosophical approaches to understanding that continue to evolve. Significant aspects of this evolution encompass more than what is normally considered, "The

'phenomenological movement' in Continental Europe" (Glendinning, 2008, p. 30). This

diversity of approach, in combination with a constant evolutionary state, points to the ever-

changing characteristic of phenomenology (Glendinning, 2008). As such, phenomenology's

flexible nature permits modification and adaptation to fit a given context. Indeed, Holroyd

(2001) has cited Crotty (1996), Crotty (1998), Giorgi (1994), Giorgi (1997), Pollio, Henley, and

Thompson (1997), Valle (1998), Valle and King (1978), and Van Manen (1990) in indicating

that, "The approach to phenomenological method design should be flexible and adapted to suit

the phenomenon under investigation" (p. 1).

Second, the kind of question that this study posed is essentially phenomenological.

Phenomenology seeks to describe lived experience in order to deepen understanding of our

world (Stones, 2006). Further, close attention is paid to culture (Embree, 2010). Similarly, and

also supported by Hycner (1999), this study aimed to understand how the experience of

participating in a social networking group has affected participants, given their particular

historical and cultural context.

Third, others have used phenomenology in the exploration of identity-related

phenomenon (Goulding, 2005). As solidarity is related to identity (Dawson, 2009; Levi & Dean,

2003; Saunders, 2008), the usefulness of using phenomenology for this study has thus been

already established. Fourth, "phenomenology is compatible with studying Indigenous People,

because it captures oral history in a holistic and culturally acceptable way" (Struthers &

McApline, 2005, p. 1264). This is achieved using participant narratives as the source of

information and truth (Struthers & Peden-McAlpine, 2005). Further, "phenomenology presents

an opportunity and positions one to interpret the inherent, unspoken, embedded meanings of

Indigenous experiences that otherwise might not be acknowledged" (Struthers & Peden-

McAlpine, 2005, p. 1272). This is achieved through phenomenology's philosophical sensitivity to language (Howard, 2008; van Manen, 2011), context, experience (Stones, 2006; van Manen, 2011) and culture (Embree, 2010). Indeed, Askegaard and Linnet (2011) have indicated that phenomenological studies can be particularly responsive to context when close attention is paid to:

> The fundamentally social nature of human existence, analyzing how individuals merge their worldviews and participate in each other's experiences, and how their constructions of identity represent cultural and historical continuities in dealing with the boundary between the particular and the universal. (p. 394)

Yet, limitations of using phenomenology within an Indigenous context have been noted. In a doctoral study of Indigenous traditional healing, Ellerby (2006) has noted the limitations of traditional phenomenological research in its ability to provide interpretation and evaluation in an Indigenous context, due to its susceptibility to misunderstanding and misrepresentation. Further, the very motivation for study is filtered through a specific worldview that affects data collection and language. Indeed, Ellerby (2006) has indicated that phenomenology that aims toward "empathetic description" must come from an emic, or insider, perspective (p. 55). Struthers and Peden-McAlpine (2005) have extended this argument, suggesting that the interpretive capabilities of phenomenology are available to researchers, as long as they possess the necessary background understanding in cultural distinctions, language and meanings. In other words, by working from an emic perspective and having access to the worldview of the Indigenous People under study, the researcher is able to address the concern of possible misrepresentation in phenomenological study (Ellerby, 2006). Indeed, this study addressed these concerns of misrepresentation by coming from an emic perspective.

Still, phenomenology has been criticized for its inability to incorporate decolonization as a central focus of undertaking Indigenous research (Kovach, 2009). This study addresseed this concern by using an Indigenous theoretical framework, as articulated in the second chapter of this study. By doing so, the impact of the negative effects of colonization is recognized. Further, the healing aspects of decolonizing activities such as reclaiming traditional language, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs, is also acknowledged.

Ethical Considerations

This study met ethical requirements, as it went through the process of an ethics review through the Research Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba to ensure that it meets acceptable standards for conducting research with people. Further, a part of this process required researchers to undertake an online course on research ethics. I have completed this course and a copy of my completion certificate was attached to my research application. As well, the process required completion of application materials that included a list of questions pertaining to ethical considerations that must be answered. This process ensures that researchers consider the multitude of ethical considerations involved when undertaking research with people, and highlights any areas of concern in order that they may be addressed sufficiently, prior to the Research Ethics Board review. I responded to these questions and appended the answers to my application.

Research with Indigenous People requires special ethical consideration, given the history of unhelpful research that has been completed on Indigenous People without their explicit consent or participation. In response to Indigenous Peoples' past negative experiences with research, Kovach (2009) has listed four ethical considerations when undertaking Indigenous research. These include, "a) that the research methodology be in line with Indigenous values; b)

that there is some form of community accountability; c) that the research gives back and benefits the community in some manner, and d) that the researcher is an ally and will not do harm" (p. 48). I sought to meet these four ethical requirements in this study.

First, Struthers and Peden-Peden-McAlpine (2005) have indicated that the methodology selected for this study is compatible with Indigenous values, through its focus on narrative and sensitivity to historical context. Further, it is in line with Indigenous values through the use of an Indigenous theoretical framework, from which this study was initially conceived and followed throughout its development.

Second, accountability to the community was ensured through rechecking data provided by research participants in order to ensure accurate understanding. Each participant had the opportunity to clarify the responses he or she provided in two ways. First, the researcher paraphrased and/or summarized participant responses to confirm accurate understanding. Second, participants had the opportunity to review the major themes that were drawn from the information they provided. This ensured that participants were in agreement with what was put forth in the final publication of this study and offered him/ her another opportunity for clarification or correction, or adding more information to the responses that had already been provided.

It is important to note that this research is not community-based, but is intended to focus upon the experience of individual Lnu originating from Ktaqmkuk who choose to use social networking services to connect with other Lnu'k. Further, the social networking group itself is not affiliated with any particular First Nation community.

Third, this study can be useful to its participants and other Indigenous People who may be interested in social networking services, by outlining the strengths and risks of undertaking or

participating in such a project. Further, questions asked may help to highlight areas of commonality among Lnu'k that can be used to build unity and solidarity action. As well, the questions provide the participants the opportunity to reflect on their own individual Lnu identity. This can be useful in helping participants come to terms with some of the damaging effects colonization and assimilatory political policies has had on Lnu'k identity in Ktaqmkuk. Indeed, Struthers and Alpine (2005) have indicated that participation in research that provides participants opportunities for discussion can help improve the health of Indigenous People. Further, participants were provided the opportunity to provide suggestions as to how the experience in social networking groups can be improved. Such information may help improve their social networking experience.

This study aimed to guard the confidentiality of study participants carefully. Email was chosen as the communication method for obtaining interview data because of geographic constraints. Participation in the Facebook® group is not limited to any particular locality. As such, participants' actual locations could potentially be anywhere. Given the potential vastness of participant locations, email provided the most accessible and cost-effective way to communicate and collect data, without having to limit study participation to a specific location. Further, this study sought to explore relationship building with the aid of newer technology that can bridge these distances, thus limiting study participation to certain locations within our traditional territory would defeat the study's purpose.

My student email account was used for distributing interview questions and collecting data. My email has 3 levels of password protection: A general password provided by the University of Manitoba, a password for access on to my email on my computer and a passphrase required for sending signed, encrypted messages from my account. My computer is also

password-protected. Participants were provided the systematic instructions for setting up

encrypted email on their computer, should they not be familiar with this process. This was

included in the consent form. I distributed my public key to study participants, in order that their

email may be sent to me in encrypted format, however, all four participants declined to use

encrypted email. I was the only person able to access and read participants' email on my

computer.

Information from the emails was copied into the data analysis program Weft QDA. A

copy of the emails was saved on a flash drive in a password protected file and kept in a locked

filing cabinet in a secure area in my home. After each question was completed, the original

emails were completely erased from my hard drive using a utility program that 'shreds'

electronic data by writing over it 7 times, making it virtually impossible for anyone without

access to extremely high level technical resources and expertise to retrieve this information.

Saving a copy of the email was a precautionary measure, should there be a technical failure

occur and the emails and/ or data in Weft QDA be inaccessible and need to be reentered at a later

date. Data entered into Weft QDA was removed of participants' personal identifiers such as

name and email address.

As well, written results and discussion that emerged from data analysis included excerpts

from participant responses. This was done in order to better capture the essence of the described

experience, and better illustrate a theme or provide concrete examples. As part of the consent

form process, participants were asked to indicate whether they wish to have identifying

information removed or included in the presentation of study findings. As such, identifying

information was excluded from these excerpts, as no participant indicated the desire to be

identified. In addition, in every instance participants were asked specifically if the particular excerpt from their response could be included.

Lastly, participants were given a consent form that described what the study was about and who they may contact if they had further questions. The consent form also described the kind of time commitment required for participation, and how information provided by participants was to be used. A copy of this consent form, based on the template provided by the University of Manitoba Research and Ethics Board, is attached in Appendix A. This consent form was emailed to participants. Participants were asked to print, sign, and then fax back to the researcher at the researcher's expense, or offered the option of sending it back with an email containing a digital signature. This was a secure means of ensuring the identity of a signor, and constituted the equivalent of an ink signature. These steps were taken in order to ensure that it was clear that participants made an informed decision regarding consent.

Population, Participants, and Setting

The population of this study is the membership of a Facebook® group that has been developed for the purpose of bringing together Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. An invitation was posted to the 'wall' of these social networking groups, seeking voluntary participants for the study. A copy of this invitation is located in Appendix B. A minimum of 3 participants was required, in order to provide the necessary information to identify general themes (Finlay, 2009). Four participants volunteered to be part of this study, fitting the required criteria of at least 3 participants. Also, included in the data were the researcher's reflections on experience as a participant of the social networking group. All participants were eighteen years or older. Although not all members of the social networking group are Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, being Lnu'k and originating from Ktaqmkuk was a criterion for selection as a research participant.

This ensured that the results of the research were applicable to the research questions of this study.

Another criterion for selection was that all participants must have been active participants in the Facebook® group. Specifically, participants must have been regular readers and/or posters of the group. 'Active participation' was defined as reading, posting or both, at least once every two weeks. This definition is based upon information provided by Crompton (2004) and Facebook®. Crompton (2004) has indicated that over 50% of rural and northern, and over 70% of urban people, who self-identify as Indigenous use the internet more than once a week. Further, Facebook® (n.d.) has indicated that over half of their users log into their account on a daily basis. Given these numbers, accessing the social networking group under study once every two weeks is a conservative estimation of 'active participation'.

Requesting that study participants be active participants of the social networking group was intended to ensure that all participants had the opportunity to be exposed to the ideas and functioning of the group. In turn, this increased confidence that participants had the opportunity to be exposed to the phenomenon being studied. Indeed, ensuring that participants have experienced the phenomenon being studied is one of the challenges of phenomenology (Creswell, 2013). In addition, the extent to which each participant can contribute to understanding is one of the defining characteristics of qualitative research in the selection of participants, as opposed to the use of random sampling methods usually chosen in quantitative methods (Kovach, 2009). As a participant of the group myself, I was aware of those individuals who had made frequent posts, however there was no way to truly ensure that participants had participated in the group, particularly if they had only read posts and refrained from making posts. Indeed, I am relied upon the honesty of those who volunteer to participate in the study,

that they meet the criteria of 'active participants' as outlined in the recruiting post and consent form provided. Though this could be viewed as a weakness in this study, I am confident that only those who have demonstrated a commitment to participation in the group were interested in participating in this study. Participants need not to have been involved in the group for a minimum period of time.

It was suggested to participants that they should have access to a home computer, in order to ensure the confidentiality of information shared. Though participation was still open to those individuals who only had access to public computers, participants were informed of the potential risks and limitations of public computer use in the consent form. Further, the consent form detailed what participation entailed and how results of this study were to be disseminated.

The Role of Researcher

The diversity of what finds its philosophical roots in phenomenology has resulted in a number of different methodological perspectives. For example, there exists a range of perspectives on about the role of the researcher. In descriptive phenomenology, which finds it philosophical roots with Husserl, the researcher is expected to 'bracket', or set aside personal experiences (Bradbury-Jones, Irvine & Sambrook, 2010; Creswell, 2013; Finlay, 2009). Conversely, interpretive phenomenology, or hermeneutics, which among others finds it philosophical roots with Heidegger and Gadamer, opposes the use of bracketing, indicating instead that it is not possible to set aside preconception because all experience (including the activity of research itself) is embedded within a cultural, linguistic and historical context (Bradbury-Jones, Irvine & Sambrook, 2010; Finlay, 2009). Still other researchers place themselves somewhere in between the descriptive and interpretative positions (Finlay, 2009). There is a general consensus in phenomenology that researcher subjectivity exists, and that the

researcher should approach study with a willingness to change one's mind based on new information (Finlay, 2009). Disagreement arises, however, as to how researcher subjectivity is dealt with. For example, in descriptive phenomenology, bracketing is seen not as a way of attaining objectivity, but "suspending" subjectivity and maintaining an open mind (Finlay, 2009). In contrast, interpretive phenomenology rejects the practice of bracketing and advocates for the researcher to engage in self-reflection in order to provide contrast between the researcher and research participants (Finlay, 2009). For this study I embraced an interpretative phenomenological stance, as I question whether anyone can truly and completely set aside previous experience and perspectives. A great deal of researcher reflexivity was incorporated in the study in order to work effectively with the multi-layered relationship I possess with the research subject and participants. As such, researcher subjectivity and my relationship with the research are acknowledged from the outset. Detailed information regarding these relationships was provided in Chapter One, in the Assumptions section on page 7.

A related issue in phenomenological research is whether the researcher comes from an emic or etic perspective. Ellerby (2006) has indicated that in order to undertake "empathetic descriptive" phenomenology, an emic perspective is required (Ellerby, 2006, p.55). Further, familiarity with the language, culture and worldview of participants is required in order to undertake interpretative phenomenology (Struthers & Peden-McAlpine, 2005). This study met this criterion, as it provided an emic researcher perspective. As indicated in the paragraph above, a description of how I am situated with an insider perspective on the research subject was provided on page 7.

Data Collection

The interviews were conducted through email. The primary interview question used in this study is attached in Appendix C. Additional questions used as probes in order to obtain further elaboration, are also included. A discussion explaining the core interview question and the additional questions, accompanied with the reasoning for their inclusion, is provided next.

The primary interview question stated 'Identity is about how you see yourself, how others see you and how you feel others may see you. Describe how you think your Lnu identity has been impacted by participation in the group'. The purpose of this question was to explore how study participant identity was affected by involvement in the group. As discussed in previous sections in the Literature Review, identity can be an important aspect of solidarity (Blum, 2007; Dawson, 2009; Levi & Dean, 2003; Saunders, 2008).

Sadana (2009) has indicated that thematic analysis is a "strategic choice as part of the research design that includes the primary questions, goals, conceptual framework and literature review" (p. 140). Saldana cited Kvale (1996), Rubin and Rubin (1995), and van Manen (1990), in his suggestion that "carefully planned questioning techniques" can help the interviewer support study participants to discover their meanings of experience (p. 140). As such, I include here a number of secondary questions that were sometimes used to stimulate discussion in order to assist participants with describing their solidarity experience. There are a total of 9 secondary questions, listed below, accompanied with an explanation for their inclusion. These questions did not need to be asked in some instances, as the participant may have included information relating to some of the questions in prior responses. Thus, they were eliminated to avoid redundancy.

Question 1 was "How did you find out about the group", and question 2 was "Why did you join the group?" The first and second questions were sometimes asked to stimulate

discussion, in order to get a sense of how the study participants came to become involved in the group. This question also provided participants an opportunity to reflect upon their relationships with other Lnu'k, including those participating in the group.

Questions 3 and 4 were sometimes asked to stimulate discussion, as a way of getting participants to begin reflecting on their participation. This question was also a way of obtaining an understanding of the range of post and discussion activities in which the respondent engages. Specifically, question 3 was "How many Facebook® groups are you actively involved in?" Question 4 was "Describe the kinds of posts/discussion activities that you have read and/or engaged in within this group".

The potentially activist nature of solidarity (Alfred, 2005), was explored in questions 5 and 6. Specifically, question 5 explored the idea of common goals and concerns Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq that start with, but go beyond, racial identity. This approach drew upon Dawson's (2009) notion of linked fate, and Blum's (2007) concept of shared experience and political commitment. This question also provided an opportunity for participants to discuss points of contention between group members, as discussion of differences can also lend itself to development of solidarity (Scheff, 2008; Vasta, 2010). Question 5 was "Describe how this group has provided an opportunity to learn or discuss issues important to you as Lnu. What are these issues and how are they important to you"? Question 6 was designed to determine whether involvement in the social networking group motivated other in-person solidarity activities. Question 6 was "Describe any 'off-line' (in-person) activities that you have been involved in, or intend to become involved in, as a result of participation in this group"?

Question 7 pertained to relationships and sought to determine whether participation in this social networking group provided participants a sense of unity and strengthened

relationships with other Lnu'k. This question addressed the nature of solidarity as a unifying, strengthening force. It also touched upon the multiple layers of connection that can exist among Lnu'k. This drew upon the idea of thick and thin ties, as discussed by Dawson (2009). Specifically, question 7 was, "Describe how you feel participation in this group has impacted your relationships with other Lnu'k, in your family, extended family, community and beyond".

Questions 8 and 9 were sometimes asked to stimulate discussion by providing an opportunity to explore what study participants' viewed as the most rewarding aspects of participating in the social networking group, and any experiences they had that they perceived as being negative. An opportunity was also provided to ask about any changes they may think would be useful to address identified issues. Question 8 stated, "Describe the most valuable aspects of participating in these groups". Question 9 stated, "Describe anything you would change about your experience in the group (can be more than one thing)".

It may also be noted that other questions not included above were sometimes asked in order to obtain further elaboration regarding the participant responses. This, in part, was necessary to ensure clarity and understanding between researcher and participant. This also occurred due to phenomenology's dependence on participant data to obtain description, as opposed to pre-defined researcher categories (Saldana, 2009).

Treatment of the data. The software program Weft QDA was used to manage and analyze the data. Weft QDA is a program for analyzing qualitative data, such as interviews. It is a free, open-source software program available online. This particular software was selected for its fit with this study's methodology and data collection instruments.

Undertaking a phenomenological study dictated following a certain approach to data analysis that corresponded with the underlying philosophy of this approach to qualitative

research. All phenomenological studies generally entail three steps: "description, reduction, and naming essential themes" (Willis, 2001, p. 7). Finlay (2009) has provided a more detailed description:

> Phenomenological research characteristically starts with concrete descriptions of lived situations, often first-person accounts, set down in everyday language and avoiding abstract intellectual generalizations. The researcher proceeds by reflectively analyzing these descriptions, perhaps ideographically first, then by offering a synthesized account, for example, identifying general themes about the essence of the phenomenon. Importantly, the phenomenological researcher aims to go beyond surface expressions or explicit meanings to read between the lines so as to access implicit dimensions and intuitions. (p. 10)

Finlay (2009) has also indicated that there is general agreement in phenomenology, whether descriptive or interpretive, that researcher subjectivity exists and that the researcher must approach research with a mind that is open to change, based upon new information. Further, Finlay (2009) has cited Gadamer (1975) in indicating that an interpretive phenomenological approach to researcher subjectivity entails, "Being open to the other while recognizing biases" and that "The researcher should shift back and forth, focusing on personal assumptions and then returning to look at participants' experiences in a fresh way" (p. 12-13). As such, I recognized from the outset that participants' views and experiences likely did not mirror my own views and experience of participating in the social networking group, and that my views and experience were no more valid than that of any other participant.

It may be noted that Giorgi (2008) has recommended picking only one methodology rather than attempting to synthesize a number of approaches and that to do so requires justification.

Yet, Finlay (2009) has noted that Giorgi's arguments focus upon those who claim to use Husserl-inspired phenomenology and yet incorporate methods that are not compatible to it, or those who attempt to synthesize work from a number of methodologists whose work is philosophically oppositional.

I did not attempt to do this here. Rather, the data analysis steps employed in this study relied heavily on Bradbury-Jones, Irvine and Sambrook (2010), Finlay (2009), and Van Manen's (2011) discussion of interpretive phenomenological analysis activities. Also, the general template for phenomenological data analysis put forth by Creswell (2013) is used, as well as his discussion and that of Bradbury-Jones, Irvine and Sambrook (2010), regarding the utility of member checking. Below are the data analysis steps that were used for this study:

1. As researcher-participant, I answered the questions posed to other study participants. I then wrote a description of my own experience of participating in the social networking group. I then undertook a macro thematic analysis of the information from study participants and began developing the themes in Weft QDA.

2. Undertook a micro thematic analysis by doing a detailed review of the information provided by participants. I then developed a list of statements from participants that represent important themes, eliminating repetition.

3. Grouped statements into categories of similar meaning in order to develop a thematic representation of the experience.

4. Collaborated with participants by sharing my interpretation of the themes. I incorporated any additional information that was provided by participants.

5. Described what happened during participation in the social networking group.

6. Undertook "exegetical reflection" (Van Manen, 2011, Exegetical Reflection and Comparative Reflection sections). This entailed reviewing the work completed in the Literature Review portion of this paper, reflecting upon this information in relation to my experience.

7. Wrote an overall description of the experience

8. Repeated steps 8 through 10 with each participant in order to develop an integrated overall description of the experience. Moved back and forth between participant descriptions and my own, in order to develop insight about the similarities and contrasts between them and remain aware of my own subjective biases about the experience.

Member checking was done to ensure accurate understanding of participant information. This was accomplished in two ways. First, where there are questions or ambiguity as to what participants are referring to in their response, additional elaboration was requested and researcher interpretation checked by obtaining participant feedback. Second, participant feedback regarding the general themes, which were derived from analysis were obtained in step 6 above. Member checking is encouraged in phenomenology, as it is a way of ensuring credibility of research findings (Bradbury-Jones, Irvine & Sambrook, 2010). Further, obtaining feedback from participants regarding the general themes derived from analysis can also produce additional information that can be incorporated into research findings (Bradbury-Jones, Irvine & Sambrook, 2010). Thus, this study was approached from a collaborative position. Therefore, any correction provided by participants was regarded as part of the interpretation process. This was also a way of addressing the potential issue of disagreement between researcher and participants (Bradbury-Jones, Irvine & Sambrook, 2010). Finally, results of data analysis and a discussion of these results with participants, was undertaken after data analysis was complete. As well, results were

discussed in relation to the Indigenous Theoretical Framework employed in this study, as described in Chapter One.

Limitations/Delimitations

Quinn Patton (2002) has outlined three sampling limitations of qualitative research. I provide these limitations, as they would apply within the context of this research. First, it is extremely difficult to examine all aspects of an experience. Therefore, the questions posed to study participants cannot, and should not, cover all aspects of participants' experience (Bradburn, Sudman, & Wansink, 2004). As such, the study may exclude certain aspects of participants' experiences and is thereby limited in its scope in describing the phenomenon of solidarity, as experienced by study participants.

Second, data was obtained from a select group of participants of the Facebook® group. As such, findings are limited in their applicability to the larger population of the Facebook® group from which the study sample has been drawn. Further, one should be cautious about generalizing the findings of this research to the larger population of Lnu'k, and more cautious still in applying these findings to populations outside Ktaqmkuk, as Indigenous groups can greatly differ from one another in terms of culture, language, history and present circumstance.

Third, the data obtained provided a snapshot of participants' thoughts on these matters at the time of responding. The data cannot provide for changes in opinion that may occur after the questionnaire has been completed. Further discussion about the sampling methods used in this study is discussed earlier in this chapter, in the Population, Participants, and Setting section.

Limitations of this particular study included that the study must be completed within a limited time frame. Thus, changes that occur after completion of the study were not reflected in the results shown here. Another limitation is that data was collected through email. As such,

questions and responses were limited to what could be read and typed. Yet another limitation was that individuals not directly involved in the development of this study have developed the Facebook® group. As such, the researcher has limited control of the group under study.

The limitations of a study are somewhat offset by its delimitations (Quinn-Patton, 2002). As the central question of this research asked "What is the solidarity experience of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq participating in a social network group"?, those persons who are Lnu'k and who have been actively involved in a social networking group aimed at being a meeting and discussion place for Lnu'k, are in the best position to provide information regarding the phenomenon under study. Resultantly, the study included only respondents who are Lnu'k, who originate from Ktaqmkuk, and who have been active participants of the Facebook® group. This provided the best opportunity to obtain data that met the purpose of this study.

Summary

This chapter concluded with a discussion of the Methodology of the study. A description and rationale for the selected study design was provided, as well as an overview of the study's population, participants and research setting. The role of the researcher and possible ethical considerations were reviewed. As well, the limitations and delimitations of this study were presented. Finally, a discussion of the methods of data collection and analysis were provided.

Chapter IV

Analysis of Data

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the solidarity experience of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq using social networking services. This chapter presents the findings of the study. The researcher obtained data for this study through email interviews with four participants, three of whom were residing in Ktaqmkuk during the period of data collection. Also included for analysis were some of my own responses, as researcher and participant of the group under study.

Participant discussion presented in this chapter falls under two broad thematic headings: Group Composition and Identity. This information is organized under sub-headings that represent themes and micro-themes identified in the data. The section Group Composition presents information shared by participants regarding group membership, informational content of the group, and information sharing within the group. The Identity section presents information pertaining to identity and concepts related to identity, as discussed in the Literature Review in Chapter Two. This information is also organized according to themes and micro-themes evident in the data. Major themes presented in this section include data about collective identity, identity development, race, and Elders.

Group Composition

This section provides information about themes relating to the make-up of the social networking group under study. General themes presented by participants relating to group composition included information about group membership, the content of posts written by group members, and group processes.

Group Membership

Participants shared in interviews, their perceptions of the membership of the social networking group. For example, Participant A and B indicated that the membership of the social networking group represented only a small portion of the total Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq population. Further, Participant A indicated that active participation was much less than the actual number of group members:

There's only 3,000 or so people on the Lnu'k Facebook® pages, and many of those do not participate. I would hazard a guess that at best there are 200 people paying attention to what's going on. That of course does not represent anything near the total Lnu'k population.

The small proportion of membership may have occurred because the group is no longer public, and members must request to join. As indicated by Participant B, "I believe that the group is very exclusive and you can only join if an administrator allows it. It is made of only Lnu'k, I am guessing". Thus, group membership is limited to a certain portion of the Lnu population and active participants represent only a small fraction of the total group membership.

Regional differences. Regional differences in Ktaqmkuk membership were noted, however. Participant C illustrated this in the following excerpts from interviews,

You can see by Facebook® alone that every Newfoundland Mi'kmaq page has been created by a west coast member, and 90% or better involved with that page are western people. This particular Facebook® group is perfect for those in the Corner Brook to St. George's areas, as members from those areas tend to make up the vast majority of that group.

Participant C further indicated that this difference in regional participation in social

networking was indicative of more cultural resurgence activities in the Western region of

Ktaqmkuk. Further, it was indicated that lack of participation by some regions, and uneven

cultural resurgence across regions, may contribute to a lack of unity and the continued erosion of

the Lnu culture in Ktaqmkuk. Thus, participation in social networking that promoted Lnu

culture was viewed as a means of cultural development and community unity.

Territorial group membership. Although predominantly Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, the

group does represent membership from across Lnu maritime territory. Participants B and D

indicated the range of communities represented in the group by the following participant

statements:

> There is a lot of input from Conne-based Lnu *(Miawpukek First Nation)*. There is also a
>
> fair amount from Cape Breton and other parts of the mainland, including other nations.

> There are members of the Reserve *(Miawpukek First Nation)* who are members in our
>
> Facebook® group and they have been very supportive, as well as other Lnu'k from Nova
>
> Scotia.

As indicated by the above interview excerpts, there is a fair degree of cultural exchange through

members of other communities participating in the group. Further, members from communities

within Ktaqmkuk view this participation as a support. More discussion of the supportive aspects

of the social networking group, is provided in the section titled, 'Support' on page 93.

Content of Posts

The theme 'Content of Posts' refers to participant data provided about the kinds of

information posted in the social networking group. Information is organized within this theme

according to a number of identified sub-themes. These included cultural focus of the group, status, learning about Lnu history and band politics.

Cultural focus of the group. Participants B and C indicated that the focus of the group seemed to be cultural issues, as from time to time, members re-enforced that the intent of the group was for sharing cultural information. As indicated in my own reflective writing, "Posts that are not specifically culturally-related, or are deemed to be otherwise inappropriate by the group administrator, are deleted".

Yet, it would seem that this focus on cultural discussion was not consistently maintained, as from to time the discussion would change from cultural to political subjects. For example, Participant C reported losing interest in the group during the recent Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation elections, as "The political message rather than the traditional message, was the constant topic". Participant B and C reported that the focus of the group did not seem planned or coordinated.

Participant C described the change in focus as occurring as a result of questions that are posted, which are then responded to by other members, resulting in a 'snowball' of discussion in an area that may not be directly pertinent to the cultural focus. Responses to questions were not seen as counter to the intent of the group, however, as this was seen as falling within the realm of information sharing. Information sharing itself was identified by Participant D as a more general purpose of social networking.

Another aspect of post content was the directing of group members to external websites for information. Participant A described this in the following interview segment,

> We are often directed to another web site or other Facebook® group that presents a
>
> traditional teaching or a story relating to our people, or those of our allies.

Another administrator posts M ikmaq words on youtube and he helped me on my

journey. I can now tell my drumming group, 'hello', my name, my clan and where I am

from in Mi kmaq.

Cross-cultural teachings. The issue of cross-cultural teaching was also evident in

participant interview data. Specifically, the three participants who resided away from Ktaqmkuk

during the period of data collection reported having interaction with other Indigenous cultures as

a way of developing and/or reconnecting with their own Lnu Indigenous identity. Indeed, my

own experience mirrored the experience of these participants. The following participant

statements, reflect the experience of connecting with other Indigenous cultures as a way of

(re)connecting to one's Lnu identity:

> I live and breathe for the Native community in Ontario, and frequent the many reserves
>
> here and in the United States, to keep connected to my roots.

> I believe this connection with other Aboriginal people here has definitely helped me
>
> define my Lnu identity. I am becoming more familiar with my culture through the
>
> Indigenous teachings of other cultural groups.

This experience of other Indigenous cultures seemed to have some influence on how

participants felt about their Lnu identity. It also appeared to have some influence on how they

viewed the cultural information that the social networking group shared. For example,

Participants B and C reported needing to be mindful of the differences between Indigenous

cultures, and the need to be respectful of these differences. This is evident in the following

participant quotes:

Every now and then, something may pop up that I would question but I have to be very careful, as my teachers are Objiway, even though I'm Lnu. Hence, it may be a misunderstanding, or a different take on the same subject.

We bow to the customs of the people whose territory we are in, but do not always follow them. It just means we respect their customs. An example is when I had to follow a custom was in drumming. The Ojibway teaching of the drum says that you should not beat the centre of your drum because it is the same as beating your grandmother in the face. Lnu'k do not have this custom but I don't beat the centre of my drum in respect for the Ojibway people who attend drumming.

The other peoples shared many similarities and experiences, as did we. When sharing my experiences with the Facebook® group of what I learned outside it, he or she let me know when they are not pertinent to me as an Lnu person. People understand that we are all still learning, regaining our perspective on our culture.

Our group do discuss the differences between the Anishinabe Cree, Haudenosaunee and Lnu'k. We discussed the fact that the Medicine Wheel is not Lnu, but Ojibway. Many of the teachings are similar, but many are different.

I respect other aboriginal peoples' customs both in and out of the group, and it has helped me. I didn't always, and put my foot in my mouth and accidently insulted others when I first started. I have learned a great deal since and watch my words.

These differences also pointed to the limitations of involvement in cultural activities of other Indigenous groups. As indicated by Participant B, "I joined an aboriginal network and they were helpful, but they did not have the answers I needed on being Lnu". As such, involvement in cultural activities of other Indigenous groups was not a replacement for Lnu cultural participation, but an accessible alternative because one was living away from home.

Similarly, participants viewed the social networking group as having spiritual limitations. Participants B, C and D illustrated the acknowledgement of these limitations of social networking the following interview excerpts:

In person, you are able to do talking circles and engage in other activities you cannot do online. Facebook® groups are a more informal and less personal way of connection with people; however, some connection I feel is better than none at all.

I love to hear what others have to say in the group, but you do not get that deep personal feel or understanding. For example, when we attend a teaching circle we first smudge, then pray and invite the spirits of our grandfathers and grandmothers to come and join us… the air becomes sacred. You just do not get that though the phone or computer.

I am ok with sharing traditional cultural and spiritual teachings using the internet as a method of communication. It does make a difference though, but since I live so far away from most of the group and the family, it is the next best thing. I would prefer to learn more face to face. Of course, the content changes when using the internet instead of face-to-face, as most aboriginal Elders will not give teachings unless you are present. They will not send ceremonial songs by emails or on YouTube. You are not allowed to

photograph, record, or publicize any ceremonies. When we had our naming ceremony,

the Elder told everyone to not take photos or record the ceremony. It is very sacred.

Yet, the combination of participating in both appeared to offer a method to overcome

living away from one's community and having limited access to cultural activities occurring

"back home". As stated by Participant B, "I think the Facebook® group and the hands-on

activities were both important, but in different ways. The Facebook® group was more Lnu,

while the hands on was more aboriginal, but not necessarily Lnu". It would appear from the

above discussion that while participating in cultural activities of other Indigenous groups

requires one to mindful of differences, combining participation in in-person cultural activities of

other Indigenous groups with online Lnu social networking, can be complimentary in

strengthening participant Lnu identity.

Status. One wholly inappropriate subject of discussion deemed not applicable to the

focus of the group, was the topic of 'Indian status'. Indeed, at one point the group administrator

created another group specifically for the purpose of discussing 'status', so that group members

who wished to discuss 'Indian status' could leave the main group and join the new one. The

view that discussion of 'status' was incongruent with a cultural focus was shared by Participant

C, who indicated:

> The potential of the group has been diluted when political issues, although important,
>
> become discussed. Or you have yahoos on the page asking a thousand and one questions
>
> about what they can do with a status card. I can think of one particular thing they can do
>
> that involves applying a lubricant to the card.

Indeed, my own experience as participant-researcher indicated that the initial reading of the

legislation that brought Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation into existence was cause for discussion and

celebration within the group, as were initial announcements of those who had received their 'card'.

Yet, there is a difference between the kind of discussion I observed during the fall of 2009, and the kind of 'status' post that Participant C alluded to in the interview excerpt above. The difference is that discussion of inclusion under the Indian Act immediately after it occurred was a celebration of the hard work and perseverance of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. It marked the culmination of the work of Elders, who had begun that struggle toward recognition in the 1970s. Thus, these initial discussions of 'status' were a celebration of Lnu cultural survival. It was when some group members began asking questions about entitlements, such as tax exemptions, that discussion of 'status' was deemed no longer appropriate for the group.

Learning about Lnu history. It would appear that one of the major subjects posted about in the group was Lnu history. Study participants described learning and sharing information in the group about family history, and Lnu'k historical events and circumstances. The interview excerpts below from Participants B and D, demonstrate participant experience of this:

> I think being in the group has opened my eyes to what I can teach my grandchildren about their Lnu'k ancestors and what they endured.

> I have used the group to look for my grandmother's family history, they changed their name and as yet have been difficult to trace. I guess it was due to necessity during the scalping proclamations in Nova Scotia. Perhaps I have lost family in Nova Scotia that I can re-connect with. What possibilities!!

I learned about our history, both good and bad, through posts.

We share information and family history with others.

The Facebook® group definitely gave me a place to discuss and explore family connections with other group members who were related to me. Through the group, I discovered that my clan was "deer" and that my grandmother was full Mi kmaq. I learned quite a bit about great-grandparents and about cousins that I hadn't seen since I was a girl.

This experience of learning and sharing information about family and Lnu history was mirrored in my own reflective writing on participation in the group,

I have learned a lot about my history and ancestry that I didn't know before. For example, I had no clue that a certain part of Corner Brook where my extended family lived when I was little, was regarded as a Lnu community within Corner Brook.

The above discussion suggests that the social networking group is an important information source for participants learning about their cultural and familial history.

Band politics. Another major subject of discussion in posts was band politics. As described in the previous section on group focus on page 77, discussions of band politics often displaced the cultural focus of the group. Though all participants considered discussion of band politics an important issue, Participant C did indicate that this discussion ran counter to the traditional cultural message, which was supposed to be the intended focus of the group. This participant expressed this disconnect in the following way,

Senior members of the group are very much anti-Chief, or have a great dislike for the

current elected Chief. What happens is that I begin to see disconnect from the traditional

teachings, by what is said about band administration.

Indeed, all participants did indicate that the group served as an important information source

about issues influencing the developing Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation. Participant discussion

regarding the kinds of issues affecting group participation follows.

Staying apprised of important issues. All participants indicated they used the group as a

source of information regarding developments affecting the band. Examples of this included

election issues, the recent federal government announcement to examine membership guidelines,

cultural celebration activities and the omission of a land base from the current federal agreement.

Participants A, B C and D demonstrated this in the following excerpts,

I have gotten information about the pow-wows in Newfoundland, Aboriginal day

celebrations, the election, and general news regarding the Qalipu band.

The group provides a platform of information on events or concerns, for example the

recent announcement of re-assessing membership.

We discussed the election quite a lot, which was an important issue.

The group gave everyone a forum to discuss the election and the results. It was a good

place to vent when the results of the election were not exactly what we would have liked

to see.

The general feeling in the group is that the current administration, the same persons who

signed off on the agreement also signed away our ability to establish a land claim. I

guess we are going to watch how the band council proceeds in these matters.

In addition, the group discussed political concerns that encompass the band, but extend beyond

to the national level. As stated by Participant D, "This group provides many different teachings,

and posts issues that are relevant in the aboriginal community, not only our particular band, but

within First Nations as a whole". From a researcher-participant perspective, examples of two

macro level political discussions that stand out include the funding issues and subsequent federal

intervention into the housing crisis in Atiwapiskat, and the national mobilization of Indigenous

People for the Idle No More campaign.

Two micro-themes also emerged from participant discussion about information shared

regarding band matters, (a) The need for information from the band, and (b) leadership issues.

These are worthy of discussion and are presented below.

Need for information from the band. Three participants indicated that one reason why

they went to the social networking group to obtain information about band matters was that it

was more difficult for them to get the information directly from official band administration

sources. As indicated by the interview excerpts from Participant A and C below:

It's so hard to get information from the council members. I want to be kept informed on

what actions council or the feds do that concerns me. The group allows for that

information to be presented and discussed.

I probably would not have known about the election, if I had not been part of the group

on Facebook®.

The interview excerpts above point to a lack of communication between Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation administration and band members. As such, it would appear that the social networking group provided a function to fill the void created by this lack of communication. Participant A clearly stated, "The only thing that is creating all the discussion in the Facebook® group is the lack of communication from the band".

Worth mention, however, is that this group was not an official communication source of the band administration. As a result, sometimes information presented was later determined to be unreliable. For example, Participant C described the following situation:

> There was one incident whereby someone posted that Ottawa was taking away status cards from members who had already been approved for registration. It turn out later that the person got rejected by the federal government before the thirty day federal appeal stage was over. The result of this was that a lot of people were angry, including me.

Thus, credibility of the information shared was an issue within the group. Participant C described the process of determining whether information was reliable:

> If a person produces non-credible information or advice, it is my responsibility to decide what weight to place on that person's creditably in the future. But I will still listen to what they have to say. If you asked me what I thought of someone who posts non-credible information, I may advise you there is a better person to ask or something to that effect.

As well, Participant B, C and D indicated that they thought information "endorsed" by persons identified as Elders, credible.

It would also appear that ease of access to information was another reason participants used the group as an information source for band matters, rather than using official routes of

communication. Participant B demonstrated this by the following statement, "The group is an important political communication link. Most people don't always check the Qalipu web site, but they do check their Facebook® page. I am no exception".

Another issue regarding a need for information from the band was the concern Participant A voiced regarding Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation's lack of a general communication strategy. Participant A's discussion demonstrated this issue by the following statement,

FNI (Federation of Newfoundland Indians) had 'communications' positions from time to time – but hired unqualified people to do the job. The end result is that the employee and employer were both frustrated – on the upside; the members did get newsletters for a time. It was commonly known at the time, that the then President of FNI and current Chief of Qalipu treated the 'communications' employee quite badly. The employee resigned and moved to the mainland. I am certain that a qualified communications professional with an online and offline strategy would make all the difference in the world to all members of the band. It does not appear that the current administration has any understanding of the critical role of communications. A strategic approach to using any communication tool, including a Facebook® page, could be used. But it should be executed within a larger vision. There is presently no commitment to communication within the current administration.

Leadership issues. The issue of band leadership was another micro-theme present in participant interviews. Attention to this issue may have been emphasized in participant interviews because the elections had recently occurred around the time of data collection. The following interview excerpts described Participant A's views on band leadership and its impact on the community:

I am woefully disappointed in the behavior of the candidates. This has caused me to bemoan the fact that we have no leader other than the current Chief – in my opinion, this does not speak well for our future.

I believe in this 'system' leaders are thwarted before they have begun. It is my understanding that if a person wants to run for office, or start a petition, or do pretty much anything, he or she has to wait to hear from an Elder on the right way to proceed, or the Elder must lead the movement.

Potential leaders are prevented from taking leadership positions as a result of: a) not knowing exactly how to proceed in a culturally respectful way, b) trying to look to established, cultural leaders (particularly Elders) in order to obtain community and cultural approval to lead, but are either unable to find such established cultural leadership, or the leadership they do find is questionable and misleading.

We do not have a true leader in the wings (that was proven by this election) and we do not have any of our own people to fight for us, especially at this critical time.
I believe leadership development should be a priority. This is where we should 'throw the money'. We should have a leadership coordinator, with workshops, guest speakers, field trips.
This lack of strong, credible leadership encompassed the social networking group, as indicated by Participant B, "Right now, the group is mainly an area to discuss issues, but no real direction is provided to deal with the negative issues involving the band". Further, Participant A and C

also indicated that the group was used as an election platform to speak to the membership. This is illustrated in Participant A's statement below:

> There were candidates in the group complaining about the incumbent administration of not talking to members, or not going into the members communities. Then they did the same things themselves. There was one exception, who made an effort to visit every community and included/invited other candidates to participate. Other disappointing behaviours I observed in the group included candidates criticizing the incumbent administration. I would expect a higher path to be taken by our potential leaders.

Participant A and C indicated that one of the issues that detracted from the usefulness of the social networking group, was the apparent animosity voiced by certain senior members of the group toward the current administration. This occurred during the period of the election (as evidenced in the preceding participant quote), but also appeared to go beyond discussion of the election, to be a consistent feature of the group. Interview excerpts from Participant C illustrated this by the following:

> I kept seeing bitterness arise from some of the senior group members toward the Chief. This later translated to open hostility.

> The only thing that can really increase this group's potential is to stop the ongoing knife fight with the band council.

Participant C described effects of the animosity between senior group members and band administration, "If we have significant discord with our leadership (mind you, I really dislike the Chief but I am doing a 'wait and see'), all we are accomplishing is providing a platform to keep a divide between ourselves".

The preceding participant quote also pointed to the need to eliminate animosity in an effort to decrease division within the community. Indeed, all participants saw unity within the community as an important step. Participant C demonstrated this by the following statement:

> The second big item is community, we need to establish our sense of community to include all and develop the strength and conviction to face concerns for our collective future. We need to pull together to form this band and have some cohesion.

Further, the role that social networking could play in helping advance community unity was demonstrated in quotes from Participant B and C below:

> Like any media, it informs and generates interest and if managed effectively, can encourage a community to bond together. Through Facebook®, we may be able to generate a lot more interest in partaking in Lnu-based activities. It would be through participation that unity is accomplished.

> In connecting with each other, we are learning from each other. Uniting will help us show a stronger face to others.

Similarly, Participant A illustrated the role that leadership could potentially have in uniting the community by the following statement, "Perhaps with a cultural and commutative leader we could understand where we are in terms of our identity as a collective, and create a collective vision as to who we are and where we're going". Participant A identified qualities of such a leader as follows, "A good leader is honest, trustworthy, knowledgeable, well spoken, politically astute, smart, humble, wise, caring, sets a good example for all…" The role leadership could play in unifying the community was also expressed by Participant C.

In summary, participants indicated that community unity was important for Lnu'k communities comprising the newly forming amalgamation, Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation. Participants saw strong leadership as a way to develop a collective vision for the future. Further, social networking could be used to help enhance community unity, but only if animosity between senior group members and band administrators were excluded from the discussion. Rather than garnering more leadership support, such "jockeying for position" (as it was termed by one participant) only lowered the status of those who engaged in such behaviour, and reduced the potential of the group as a unifying forum.

Group Processes

This section provides information regarding the products of information sharing within the group. The researcher organized this according to three sub-themes: Keeping in touch, sense of community and support.

Establishing and maintaining relationships. All participants reported using the social networking group for the purpose of staying in touch with friends and family, and for reconnecting with people with whom they had not seen in a long time. As indicated by Participant B, "The Facebook® group is vital to keeping in touch." Further, Participant B, C and D indicated that new friendships were developed and maintained through the social networking group. This is evidenced in the following participant quotes:

> Online networking can be a great tool to help build relationships that would not otherwise have existed. Using social networking sites has had a positive effect for me in particular, because I am living away from the island.

I have made and renewed acquaintances from participating in this group. As a social

networking tool, it is tremendous.

I have added a number of people I have 'met' through the group to my friends list on

Facebook®, so we can get to know one another better. I share a common ancestry with

these people, but we are spread across the country.

As such, the social networking group is a useful tool for communication between family

and community members. It is also useful for building relationships between social networking

group members. Given the previously mentioned perception that most group members were

Lnu'k, this relationship building may provide opportunities for strengthening cultural ties.

Sense of community. Two participants living away indicated that the social networking

group provided a feeling of community. As mentioned earlier in the section on leadership, the

social networking group, "If managed effectively, can encourage a community to bond together".

Participant D expressed this feeling of community in the following interview segment:

This connection to the group has given me a feeling of belonging, knowing that there are

people that share similar interest and ideas as me. It gives me a feeling of identity, and of

being a part of something much larger than myself.

Experiencing this sense of belonging to a community as a result of participating in the

Facebook® group, was mirrored in my own reflective writing about the subject:

I have noted some of the deeper connections I have to many members of the group. For

example, we may be related to the same people on different sides, or we may share the

same friends. This all makes me feel like I am part of tight-knit community, and I

wouldn't probably feel that way if I hadn't been able to see all these connections laid out

visually through Facebook®.

Of course, reflecting on my writing during this time leads me to believe that this sense of

community derived from participating in the social networking group, may likely be a result of

living away from the island. When on the island, my sense of community is derived from the

people I interact with and the places and things that I see and experience. In other words, the

social networking group may offer a sense of community to those who must live away from

home, as many people from Ktaqmkuk must do, due to the economic limitations of the region.

     Support. Two participants also described using the social networking group for access

to a support network for federal registration issues. These participants saw this kind of support

positively as an aspect of sharing information about family and Lnu history, as opposed to

viewing it as a discussion about 'status', which is frowned upon and not generally permitted.

Participants B and D's statements illustrated this supportive aspect of the group:

> I think the group is a way for us to support our Lnu'k brothers and sisters who are not
>
> recognized yet.

> While participating in the group, I have helped many people who were looking for
>
> information regarding membership and information required to complete their
>
> applications. I have also been helped. A woman in Calgary actually sent me the final
>
> piece of information that I had been looking for to help my mother finish her membership
>
> application.

As well, participant's felt discussion of issues pertinent to Lnu'k was a supportive aspect of the group. As stated by Participant B: "Just being able to discuss the situation with other people who have the same issues is a form of support".

Elders

A general theme that emerged within interviews was the discussion of Elders. Three sub-themes emerged within this general category of discussion: Identification of Elders, Elder's role within the group, and the difference between Elders in the social networking group versus traditional community Elders.

Identification of Elders. Participants B, C and D indicated that identifying Elders in the social networking group was the same process as the traditional way of doing so, and that the characteristics traditionally identified as indicative of an Elder applies equally in the group. Participants B, C and D's statements demonstrated this by the statements below:

It goes back to a more traditional method of being told by someone whom you already recognize as an Elder, or by your observations whereby you determine this person is an Elder. An Elder has nothing to do with age, it has everything to do with their knowledge of our customs or medicines etc., and their ability to teach, listen, led by example and of course communicate with our grandfathers or grandmothers.

You know who is and who is not an Elder though the community. For example, I would be introduced or I know of this person to process the traits of an Elder. Keep in mind an Elder is not an age thing.

It is my understanding that an Elder is someone in the community who teaches and shares

cultural traditions. They are very respected within the community.

Treatment of Elders. It would appear that the social networking group practiced the

cultural tradition of respecting Elders. For example, 3 participants indicated that information

was credible when it received endorsement by an Elder. Further, Participant C indicated that it

was understood in the group that it was disrespectful to question the credibility of the

information posted by Elders. This was illustrated in the following excerpts:

Never question an Elder in public about their knowledge or abilities, it is very

disrespectful. You can ask for a clarification or ask another Elder for clarification.

If a person produces questionable information or advice, it is my decision and mine alone

to place very little weight on that person's creditably in the future, but I still will listen to

them. If you asked me what I thought of such a person, I may advise you there is a better

person to ask, or something to that effect.

Yet, it would appear that not all group participants have observed the cultural practice of

respecting Elders. As indicated in my own reflective writing on being a participant:

I wish that the some of the older people who joined the group would have stayed, and that

the younger people in the group would have shut up for long enough to hear what they

had to post, instead of running their tongues.

My experience of observing an Elder leaving the group because of being treated disrespectfully,

was echoed by Participant C, who also indicated that he had observed disrespectful behaviour

toward Elders occur in the group. For me, this was a very disheartening experience, and

illustrated to me the limitations of community cultural connection through social networking. As

indicated by Participant D, people are less likely to take ownership of what they say in an online environment than in person, thus making it easier to make inconsiderate statements to others.

Role of Elders in the group. Three participants pointed to the existence of a social hierarchy within the social networking group. Respondent information indicated that Elders appeared to comprise the top echelon of authority within the group. As well, people who appear to be more familiar with their culture and posted more often seemed to garner a certain degree of respect. Although these participants identified Elders and other culturally knowledgeable people as having more authority in the group, it begged the question as to how the group identified Elders and persons with more cultural knowledge. The following interview excerpts from Participants C and D explain the identification process for those people who seem have more cultural knowledge:

> I think people with information to share are respected within the group. You can generally tell who is knowledgeable based on comments/posts and discussions that they share.

> There are usually a number of persons whom seem to be the first to make a posting about something, or be the first to comment on a post. There are some members who, first thing in the morning, appear to search for stories relating to us.

Further, Participant D indicated that those more familiar with their culture also seemed to be those who have had a long-term understanding of their Lnu'k ancestry:

> I have noticed that the more 'seasoned' will readily give opinions and comments, whereas those who are only now learning that they are Lnu will not.

It was not clear from the participant data whether the categories 'Elder' and 'person with more cultural knowledge' were mutually exclusive. It did appear from participant discussions about group Elders, that someone who was ascribed Elder status was deemed to be culturally knowledgeable. Yet, it is unclear whether all people who were deemed culturally knowledgeable in the group, were also ascribed Elder status.

Social networking group Elders versus traditional community Elders. The preceding discussion indicated Elders occupied the higher ranks of authority within the group, and that the group generally considered these people credible sources of information and people who the group should respect. Yet, data from three participants also revealed concerns regarding those who appeared to be designated Elders within the social networking group. For example:

Personally, I have seen traits that I would deem not suitable, or truly a character trait of an Lnu Elder. I cannot compare these type of individuals with an Elder.

An actual Elder would have the knowledge and respect of someone to never make such comments. They know that you give respect to get respect, and would not conduct themselves in the way that these individuals do.

Some people have not met with Elders before, and perhaps their only exposure is to who they are meeting on the Facebook® pages. This perhaps is enough to turn someone away from their culture, if this behavior is all they have seen.

It would appear as though there are some self-appointed Elders in the group. Some behaviour does not command respect. This gets back to the question of, who is an

Elder? The other side of that coin is, I know some well-known community Elders.

Interestingly none of these people are involved in the social networking group.

The information above pointed to a discrepancy between what I refer to as 'virtual' Elders, and

actual community Elders. For example, participants indicated that there is a difference between

who lays claim to the title of Elder in the social networking group, compared to who is actually

regarded as an Elder in the larger community. Further, participants pointed out a discrepancy

between the behaviour of people laying claim to the title of Elder in the social networking group,

compared to the common understanding of how an Elder should conduct themselves within their

community.

Conflict

Conflict is presented as a separate theme, as it represents both process and content within

the group. Further, conflict is deserving of its own treatment, due to the amount of attention it

received from 3 participants, and because of the impact these participants perceived the conflict

to have on the functioning of the group. Participant information indicated that there were four

types of conflict most evident in the social networking group. The first type of conflict was the

animosity expressed by senior members of the group toward band administration. This was

discussed previously in the section titled, 'Leadership Issues' on page 87.

The second type of conflict that occurred within the group was the disrespectful treatment

of Elders. Participant C indicated that such circumstances were dealt with in the following way:

Generally disrespectful persons are dealt with primary by two different methods, fist just

ignore them or secondly block them.... There is times I seen a person or persons sort of

retort back, but I do not like seeing that as the water sort of gets muddy after that.

The third type of conflict was the poor treatment of group members by senior members of the group identified as being Elders, or persons claiming to have cultural knowledge. Participant D used this way described this experience:

Social networking is meant to be a source of sharing and engaging with our people and not to make someone feel bad or stupid for not having the same amount of cultural knowledge as another member. This has occurred to me directly. I can't remember exactly what was said but I know I was embarrassed and humiliated by someone that I once respected. It has affected me because I do go look at the site to see posts, but feel less inclined to share. If I do, it's generally by a private message.

The preceding section provided more in-depth discussion of the discrepancies between social networking Elders and community Elders.

The fourth type of conflict described by participants was racial discrimination. That is, written posts and comments made to group members that referenced certain physical traits as being indicators of lack of Lnu identity. For example, some wrote that fair-skinned people were "too white," and people with blue eyes or lacking dark hair colour were less entitled to claim Lnu identity. The section titled, 'Race' on page 108, included discussion of race and discrimination within the group.

These discussions on conflict within the group indicate that this was a negative aspect of the social networking group, which served to hinder the group from realizing its full potential as learning and sharing tool, and as a unifying forum for the community. As indicated by the following interview segment from Participant A:

Angry comments, put downs, the best words I can use are hurtful and insulting. Some

people are looking for a fight on these pages and I believe that prevents positive

discussion and learning. I am very hesitant to post as I'm fairly sure of an attack and I'd

be confident others would feel the same way.

Participant A suggested that the solution to address this conflict was through band administration

developing a communication strategy. As indicated below:

I think the potential is only within a well thought out strategy. These Facebook® groups

are very fly by the seat of your pants, I only know of one that focuses on positive

discussion and learning. I really believe that a well thought out online and offline

communications strategy is the only way for positive discussion and learning to happen.

This hodgepodge, angry, racist, jockeying-for-position stuff is not positive or educational.

Identity

This section presents participant information related to identity, and identified a number

of identity related themes. These included Collective Identity, Identity Development and Race.

Collective Identity

The existence of a collective Lnu identity emerged as a general theme within the data.

This was despite the fact that some participants were not entirely aware, or even acknowledged,

that such a collective identity even existed. As indicated by Participant A and B:

I hadn't really given it much thought, but connecting with others has made me realize that

we as Lnu'k, share some of the same qualities.

I don't think we have a collective Lnu identity as such. And of course that opens up a whole new kettle of fish. I would love to know what some of us think of our "collective Lnu identity". I think our opinions could be quite different.

These participant statements perhaps reflect how Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq are in the early stages of cultural revitalization, whereby previous discussion of, or opportunities to express collective identity have been extremely limited.

Despite this, all participants in this study expressed an understanding of Lnu collective identity in a number of ways. As such, the researcher organized the discussion of collective identity according to the sub-themes presented. These are identity as ceremony, identity as artistic expression, identity as relationship with the natural world, identity as a holistic worldview, and identity as community member.

Identity as ceremony. Ceremony was a repeated sub-theme in which 3 participants expressed their understanding of what it means to be Lnu. The excerpts below from Participants B, C and D clearly illustrate this:

I think it is a way of life as it means going to ceremonies, offering Tobacco to the Creator and teaching the ways to our children and Grandchildren.

We attend teaching circles. We first smudge, then pray and invite the spirits of our grandfathers and grandmothers to come and join us...

I wanted to learn to sing in the traditional manner, and as a result, I have been sort of trying (poorly but still trying). But I really love partaking in talking and teaching circles.

In summary, three study participants indicated that participating in cultural ceremonies was an important part of Lnu identity. As well, the importance of participation in cultural ceremonies as a part of Lnu identity was also reflected in my own writing as researcher-participant.

Identity as artistic expression. Another interesting sub-theme presented by participants was the expression of collective Lnu identity through artistic endeavor. Quotes from Participant B below encapsulated this idea:

> There are a great many Lnu'k people who are artistic. Most Lnu'k people have gifts of one sort or other given to us by the creator. Talking to others in the group I can see how many have great artistic gifts.

I enjoy showing my creativity to the group, and I love to see their creativity as well. This was also evident in my own reflective writing:

> I would like to get involved in basket weaving. Every time I see a dead porcupine on the road I want to run back and get it, to get the quills and try my hand at quill box making. I have wanted to do hide tanning for years, in order to do painting on them like a canvas, but I never seem to get around to it. Seeing the pictures of other people's art posted in the group makes me really want to start these activities, when I get the time.

> One of the most valuable aspects of participating in this group was getting to know our Lnu'k artists and craftsman, and seeing pictures of their work.

In summary, artistic expression is one way that the group experiences, expresses and shares Lnu identity. The social networking group demonstrates this artistry, through the posting of pictures displaying one another's work.

Identity as relationship with the natural world. Another important sub-theme that illustrated collective Lnu identity was the recurrent participant reference to the relationship between Lnu'k and our natural world. As stated by one Participant D, "To me being Lnu means being one with nature". Further, this relationship with the natural world was evident in discussion in the group. As stated by another Participant B, "Talking to others in the group, I can see how connected we are to Our Mother the Earth".

Through a desire to protect the environment, 2 participants expressed the idea that being Lnu means being an integrated part of the natural environment. This expression occurred in various ways, such as recycling and advocating against environmentally harmful resource extraction practices. As well, my own reflective writing indicated that for me, being Lnu meant engaging in traditional harvesting and food preparation activities. Such activities indicate group interest in environmental preservation and sustainability.

Identity as a holistic worldview. It is also worth mentioning that participants expressed a holistic worldview as being a an important part of being Lnu. This is clearly indicated in Participant B's statement that, "To me, being Lnu means being part of the Whole". Further, it would appear that a relationship with the natural world is one form of expression of this holistic worldview. As indicated by Participant C:

How we interact with each other, how we interact with nature, how we are tied to the land these means is how we are identified.

This statement illustrates the Lnu holistic worldview through its suggestion that all things are interconnected. Further, the group placed special emphasis on the connection between Lnu and the natural world, again reinforcing Lnu identity through our relationship with the natural world, as previously discussed.

Identity as community membership. Another sub-theme presented was the idea that Lnu identity developed due to a combination of one's behavior in the community and how one's community members view one another. As stated by Participant C, "My identity is represented by my behaviour within my community. This what others see of me. I may see myself as a positive force in the community, while others may not see me this way". This view on identity is not an expression of collective identity per se, but still speaks to the concept of identity on a community level, as the group perceived the community as actively participating in helping define one's individual identity. As such, it is included here with the other collective identity sub-themes.

Identity Development

A major theme that emerged from participant information was Lnu identity development. Sub-themes identified included new identity development, reconnecting with identity, federal recognition and its influence on identity, and self-identifying as Lnu. This general theme suggested that for participants, being Lnu was a state of 'becoming' and that identity was fluid, subject to change based on new information, experience, etc. Further, Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq represented a broad identity spectrum. As stated by one Participant A, "There are many people at as many different stages in their understanding of the culture".

Despite the wide range of individual experience of Lnu identity, two lines of difference were drawn by participants regarding the collective identity experience. First, participants

differentiated between those who have always been aware of their Lnu ancestry, as opposed to those who have only recently acquired knowledge of their heritage. Second, participants pointed to the existence of two other identity groups: Those who have acquired federal recognition under the Indian Act, as opposed to those who have not.

New identity development versus reconnecting with identity. As stated by Participant B, "Many people have only realized over the past few years who they are and many are trying to find their identity". The following quote from Participant D reveals reasons for this birth of identity:

I think it's great that people are finally learning and exploring their heritage. It is a birth right that was perhaps lost because people have passed away or have been denied for years. The materializing of Lnu identity is more prevalent now because these days the general population is more understanding. People feel that they can finally be who they are without fear of discrimination and retribution.

Participants with prior knowledge of their Lnu ancestry expressed their support for those who were only recently arriving at this understanding. Yet, not all Lnu'k were supportive of those who were newly discovering their Lnu heritage. This lack of support was expressed in the social networking group. As indicated by Participant B:

I have read comments posted by members where they said they were not exactly received with open arms. I have read other comments like, "Look at all the Indians coming out of the woodwork".

Interestingly, these categories were not entirely mutually exclusive to one another. For example, Participant B indicated that though she had always been aware of her Lnu ancestry, she had not been aware of the extent to which Lnu heritage extended throughout her kin system, and

that she was still attempting to obtain information about this aspect of her Lnu ancestry. Still, having at least some prior understanding of one's Lnu identity seemed to put one at an advantage. For example, Participant D suggested that she had more confidence in her Lnu identity because of life-long knowledge of her ancestry, as opposed to those who were newly developing this awareness. This participant suggested that this "lack of confidence" may in turn translate to hesitancy to post within the social networking group, or vulnerability to criticism within the group. Participant A suggested that having no prior knowledge of one's Lnu identity meant one's experience and understanding of the culture were limited, thus making a person vulnerable to inaccuracies shared online.

My own experiences as a researcher-participant mirrored these participant observations; for example, my own life-long knowledge of my ancestry has fueled a life-long quest to seek out relationships and learning experiences that would support my Lnu identity development. This has helped familiarize me with concepts new to those who are only recently starting their identity journey. This prior understanding may have helped me become a more informed consumer of online information, such as that which is exchanged in the social networking group.

Federal recognition and its influence on identity. It was generally recognized by participants that Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq are separated by whether or not they have received federal recognition (in other words, been accepted into the newly formed Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation, or are members of the previously established Miawpukek First Nation). As stated by Participant B, "It does separate us form those who are and those who want to be".

The issue of federal recognition is a contentious one, given the enormous number of applicants that await review, amid reports of federal government concern regarding the growing

number of registrants. The following excerpts of interview data from Participants B and D

illustrated the controversy:

>   With the deadline approaching, there are many people who are looking for information to
>
>   support their application for registration.

>   Many members have discussed the controversy around the development of Qalipu and
>
>   how quite a few people who were in the band did not seem to want us extra members
>
>   there.

>   We discuss Elder Whites' court case, which helped the extra members get their
>
>   proverbial foot into the Qalipu door, so to speak.

Participants of this study expressed support for those who are awaiting federal

acceptance, and indicated that the social networking group was a way to provide this support.

For example, Participant D indicated she obtained information that helped her complete her

mother's application. Participant B indicated that she believed this was one of the beneficial

functions of the group. Discussion of the supportive aspect of the social networking group is

included in the previous section titled, 'Support', on page 93.

Participants also indicated that federal recognition influenced identity perception, as

expressed by the following statements by Participants B and D:

>   It is my opinion that with status comes recognition.

>   It does change the perception of who we are as Lnu'k, and how others (including other
>
>   aboriginal people) see us.

It would also appear that Participant B perceived that 'status' under the federal Indian Act may help bridge some of the complications of identity perception created by mixed heritage:

I am not sure if having status will solve the issues, but with it we can prove to others who we are. If you are not visibly native-looking you are categorized as a "Wanna-Be". I guess having status does assert one's claim to native heritage.

I have extended family members who do not consider me Native. They are Native and they despise white people. This has had a negative impact on our family. They prevent me from seeing my family. I am hoping that 'status' will make a difference.

Self-identifying as Lnu. Study participants described interesting aspects of self-identifying as Lnu. Participant C indicated that joining an Lnu social networking group was an act of making a public statement about one's identity, as indicated by the statement, "By adding my name to the Facebook® group, I become associated as a First Nation member or supporter, or in this case a member of the community".

Three participants indicated that they had encountered some negative experience when self-identifying as Lnu. These participants indicated, however, that these negative experiences were limited to their in-person interactions. Within the social networking group, Participant C indicated he felt shielded from the kinds of negative stereotyping he had encountered in his in-person interactions. The section titled, 'Mixed heritage', on page 112, describes the negative aspects of self-identifying as Lnu.

Race

A general theme that emerged repeatedly in participant interviews was the discussion of race. The following excerpt from Participant B illustrated the importance of race:

I see myself as a person of Native ancestry. I think race is very important, as it does

define who we are as people. I have been to drumming groups that non-natives

participate in, and have heard comments like "wannbe's" in reference to them.

Race is organized according to two sub-themes evident in the data: Discrimination and mixed

heritage.

Discrimination. Half the participants participating in the study indicated that they had

encountered discrimination in their interactions in the social networking group. On the surface,

the assertion of discrimination in the group would appear to run counter to data indicating that

participants did not experience negative stereotypes in the social networking group when self-

identifying as Lnu, or the assertion that within the group, one could feel shielded from the

experience of negative stereotyping. Yet, it would appear that the discrimination that occurred in

the social networking group was quite different, and entailed treatment as a non-Lnu person. In

other words, discrimination in the group took the form of being denied Lnu identity. The

following quote from Participant D described this experience:

As much positive I have received from social networking and as many wonderful people

I have met, I have unfortunately run into some discrimination. Because I have white skin

and do not live in my community, some believe that I am "less" native than someone who

still lives in their community. Some are condescending and down-right rude, particularly

the older generations that are set in their ways and think that the only way is their way. I

can say with absolute certainty that living in your community and being a "darker

skinned" native does not make you more native.

The subject of denying others Lnu identity was also evident in my own reflective writing:

I wish that there weren't as many people in the group making negative comments to one

another about being "too white".

These passages highlighted the importance some social networking group participants attach to

stereotypical biological representations of Lnu identity. Biological representation, or race, is not

included in the preceding discussion of Lnu collective identity, however, because the participants

of this study viewed this as a harmful and inadequate way of defining Lnu identity.

Participant D indicated she did attempt to address the issue. The following excerpt

described the experience:

I have tried to address the culprits of this discrimination upfront, not through a public

post but an inbox message. I refuse to drag other people into that negativity even though

it was publically said to me. I however was confronted with rudeness and resistance so I

dropped it. I can't change anyone's opinion, so I let it go.

Expressing past hurt in racial terms. A micro-theme within the discussion of

discrimination was how some participants expressed an understanding that racial discrimination

can occur because people are still feeling the pain of harm inflicted in the past. For example,

Participants B and C acknowledged that individuals and communities who experienced the

residential school system may still feel anger and resentment, and that these feelings are

sometimes expressed in racial terms:

Aboriginal people for the most part do not like white people, especially here in Ontario

where residential schools are still fresh in their history. It was only in the 1980s that the

schools closed and that children weren't forced into them[4]. Many have lost their

language, families and culture.

Similarly, the racial discrimination that some group members are expressing may be the

result of past hurt, whereby these individuals or their families faced stigma for their Lnu identity,

but now see tens of thousands of people attempting to claim Lnu identity. The following quote

from Participant A cites a post written in the group, which demonstrates the hurt and resentment

some Lnu are feeling as a result of what has been seen by many as an unfair registration process,

expressed in what appears to be racial terms:

> I quote "Feds looking into why the new Qalipu (Caribou) First Nations Band in
>
> Newfoundland Canada has a potential to be as high as 67,000 members when only five
>
> years ago there was only 7200 that claimed they were aboriginal. …And to think some
>
> of the round-eyed, corn-haired ones running the new band told me I was not Mi`kmaq.
>
> haha!" This was posted on a Facebook® page by a candidate for chief. I believe this
>
> post best describes what I'm trying to get at: People promoting racism within their own
>
> band. Is he trying to say that all round-eyed, corn-haired people are not Mi'Kmaq? I
>
> think so, and that is so hurtful and insulting to anyone who fits that description.

As researcher-participant I have also observed the perception of unfairness in the registration

process be expressed in more constructive ways, such as through posting of an online petition

within the group, or through discussion of issues such as the exclusion of original band member

lists in the federal registration process. Yet, it does appear that within the group, discriminatory

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[4] Attendance at residential schools was compulsory until the 1950's (Malloy, 1996). Twelve

residential schools remained open in Canada by 1979 (Assembly of First Nations, n.d.). The last

school closed in 1996 (Assembly of First Nations, n.d).

remarks based on physical attributes occur frequently enough to mark the experience for some participants.

  Difference between race and culture. Participant C differentiated between race and culture, indicating that race was not a point of discussion in the group, but that discussion included cultural identity. When asked how he made this distinction, this participant responded, "Simple. Our people after 500 years of contact, being the lovable types we are, we cannot say that we are 100% Lnu in a physical sense". This passage pointed to the complexities of understanding Lnu identity in racial terms. The discussion regarding discrimination above highlights how physical attributes remain a basis for some individual's understanding of Lnu identity, yet it is clear that study respondents believe that Lnu identity is simply not merely a racial identity.

  Mixed racial heritage. The mixed racial heritage of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, as highlighted in the above passage, emerged in participant discussions as a major sub-theme of race. The statements from Participants B and C below highlight the extent of Lnu racial mixing:

  I am part white, as are most (if not all) Lnu'k in Newfoundland.

  As you know, the Lnu'k on the Island are of mixed blood mostly.

  Participant B indicated that having mixed heritage did not affect the functioning of the group:

  Being fair does not impact anything within the group, as many of Lnu'k in

  Newfoundland are part white, and many are blond with blue eyes.

This assertion would appear to run counter to the previous discussion, indicating that discrimination based on physical appearance was evident in the group. Certainly, it would

appear that preclusion of persons with non-phenotypical features from participation in the group did not occur. Further, it may be that given the fact that so many Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq potentially present with non-phenotypical features, that discrimination based upon racial terms is somewhat absurd.

Other participants indicated that they believed that external perceptions of his or her indigeneity were impacted in their in-person interactions. For example, Participants C and D indicated:

Many times, I have crossed the border and presented my status card. I was asked, "Who is the Indian?" Obviously, it was me in the picture. I felt that was very inappropriate.

Physically, I have passed for a white guy. I guess people assume me to be that, however, if I do mention to them, "you have been mistaken", I can then expect a lot of, "you do not look it".

The passages below also suggest that having mixed heritage impacts external identity perceptions, including how Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq are viewed by other Indigenous groups. As indicated by Participants B and D:

There are a few that are 80-90% Lnu, but not many. It makes others, including other native people, see us differently.

"Even though I am not full blood, I am accepted without question into the native sub-culture here, *for the most part*" [italics added].

In the passage above, the participant pointed out a separation between herself and other indigenous groups that she interacts with, based on her mixed heritage. As well, though she

indicated she has acceptance of the Indigenous People in the territory she currently resides *despite having mixed heritage*, she qualifies this with "for the most part", which suggests that there are those who are not accepting, because of her mixed racial heritage. This perceived lack of external acceptance because of mixed heritage, is also highlighted in the following passage from Participant B:

> There is a lot of controversy regarding the Qalipu right now because of blood quantum.

> We are being regarded with scrutiny by both natives and whites alike, and many don't like it. The white people think we are getting something for nothing, and the natives think that we should be judged by the same rules as them. They don't understand the reasoning behind formation of the band. It is a complicated issue for sure.

In summary, race is a contentious issue within the social networking group and for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq in general. Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq present with predominantly mixed racial heritage, resulting from an extended period of colonial contact and assimilatory government policies. This mixed heritage presents some challenges. For example, self-identifying as Lnu is often met with racial stereotyping, and often, discriminatory responses. Though this predominantly occurs in in-person interactions, it does also occur in the social networking group, whereby participants of Lnu identity become disenfranchised because of non-phenotypical traits. This does not preclude participation in the social networking group, but does affect some members' experience of it, and thus the degree to which they participate in the group. Racial discrimination is one form of conflict that occurs in the social networking group that prevents the group from realizing its full potential as positive force within the community.

Summary

The purpose of the social networking group did not permit discussion regarding information not pertaining to Lnu culture; however, discussion of political issues of concern to Lnu'k does occur frequently. Though participants view much of this discussion as being important, political discussion detracted from the cultural focus of the group. As well, discussions of 'status' were specifically singled for excluded from the group. Further, the group viewed criticism of band administration negatively. A social hierarchy exists in the group, whereby the group views Elders and other persons deemed to be culturally knowledgeable with respect. There were concerns expressed, however, regarding the treatments of Elders in the group, as well as how Elders treated others. In addition, there were concerns expressed regarding the discrepancy between online and community Elders. Even after further probing in interviews, it was unclear whether all persons identified as being culturally knowledgeable were also identified as Elders.

Participants identified aspects of a collective Lnu identity. These included identity being expressed through participation in ceremonies, artistic expression, relationship with the natural world, holistic worldview and community membership.

Social networking was not seen as an effective means of Indigenous spiritual experience, and participants reported that only ceremonial participation and spiritual guidance received through in-person encounter could fulfill this aspect of their identity. Other aspects of collective identity were able to be shared within the social networking group through posts and discussion. Sharing of information lends itself to feelings of community and support. As well, the social networking group offered a way for group members to establish and maintain relationships with other Lnu'k. It also provided a way for participants to learn about Lnu and family history.

Participants indicated that conflict was a persistent negative aspect of the group. Conflict prevented positive discussion and full participation from occurring. The group identified discriminatory racial comments as one kind of conflict that occurred in the group. Other kinds included the disrespectful treatment of Elders, the disrespectful treatment of group members by Elders and other culturally knowledgeable people, and the animosity expressed by senior group members toward band administration.

Participants indicated that Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq present with extensive racial mixing. One participant suggested that Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq identity was better understood on the basis of culture rather than race. Participants also indicated that federal recognition impacted external perceptions of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, including how other Indigenous People view us. Participants suggested that recognition brought more acceptance, and offered a way of bridging Indigenous identity for those who do not possess phenotypic Indigenous physical features.

Participants indicated that a reason for the popularity of the group was a lack of communication between band administration and band members. A band communication strategy that includes online activities such as social networking could help address the conflict that occurs in the social networking group, while achieving the possibilities of information sharing, cultural development and community unity that social networking offers.

Chapter Five is the concluding chapter of this study. It provides a brief overview of the study, and relates findings of the study to pertinent information presented in the literature review in Chapter Two. Also included is discussion concerning the implications of these findings for social work, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, Implications, Recommendations

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the solidarity experience of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq using social networking services. This is the concluding chapter of the study. The chapter summarizes the study and its major findings. Findings from the study are discussed in light of the research presented in the literature review, in Chapter Two. The implications for social work practice are discussed, and recommendations for future research are made.

Summary of the Study

This section provides a summary of the study. A summary of the information from Chapter One is presented, specifically information regarding the problem the study sought to address and the purpose of the study and its research questions. Information from Chapter Three regarding the study design, is also reviewed. Finally, the major findings of the study, as discussed in Chapter Four, are summarized.

Overview of the problem. Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq have experienced a longer period of colonial contact by virtue of their eastern location (Lawrence, 2004). Further, they have been subjected to a longer period of assimilationist policy, initially enacted by the British colonial government, and then subsequently carried on by the Canadian government through deliberate omission from the terms of Confederation (Hanrahan, 2003). Despite the erosion of culture and language as a result of colonial intrusion, Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq identity continues to be asserted by communities that comprised the now defunct Native Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (NANL) (Hanrahan, 2003).

In response to action by the NANL members, the federal government began registration of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, beginning first with members of the Conne River community, thus creating Miawpukek First Nation (Hanrahan, 2003). Promises were made by the federal government that registration of the remaining non-status Lnu'k communities, however, this process was derailed by a change in government and a lack of support from the province of Newfoundland (Hanrahan, 2003). As a result, the remaining communities made application to the court for resolution to the federal government's failure to fulfill their fiduciary duty (Hanrahan, 2003).

In 2008, the Conservative government under Stephen Harper and administration of the Federation of Newfoundland Indians (FNI) under the leadership of Chief Brendan Sheppard, ratified an agreement that would result in the registration of the remaining non-status Lnu'k, and the amalgamation of the remaining geographically-separated communities into Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation. The agreement made now allowance for a land base. Original band lists were not used as the basis for registration, but were used as an estimate of the number of potential registrants. Yet, the number applications for registration surpassed initial estimates. As a result, thousands of applicants remained unreviewed by the November 30, 2009 deadline. This left these potential registrants, many whom were original band members, waiting three years for registration as part of the two-stage registration process initially conceived in the federal agreement. Perceived unfairness in the registration process resulted in a court application by Elder Calvin White, one of the original leaders of the NANL movement.

On September 2011, the legislation enacting the creation of Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation was read, and the first list of band members registered. As a result of Elder Calvin White's court case, the registration process was changed such that this list was to be updated every four

months, until the closing of registration on November 30, 2012. On November 5, 2012, the

Federal Government announced concern over the high number of applications for registration,

and indicated they had hired a lawyer to investigate the rules for registration with Qalipu

Mi'kmaq First Nation ("Ottawa to Tighten", November 5, 2012).

Brief overview of the problem. Can an Indigenous group that has endured an extended

period of colonial intrusion and assimilationist policy regain a sense of collective purpose,

culture and identity, despite external criticisms and internal quarrelling? Many Lnu'k

Ktaqmkukewaq are hopeful, but concerned for the future. The popularity of online social

networking has extended across the globe, and Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq are showing their online

presence in a Facebook® group called Msit No'kmaq The Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland. Can

social networking offer a means for an Lnu group comprised of an amalgamation of

geographically-separated communities, no designated land base, and a large migrant worker

population (Hanrahan, 2003) pull together to create a unified community? My experience as a

community member participating in this social networking group stimulated the idea for this

research.

Purpose statement and research questions. The purpose of this phenomenological study

is to explore the experience of solidarity of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq participating in a social

networking group. The central question of this research is, 'What is the solidarity experience of

Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq participating in a social network group'?

The following sub-questions constitute my research:

1. Can social networking services impact participants' sense of Lnu identity?

2. Can social networking services provide participants opportunities for connecting with

    others about issues important to Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq?

3. Can social networking services motivate participants to get involved in activities that promote the interests of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq?

Review of the study design. Data was collected through interviews with 4 participants. Participant interviews were conducted through email. Member checking was done during interviews, to help ensure correct understanding. As well, data from the researcher's experience in the group was integrated into the data analysis process.

The central interview question used in this study is attached in Appendix C. Additional questions used as probes in certain instances in order to obtain further elaboration and stimulate discussion, are also included.

The software program Weft QDA was used to manage and analyze the data. Weft QDA is a program for analyzing qualitative data, such as interviews. It is a free, open-source software program available online. This particular software was selected for its fit with this study's methodology and data collection instruments.

Data analysis steps employed in this study included the following:

1. As researcher-participant, I answered the central questions and the list of question probes some months prior to beginning interviews with participants. I wanted to have a period of time elapse between forming my own responses about my experience in the group and when I began to collect data, to ensure that I would approach data collection with a fresh perspective, open to the differences that participants might present in describing their own experiences.

   As well, around this time I decreased my participation in the social networking group. Further, I stopped participating and reading material in the group altogether after I

posted a request for study participants. I did this in order to help ensure participants did not view me as having any informal authority in the group as a regular participant.

2. After completing interviews with participants, I entered the data into Weft QDA. I then began a macro thematic analysis of the information from study participants. Major themes were identified during this step, and then grouped according to the broad thematic categories of group composition and identity.

3. After identifying major themes, I then undertook a micro thematic analysis by doing a detailed review of the information provided by participants. I then listed and grouped statements from participants, according to the themes and micro-themes they represented. I then incorporated statements from own reflective writing.

4. I collaborated with participants during data analysis by providing participants a rough draft of the themes I identified, as well as the participant statements I intended to incorporate into Chapter Four. I requested that participants review the information and provide their comments. I did this to help ensure participants were in agreement with my understanding of the data, and o ensure that no one felt information would be shared that would compromise confidentiality. I then incorporated any suggested changes.

5. I then developed a description of what happened during participation in the social networking group.

6. As part of the information included in the conclusions section of this chapter, I reviewed the Literature Review portion of this paper, reflecting upon this information in relation to data presented in Chapter Four.

7. From this I wrote a summary of an overall description of the experience.

Summary of major findings. Study data identified different facets of group composition. Namely, information was presented regarding group membership, the content of posts made in the group, group processes, the role of Elders in the group, and the impact of conflict on group functioning.

Participants indicated that the group had a cultural focus. Discussions of 'Indian status' appeared to be prohibited. This focus was adapted at times, to incorporate discussion of political issues that were important to Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. Though participants indicated that political discussion was important, it was seen as detracting from the cultural focus of the group. Conflict between group administrators and Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation band administration appeared to negatively impact the experience of participating in the social networking group.

Participants indicated that the group was comprised of mostly Lnu'k, with membership extending across the Lnu maritime territory. Most members, however, were from the west coast area of Ktaqmkuk. This participation was seen as an indication of more participation in cultural resurgence activities. Concern was expressed regarding the possible negative impact that lack of participation from other communities could have on the general Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq cultural resurgence. Participation from members of Miawpukwk First Nation and mainland Lnu'k communities was viewed as supportive.

Additionally, participants indicated that a social hierarchy existed in the group, whereby group members who were identified as being Elders, and those who were deemed to have more cultural knowledge, were accorded a certain degree of respect within the group. More discussion of the role of Elders is provided in a later paragraph in this section.

Most of the participants of this study were residing away from home during the period of data collection. As such, participants shared experiences of participating in cultural activities of

other Indigenous groups, whose territory they currently resided. Participants indicated that they valued this cross-cultural participation in absence of access to Lnu'k cultural activities, but acknowledged differences in teachings between Indigenous groups. While the social networking group was limited in the kind of cultural content that could be shared, participants indicated that the social networking group offered them an opportunity to connect with their own Indigenous culture and community, while living away from home. In terms of limitations, participants indicated that social networking was unable to provide the kind of spiritual experience that was possible with in-person interaction. As participants also indicated that participation in ceremonies was an important facet of Lnu identity, this limitation is significant.

Participants described other benefits they derived from participating in the social networking group. For example, participants indicated learning about family and Lnu history within the group. They also indicated being able to maintain relationships with others, and establishing new relationships with other Lnu'k people, such as extended kin and other community members.

Participants also indicated that they felt a sense of community from participating in the social networking group. Further, participation in the group was seen as a means to advance cultural development and community unity. They also indicated that they felt a sense of support from sharing with others in the group.

As previously mentioned, discussion in the group sometimes turned from culture matters to political issues, and though participants indicated that this detracted from the experience, they also indicated being able to use the group as a source of information regarding issues and events, an aspect which was viewed as important. A lack of information from the band was identified as one reason for the proliferation of information in the social networking group. Another reason

may be that the social networking group simplified access to information. Participants also indicated that the lack of an effective band communication strategy was a key reason for the lack of communication between band administration and the membership. The need for strong leadership was identified, and strong leadership was seen as a way to develop a collective vision for the future, and unite the community.

Participants indicated that there was a discrepancy between the Elders in the social networking group and those in the community. Specifically, there was a difference between how Elders conducted themselves in the group, and how they perceived Elders should conduct themselves. For example, participants believed traditional community Elders would not cause conflict or belittle others for having less cultural knowledge; however, this did occur in the social networking group. Further, participants indicated that many widely- known and well-regarded Elders in Lnu'k communities did not participate in the social networking group.

Yet, some similarities did exist between Elders in the community and social networking group. For example, Elders were identified in the group with the same process and using the same identifying characteristics as one would use in-person. Further, Elders were accorded a certain degree of respect within the group. Participants indicated, however, there were instances whereby Elders were treated disrespectfully in the group.

Participants indicated that conflict was a negative aspect of participating in the group. Conflict manifested itself in four ways in the group. First, conflict occurred when Elders were treated disrespectfully. Second, conflict occurred when Elders and culturally knowledgeable group members treated other group members disrespectfully. Third, participants perceived that excessive criticism of band administration occurred in the group. Fourth, participants indicated that racially discriminatory remarks were made in the group, whereby non-phenotypical features

were used as the basis of derogatory remarks and to deny others their Lnu identity. More discussion of discrimination in the group is provided in a later paragraph in this section.

Study data also identified different aspects of identity. This included discussion of collective Lnu identity, identity development and race. Though participants indicated being unaware of a collective Lnu identity, participant information pointed to the experience of collective identity in a variety of ways. For example, participants indicated experiencing their Lnu identity through participation in cultural activities and ceremonies. As well, participants indicated experiencing their Lnu identity through artistic creation and admiration of Lnu'k artists. Recognizing our relationship with and dependence on the natural world, was another way that participants expressed experiencing their Lnu identity. This relationship with the natural world was extended to encompass an understanding of the interconnectedness of all things, pointing to the experience of Lnu identity through a holistic worldview. Further, the role of community in determining one's identity was also discussed. Though this was not an aspect of collective identity per se, it did point to how collective, community-level processes affect perceptions of identity. Finally, participants acknowledged that Lnu identity was rooted in race, but extended beyond racial markers, and thus was better understood as a cultural identity.

Participants indicated that Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq are in a process of cultural and identity revitalization, and that federal recognition has had an impact upon this development. Participants differentiated between Lnu'k people who had only recently discovered their Lnu ancestry, with those who had always had this awareness. Those who had long-standing knowledge of their ancestry were seen as being more confident in their Lnu identity, and perhaps more culturally knowledgeable, than those who were only recently discovering their heritage. Further, though participants of this study expressed support for those who were only recently

discovering their heritage, it was apparent that not all Lnu'k, or all social networking group members, were supportive. Indeed, participants noted that some have expressed resentment toward those who are only now expressing an interest in their heritage.

Federal recognition was seen as having a positive influence on identity development. Data indicated that study participants felt this changed how others viewed them, including other Indigenous People. Further, federal recognition was seen as a way to bridge identity for those with physical features stereotypically viewed as atypical of indigeneity. As most Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq have mixed racial heritage, federal recognition may provide access to claiming a heritage that to many, is an important part of their identity.

Some discussion also pointed to external perceptions of unfairness in the registration process. For example, the lack of blood quantum requirements meant that Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation did not have the same rules apply to its member's registration, as did other Indigenous groups. As well, other people lacking knowledge about the history of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq did not understand why it was being created. Further, internal difficulties with the registration process meant some long-standing members within the 'old' communities were not automatically registered in the new band, and needed to reapply and be subjected to a level of scrutiny of their Lnu identity that they had not previously had to experience.

Race was another major theme evident in the data of this study. As previously mentioned, it was noted that Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq are predominantly mixed-race. As well, participant data indicated that race and culture were not seen as the same, a distinction made due to this mixed racial heritage. Despite this, race was seen as an important part of Lnu identity. It was not included as part of the features identified as comprising collective Lnu identity, as viewing Lnu identity in strictly racial terms was problematic for participants, due to our mixed

racial heritage. For this reason, one participant suggested that Lnu identity was better understood as a cultural identity, rather than a racial one.

Data indicated that participation in the social networking was a form of self-identifying as Lnu. Given the amount of information sharing possible with Facebook®, adding one's name to an Lnu group was viewed as making a public statement about one's Indigenous identity. Further, self-identifying in the social networking group was not as problematic for participants as was self-identifying in in-person interactions, as participants were subjected to inappropriate and discriminatory remarks when self-identifying in their in-person interactions, whereas this did not occur in the social networking group, thus offering participants a 'sheltered' place to self-identify.

Though Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq present with extensive racial mixing and participants viewed the group as a place where on could self-identify without experiencing discrimination for being Lnu, racial comments were made by some group members that created conflict and detracted from the experience of the group. It would appear that racial discrimination was targeted toward those with non-phenotypic features, whereby such remarks were made to deny people their Lnu identity.

Participants did, however, note some awareness that the historical trauma experienced by other Indigenous groups does cause some to express this hurt in racial terms. Indeed, it may be that some of the hurt experienced through our own painful history and difficult present, are being expressed in racial terms in the social networking group.

Conclusions

This section provides a discussion of the research findings in light of information presented in the Literature Review in the second chapter. It concludes with an overall

description of the experience of participating in the social networking group. Wilde's (2007) discussion of the contradictory character of solidarity was supported by the findings of this study. For example, participants indicated that the social networking group provided a sense of community, and offered possibilities of enhancing community unity, while at the same time reporting experiences of discrimination and being denied Lnu identity. As indicated by Wilde (2007), "On the one hand it has connotations of unity and universality, emphasizing responsibility for others and the feeling of togetherness. On the other hand it, exhibits itself most forcefully in antagonism to other groups, often in ways which eschew the possibility of compromise" (p.173). Thus, Wilde's description of solidarity may offer explanation as to why some group participants discriminated against other participants with non-phenotypic features, despite the extensive mixed-racial heritage of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq as a whole. Such behaviour can actually be viewed as a process of Lnu solidarity that is as important as processes that promotes feelings of community and unity. While unpleasant, such exclusionary processes serve the vital purpose of keeping focus on Lnu'k interests. This in turn ensures the survival of the Lnu identity, despite extensive racial mixing and extensive policies of cultural assimilation.

McKenzie and Morrisette's (2003) discussion of "transactional" and "categorical" racial identity, is also useful in understanding data on how race was perceived by study participants and within the social networking group (p. 263). Categorical identity is identity perception based on stereotypical physical features, whereas transactional identity is based on the acknowledgement that identity is fluid. The transactional identity view is less rigid than categorical identity, as it allows for changes that can occur within a group over time, focusing on social markers of difference between groups instead. It would appear that while study participants indicated that Lnu identity was rooted in racial ancestry, most perceived a categorical view of identity as

problematic and inappropriate for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, given the high degree of mixed racial heritage. Rather, a transactional view of identity was taken, focusing on perceptions of one's community, and how one behaves and perceives the world.

Thus, a complex picture emerges of Lnu solidarity, when one combines the need for a transactional view of identity with recognition of the role that adversarial positioning in relation to other groups may serve in the function of keeping focus on Lnu interests. Indeed, this suggests that those involved in administration and monitoring of such social networking groups are tasked with the very difficult project of balancing exclusion with inclusion. Where one ends and the other begins might certainly be an ambiguous process with the potential for disagreement and conflict.

Though participants experienced feelings of unity in the group as Lnu, there was a lack of political unity. For example, criticism of band administration was prevalent in the group, and was not viewed as a positive group process. In addition, the group was seen as a vehicle used by some election candidates to promote their political agenda. Further, criticism of the incumbent administration or other candidates in the group during the election process was not viewed positively. As well, though there was criticism of band administration within the group, participants did not view the group as a source of direction or leadership to respond to the perceived difficulties with band administration. Yet, despite such discussion being viewed as detracting from the experience of the group, political discussion was still viewed as being an important aspect of what the group offered participants. This seeming incongruence in findings around political discussion discussed may be explained by the discussion provided by Fenton (2008) and Blum (2007).

Fenton (2008) has indicated that political solidarity requires commitment to a political project without self-interest, which permits acceptance of difference and allows inclusiveness and multiple expressions of identity. The concerns raised by participants regarding the discussion that occurred in the group points to difficulties with the aforementioned qualities that Fenton stipulated as necessary for political solidarity. As such, this may explain why participants did not view the political aspects of the social networking group as being positive or useful, despite its perceived importance.

Blum (2007) has suggested that solidarity exists not as process of community, but as a political process, that requires commitment and action. This suggests that the development of solidarity within the social networking group among group participants would resultantly lead to political discussion. This may explain why band politics was a major discussion point in the group, despite its intended cultural focus. Further, it may help explain why participants viewed this discussion as important, despite viewing it as detracting it from the group's cultural intent. Given the above discussion by Blum (2007) and Fenton (2008), it would appear that the cultural solidarity that occurred in the group led to political discussion, but that political solidarity was not fully realized within the group.

Yet, criticism of band administration may also provide a function. Pratt (2010) has indicated that internet communication can be used by Indigenous People in order to break up community political monopolies. In this respect, criticism of band administration within the social networking group may serve the purpose of balancing power within a community and giving voice to those who would not normally have the power or position to express concerns at the community level.

Dawson's (2009) discussion of thick and thin ties would suggest that group participants would demonstrate stronger attachments to those with whom they shared closer ties. This was only evident in the data by participant information that indicated that living away from one's community was perceived by some group participants as being an indication of being 'less' Lnu. Indeed, data indicated that group participants from communities outside Ktaqmkuk, where familial and extended kin relationships would likely be weakest, were welcome and seen as a support within the group. Further, though most of the group was comprised of Lnu'k from the Western region of the island, participants from all areas of the island were considered eligible to request to join, and lack of participation from other areas was viewed as counter-productive and something to be improved upon in the future. Thus, though thick and thin ties may exist among Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, the preferential treatment that accompanies thick ties was not overly evident in the social networking group, aside from the initially mentioned instance. This may suggest that without obvious preferential treatment that accompanies interaction according to think and thin ties, social networking may offer a more egalitarian method of interaction.

Dawson (2009) also discussed the concept of 'linked fate'. Linked fate is the degree to which a group may feel that one's destiny is linked to that of others in their group, and can be the basis of solidarity. It would appear from the discussion presented by participants, that there is a shared feeling of "linked fate", in that participants expressed both concern and hope for the future, both of which are stronger indicators of linked fate than other identity markers such as ethnicity, culture or community. These findings offer the possibility that linked fate can be a basis for Lnu solidarity development.

It would appear that the solidarity developed among group participants incorporates all three kinds of solidarity that Blum (2007) indicated could occur in racial groups, to varying

degrees: Shared racial identity, shared experience and shared political interests. Data indicated that shared racial identity was perhaps the most conflictual, as some group members denied others Lnu identity based on physical attributes that were not considered stereotypically Lnu. That a solidarity based on shared racial identity alone would be problematic is not difficult to understand, given the extensive racial mixing of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. As well, political solidarity was something that seemed to be strived for within the group, but was not fully realized. Yet, the fact that political discussion was included in the group and identified as important is indicative of a developing political solidarity. Solidarity based on shared experience was more evident in the data, demonstrated by discussion of sharing information and support.

Alfred (2005) discussed the development of Indigenous solidarity, indicating that a spiritual awakening was necessary in order to reestablish Indigenous ties to land and help develop relationships across Indigenous communities and groups. Further, traditional languages have an important role in this spiritual awakening, as they demonstrate how Indigenous People perceive the world. Data from this study indicated that spiritual development and reconnection to the land was an important part of participants Lnu identity, expressed through participation in ceremonial activities and described importance of the Lnu relationship with the land. Yet, the social networking group was unable to provide the kind of spiritual connection that participants reported experiencing in person. Thus, while the social networking group was able to provide a place for participants to discuss and share spiritual experiences and views on Lnu connection with the land with others, it did not provide participants a direct way to "walk the talk" (as stated by Participant D). In light of Alfred's (2005) discussion above, this limitation in turn restricts the potential of social networking as a tool for Indigenous solidarity development. These

findings are also supported by Wellman and Gulia (199), who indicate that online work must be accompanied by in-person work.

The social networking group was, however, able to provide opportunities for participants to learn some Lnu'k words and teachings, by directing participants to outside web sites that provided this information. Thus, social networking can provide a measure of language revitalization that Alfred (2005) indicated was an important ingredient for the development of Indigenous solidarity. As well, participants reported having the opportunity to reestablish and maintain previous relationships and develop new relationships, with other Lnu'k both within and beyond their kin and community networks. Further, participants indicated that they viewed participation from other communities as a support. Thus, social networking can help break down what Alfred (2005) referred to as the 'divide and conquer' colonial system of separated and isolated First Nation communities, to enable cross-community and cross-territorial conversation and relationship building. Further, the potentially positive benefits of such exchange are immediately evident through feelings of perceived support.

Alfred (2005) and Blum (2007) indicated that solidarity requires a commitment to action. Further, Alfred (2005) outlined five different conditions that were necessary for Indigenous mobilization to action. Of these five, two of them underlie the importance of access to media. It is in this respect that social networking offers its strength. Data from this study suggested that it was powerful information sharing tool. Yet, the data also suggested that the potential social networking offers could only be realized by avoiding political in-fighting, and denying the urge to counter ignorance and aggression with similar behaviour. These findings are supported by the discussion by Alfred (2005), who indicated that commitment to action may entail engaging in conflict, but should not include taking an aggressive stance.

Further, data from this study indicated that leadership was perceived as problematic, both within the Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation, and within the social networking group. Opportunities to develop leadership were viewed as stymied by a vague process that involved dependence on consultation with and support of Elders. Further, the credibility of those identified as Elders in the social networking group was called into question.

Yet, it would also appear that identification of Elders within social networking groups follows the same process as in offline interactions in communities, suggesting that such individuals recognized as Elders in the social networking group are validly identified as such. As study participants identified Elder engagement in conflict as being a major concern, it may be that the social networking environment requires a different set of skills from Elders that are not otherwise required in offline community interaction. For example, the aforementioned need to be able to assert an Lnu focus, while at the same time having the flexibility to accept group differences. Further, as it would appear from data that Elders are not accorded the kind of respect they are traditionally given in in-person interactions, it may be that Elders need to take a defensive position in social networking to ensure their recognized place of authority. Defensive positioning may at times become reactionary defensiveness for those who are tasked with the burden of ongoing monitoring of a large social networking group.

Study participants focus of discussion on the importance of the role of community Elders, and complete omission of discussion of the role of warrior, is supported by the work of Alfred (2005). Further, there is the possibility that Alfred's discussion of the neo-colonial warrior may offer potential leaders with a concrete template of steps to develop the kinds of strengths and abilities necessary for strong future leadership, without over-reliance on community individuals whose Elder roles are not necessarily agreed upon.

With reference to Sinclair's (2007) Indigenous identity spectrum, it would appear that the participants of this study are mostly placed within the 'High traditional, high acculturation' category. According to the model offered by McKenzie and Morrisette (2003), they would likely represent those in the "transitional" or "contemporary traditional" categories. This approximation comes from the combined estimate of the importance participants placed on traditional activities and perspectives, as well as the extent of cultural and language assimilation that has occurred in Ktaqmkuk. As such, the participants of this study represent about one quarter of the possible 'spectrum' of identity evident in modern Indigenous culture. Thus, it may be that Lnu who have embraced traditional practices and views are more likely to be active participants of the social networking group, than those who adhere to a more colonized perspective of Indigenous identity. This also may mean that the results of this study should be approached with caution, given the limited proportion of the spectrum of possible expression of Indigenous identity this data represents.

Data indicated participants were disappointed in not being able to express their views without in some instances, being treated negatively by others with group status, and that they felt they were unable to speak out against things they disagreed with, without fear of being attacked. Some of these attacks focused upon physical characteristics that were perceived as being 'un-Lnu', and was experienced as discrimination by recipients of this treatment. The previous discussion of "transactional" and "categorical" identity perspectives (McKenzie & Morrisette, 2003, p. 263) may help to understand why this occurred. The work of Scheff (2008) may shed light on the implications for solidarity development.

Scheff (2008) indicated that total solidarity is only possible in an environment where disagreement can be expressed and divergent opinions are accepted as valid views of the other.

Thus, the inability for participants to feel comfortable expressing themselves within the group is indicative of a lack of complete solidarity within the group.

The lack of complete solidarity within the group may be partially explained by data that indicates it was not generally acknowledged or agreed that Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq possess a collective identity. As collective identity lends itself to the development of solidarity (Saunders, 2008), the perception of lacking a collective identity, or the lack of awareness of a collective identity, may negatively impact solidarity development. Irrespectively, data did point to the existence of a collective Lnu identity. As such, perhaps further discussion in the social networking group of the aspects of collective identity highlighted in this study's data will provide a stronger basis for future solidarity development, based on collective identity.

Weaver (2001) has indicated that the colonial tool of 'registration', which operates under various federal policies to determine who is and is not Indigenous, serves to break one's connection to their Indigenous identity. Indeed, the inability of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq to register has been a part of the assimilatory policies of English, Newfoundland and Canadian governments (Hanrahan, 2003). Denial of registration, combined with the existence of such policies regulating other Indigenous groups, equates to an 'official' diminishment of the Indigenous identity of those denied. Weaver's discussion is supported by data from this study, whereby participants indicated that federal recognition would change external identity perceptions as to who Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq are as an Indigenous People. In addition, it would appear that the possibility of registration is fueling many people who were previously unaware of their Lnu heritage, to learn more about this aspect of their identity. Further, the importance of 'official' recognition to those who lack stereotypical physical features in order to demonstrate one's Indigenous claim (Lawrence, 2004; Weaver, 2001), was also supported by data in this study.

Lawrence (2004) and Weaver's (2001) suggestion that people who become disconnected from their community of origin may connect with other cultural activities of other Indigenous groups in order to reconnect with their Indigenous identity, was supported by the data in this study. Further, the social networking group offered a means for participants to connect with their communities of origin that was not as widely available at the time of Lawrence and Weaver's writing, as it is now. The connection via social networking provided a distinctive kind of support for reconnecting with one's identity, by way of being culturally and community specific. Yet despite recent technological innovation, the kind of in-person connection with other Indigenous groups that Lawrence (2004) and Weaver (2001) described remains vitally important for those living away from their community, as it offers a kind of cultural and spiritual connection that is not possible with social networking technology. Indeed, the ability for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq to connect with other Indigenous groups in whose territories they currently reside, may be a supportive indicator of the pan-Indigenous identity described by Alfred (2005), Young (2003) and Niezen (2003), which Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, and other Indigenous groups share. As well, this may be another point of possibility for the development of pan-Indigenous solidarity. Indeed, given the previous discussion regarding participation in ceremonial activities with other Indigenous groups, and the importance attached to ceremony as a defining aspect of Lnu identity, it may be that Lnu identity (re)development will reflect aspects of this pan-Indigenous cultural involvement.

Issues of use and credibility of information through social networking discussed in the Literature Review were confirmed in this study. For example, Gherab and Martin (2011) pointed to the possibility of information sharing becoming attached to individuals, thereby increasing accountability. Yet, such widespread information sharing in itself lends to concerns regarding

credibility of information (Kolbitsch & Maurer, 2006). Both of these were evident in this study, as data indicated that information shared by Elders was generally deemed to be reliable, however, instances did occur whereby some information was later found to be unfounded. Further, it would appear that group participants relied upon the information sharing done in the social networking group to a greater extent than information that could be obtained from official sources, supporting the notion of what Kolbitsch and Maurer (2006) refer to as increased "personalized" web searches resulting from the use of social networking services (p. 204).

Given these findings, any administrative information sharing strategy should incorporate social networking as an important ingredient. Further, given the lack of cost associated with using Facebook®, administration's running on a budget may find social networking an appealing media tool to update their membership. It is important to note, however, that not all people use social networking, as this study pointed to only a small fraction of the general Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq population as active social networking group users. As such, social networking should be used in combination with other forms of communication, such as newsletters, static web pages and the like.

The potential for social networking as a tool for culture sharing, and community formation and maintenance (Wellman & Gulia, 1999; Winter, 2008) was also supported in this research. Data indicated that though the social networking group lacked the spiritual connection of in-person interaction, it did provide an outlet for sharing and discussion of cultural teachings, history and artistic creation. Further, data indicated that participants viewed social networking as offering an opportunity to strengthen community ties, though this particular social networking group has yet to realize this potential. Indeed, it may enable marginalized groups access to mass media tools that facilitate tapping into a yet unrealized potential for changing the political

landscape. This in turn may lead to the kind of civil unrest that may be necessary for positive change (Alfred, 2005), which can be embraced within the concept of solidarity, but cannot within the concept of social cohesion (Vasta, 2010). Data from this study indicated that this social networking group did have the potential to mobilize participants to action, as evidenced by the creation of an online petition and discussion and support of Elder Calvin White; however, in general this potential was not realized due to lack of direction.

It may be that any missed opportunities identified in this study could be the result of a lack of one very important resource: Time. Nielson (2009) indicated that increased internet traffic and communication exchange evident on social networking services, means the task of moderation is much more time-consuming. Thus, when a group is set up by one individual such as this one was, and subsequently monitored through the efforts of no more than a handful of individuals on the basis of shared personal commitment, one can easily see how a project that extends over many years (such as this one), can become stressful and fatiguing. Thus, it may be useful for people involved with such groups to consider steps to reduce the time involved by recruiting others to assist, setting up a clear agenda, roles and time tables for sharing responsibilities, and perhaps even letting the group 'self-moderate' from time to time, rather than taxing one's abilities beyond reasonable limits.

A number of tensions were evident in this study's data. First, tension is apparent between the significance attached to political discussion, while at the same time such discussion detracting from the group's overall cultural purposes. Tension also existed between how discussions of status were disallowed within the social networking group because status was recognized to be a superficial and misleading identity indicator that had nothing to do with culture, and how participants indicated that federal recognition may impact the external

perceptions of Lnu identity. Tension was also evident between how participants were not cognizant of Lnu collective identity, despite findings of commonalities in identity expression that suggest Lnu collective identity does indeed exist. Tension is also apparent between how social networking offered a place of safety to self-identify as Lnu, while also being a place where some individuals were denied their Lnu identity.

A number of tensions existed around Elders in the group, such as perceptions as to how such individuals should conduct themselves as opposed to actual Elder behaviour, the traditional custom of respect for Elders as opposed to how Elders were actually treated, and perceptions of who was an Elder in the social networking group as opposed to the absence of those well-known Elders in our communities.

Yet another tension was apparent between how participants felt that criticism of band administration detracted from the group, while at the same time identifying that leadership was problematic. There was also tension between how the existence of conflict in general detracted from the experience of the social networking group, while at the same time the literature suggests that some conflict may be necessary in order to maintain focus within the group upon Lnu interests.

Relating these findings to the literature and determining plausible causes for the tensions is helpful, but it is also important to remember what these tensions may represent. Tension can be thought of as conflict or strain, but it can also represent the balance between opposing forces. From an Indigenous holistic perspective, balance is vital to health (Zinck & Marmion, 2011). Thus, these tensions need not be regarded as problems that need to be immediately solved. Rather, one should be mindful to the need to maintain balance. As the social networking group evolves and Lnu'k Ktaqmkuewaq continue the journey of cultural revitalization, some issues will

be resolved and others will be identified. Yet, the need for balance will still remain. From this perspective, tensions of some sort should always exist, as they are indicative of systemic balance. Indeed, from this perspective the existence of these tensions can be viewed as indicators of healthy interaction within the social networking group.

Implications for Practice

This study discussed the potential of social networking to help strengthen Ktaqmkuk Indigenous communities and build solidarity within and across the geographically separated Ktaqmkuk Indigenous communities. In addition, it illustrated how social networking can be used for variety of purposes, such as cultural and traditional language revitalization, sharing of information, maintaining relationships and establishing new ones, and providing a source of support.

Social work is a diverse field that incorporates a variety of activities to improve the welfare of individuals, families and communities. As such, the findings here are pertinent to social workers working with Indigenous People and within Indigenous communities. For example, the findings here may support the use of social networking sites as a tool for mobilization of community support to advocate for Indigenous interests, and resultant policy changes needed to protect and improve the well-being of Indigenous People and communities.

As well, social workers may consider social networking as another support tool for those living away from their communities. This may be very valuable for Indigenous youth and adults who must leave rural communities for education and work opportunities. Social workers considering recommending the use of social networking in this way should also consider some of the possible draw-backs of online activities in general. These may include privacy considerations and excessive time spent engaging in online activities. If suggesting the use of

online social networking as a support tool, social workers should discuss these matters to help protect and inform of these possibly harmful drawbacks.

This study also demonstrated the importance of what online social networking cannot do: Provide a spiritual connection. Ceremony was viewed as an important part of Lnu identity, however, this aspect of our identity cannot be experienced or truly shared through online interaction. This requires connection to one's physical community, and if away from home, connection with the Indigenous community in the territory where one is residing. As such, social workers working with Indigenous People need to recognize that though social networking can be used for connection when living away from home, it cannot replace the need to connect with real communities and real people, in real time.

This study also demonstrated how online social networking can have a positive impact on Indigenous identity through the sharing of information about language, history and familial connection. As well, online social networking groups whose purpose is to provide a place for Indigenous People to connect, may provide a place of safety for self-expression, free from Indigenous discrimination. This suggests that social networking can be used as a decolonization tool, as these virtual spaces can be places used to foster cultural revitalization and to celebrate Indigenous identity. This may be a healing experience for many Indigenous People who have internalized colonial oppression, and have incurred the kind of psychological damage that such internalized oppression can cause. Thus, social workers working with those who engage in damaging externalized behaviours symptomatic of internalized oppression, may use online social networking as a tool to help address the root causes of these pathologies. A discussion of how internalized colonial oppression can result in externalization of negative behaviours, is provided in Hart (2002).

That being said, this study also demonstrated that Indigenous People presenting with no-phenotypic characteristics may face challenges in laying claim to their Indigenous identity. Social workers should be sensitive to this in practice, by acknowledging these challenges and taking steps not to further diminish a person's Indigenous identity because they may not fit a preconceived notion of what a person with Indigenous ancestry should or should not look like.

Further, the findings of this study also suggest a number of considerations for social workers working with Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. In particular, social workers should be sensitive to the historical injustices this group has experienced, and support efforts for cultural resurgence and identity development. For example, social workers should make it a routine part of practice to ask individuals with whom they are working, whether they are Lnu. One should not leave Lnu identification to personal stereotypical assumptions of what an Lnu person should or should not look like. As well, one should not leave the responsibility of self-identifying to the individual, as Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq represent a wide spectrum of identity (re)development experience. Taking the initiative and asking about cultural affiliation may provide an opportunity for discussion about how current and historical events affect the person's life and sense of personhood, and how the individual is coping with these challenges.

As well, social workers should make efforts to provide culturally appropriate services to Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. Failing to recognize the different cultural nuances that this group may present with is akin to continuing the cultural assimilation policies that deliberately eroded the language and culture of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. This may take the form of asking about spiritual beliefs and participation in cultural activities and ceremonies, incorporating the use of Elders or other knowledgeable community consultants in agency settings, ensuring boards and staff have adequate Lnu community representation, or sharing information about opportunities to access

events and activities that support cultural revitalization. Social workers should also make efforts to support language revitalization by incorporating traditional language in publications servicing Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq.

Further, social workers should be conscious of the potential for discrimination, and make efforts to counteract this through respectfully challenging discriminatory perspectives in the workplace and in the community, and by modeling the kind of anti-discriminatory perspective that is foundational to the values of social work. This includes interactions that occur both in-person and in an online environment.

The Memorial University School of Social Work is in a strategic position to promote the kind of practice described here. This can be done by ensuring curriculum sufficiently covers the historical policies and processes that sought to eradicate Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq existence and the importance of decolonization efforts to address these injustices. Further, culturally appropriate instruction is required for social workers to adequately incorporate these principles into their own social work practices. Such an initiative is supported by Baikie and Decker (2003).

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings presented here raise further questions that would be suitable for further research. For example, an area of input that was missing in this study was the perspective of Elders. Research into the experience of being an Elder in social networking groups could ask what skills Elders require in order to maintain a presence in online social networking groups, and what challenges they face filling a traditional role in a non-traditional environment. Similarly, group administrators were omitted in this study. Future research that specifically asks about the experience of group administrators could highlight some of the challenges and rewards of undertaking this kind of community work.

Most of the participants of this study were living away from Ktaqmkuk at the time of data collection. This may be due to the study's online context. Thus, the results here may be more pertinent to those individuals experiencing similar geographic separation from their home community. Therefore, further research is needed regarding solidarity and identity experiences of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq still residing on the island.

Further, future research could be undertaken on this ongoing and expanding group. Using a different approach than the one employed here could potentially build upon this study's findings, while capitalizing on the strengths other methods and methodological approaches offer, providing a different perspective from strictly that of social networking group participants. For example, contextual analysis of group posts may provide further information about the group's content and processes, and possibly further information about collective Lnu identity markers. Indigenous research methodologies may provide further insight into Lnu community issues and processes.

As well, the findings here suggest that online social networking should be incorporated in a community communication strategy. Some evaluation work could potentially be done to support such an initiative, to determine its effectiveness and means for improvement.

As well, the findings here suggest that this social networking group is a living depository of Lnu oral histories of families and communities. Future work may include gathering these stories together. This could possibly be done using a narrative, ethnographic or Indigenous methodologies approach. As indicated in Chapter Three of this study, methodologies that do not include decolonization as a central purpose, should be compatible with an Indigenous worldview and capable of being combined with an Indigenous theoretical or conceptual framework that incorporates recognition of the negative impact of colonization on Indigenous People(s), and by

extension, have a decolonization purpose. As indicated by Wilson (2008), as long as one is working from an Indigenous conceptual framework, one is free to choose whichever methods serve the purpose.

That being said, one of the struggles I experienced with undertaking this work was trying to negotiate the use of technology as an instrument for gathering data while at the same time honouring traditional Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. Indeed, Wilson (2008) also indicated that some methods may seem more suitable than others due to their congruence with Indigenous values. Further research may be warranted in this area, in order to advance discussion about the strengths and limitations of using internet communication technology from the standpoint of traditional Indigenous epistemology and ontology.

Concluding Remarks

To synthesize the above discussion and general findings, the social networking group participants experienced aspects of solidarity such as a sense of community, support and sharing of information resources. Further, political discussion was stimulated, despite this being outside the intended scope of the group. While participants felt that this political discussion was important, political conflict detracted from the group experience. Study participants viewed conflict in general as a negative experience within the group, however, some conflict may be necessary in order to maintain a focus on Lnu interests, and/or to challenge community political monopolies.

Leadership limitations were seen as an issue that extended to the experience within the social networking group, and appeared to be a potential source of division within the group and the larger community. In particular, the role of Elder in leadership and leadership development appeared to be problematic, both within and outside the social networking group. Work in the

area of leadership development that includes a focus on the non-gender specific "neo-colonial warrior" that Alfred (2005) has discussed, may be worthwhile for future leadership development.

Lnu collective identity appeared to be a yet untapped potential area for building solidarity. Conscious efforts in this direction should be mindful of the extensive racial mixing of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. Indeed, rigid definitions of identity based on physical attributes are not useful, and served to cause conflict and division in the social networking group. Further, for many Lnu'k identity is something that is new and under development. As such, discussion about collective identity may be useful. Indeed, discussion about commonalities in general may be useful, keeping in mind the need to respectful and accepting of the spectrum of possible difference among Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq.

Federal recognition was seen as having a positive impact on external perceptions of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. Further, federal recognition was seen as a means to bridge Indigenous identity for those lacking stereotypical Indigenous physical attributes. Given the racial mixing of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq, combined with the aforementioned perception that external perceptions are positively impacted by federal recognition, registration may have significance for Lnu identity.

Social networking can be useful in overcoming geographic obstacles to maintaining community connections. Further, social networking can provide an opportunity to expand the existing community network based on singular geographic location, to encompass people and resources from other territorial areas.

Social networking was limited in its ability build spiritual solidarity. Alfred (2005) has indicated that an Indigenous spiritual solidarity is a necessary ingredient to build unity among Indigenous Peoples, across community and nation divides. Online social networking cannot

provide this. That being said, social networking does provide the access to mass media that Alfred (2005) also indicates is another necessary ingredient for Indigenous mobilization.

Given that most of the participants of this study were living away from Ktaqmkuk during data collection, results may reflect the perspectives of those living away and who rely upon social networking for a continued connection with their community, and who are striving to regain a sense of Lnu identity. Thus, results should be interpreted within the framework of the perspectives from which its data was derived, and may not be directly applicable to the entire spectrum of identities represented among Lnu'k Ktaqmkuk. For example, more colonized expressions of Lnu identity are not represented in this work. Further, only one participant was living in Ktaqmkuk. Though the differences (if any) between those who live away and those who are able to remain on the island are as yet unknown, caution should be used when applying the results here to Lnu'k Ktaqmkuk residing on the island.

Though this study focused upon the experience of social networking, I want to end with emphasizing the importance of maintaining a physical connection to one's community. Though as this study suggests, social networking can sustain one while away from one's community, it cannot replace it. Indeed, I would not have been able to complete this research had I not returned home for a three-week period at the end of this journey. Being physically immersed in one's community provides a completely different perspective, and though having to live away does not make one less Lnu, home does provide a qualitatively different experience of being Lnu.

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UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA | **Faculty of Social Work**

521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada   R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Social_Work@UManitoba.CA

Appendix A

Study Participant Consent Form

Project title: The Solidarity Experience of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq Participating in an Online Social Networking Group

Principal Investigator: Terri Louise Darrigan, MSW Student, Social Work, University of Manitoba, umdarrig@cc.umanitoba.ca

Research Supervisor: Dr. Michael Anthony Hart, Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Work, 204-474-9237, mhart@cc.umanitoba.ca

This consent form, a copy of which will be provided to you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

You are being invited to be interviewed by the researcher regarding your experience of solidarity during participation in a social networking group developed for Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq. This research is being conducted by Terri Louise Darrigan (of Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation) as a master's thesis, under the supervision of the faculty advisor Dr. Michael Anthony Hart, at the University of Manitoba. The primary goal of the study is to learn how involvement in social networking groups can help Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq build solidarity. Interviews will be conducted through an email dialogue. Information will be provided to you in this form regarding steps you can take to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of your email for this study.

In order to participate in this study, you must be at least eighteen years of age or older, be of Lnu'k Ktaqmkukewaq ancestry, and be an active participant of the social networking group. For the purposes of this study, active participation is defined as checking into the group approximately once every two weeks, to read and/or write posts.

You will be asked several questions that will focus upon aspects of solidarity, as you experienced it within the group. For example, you will be asked about your sense of Lnu
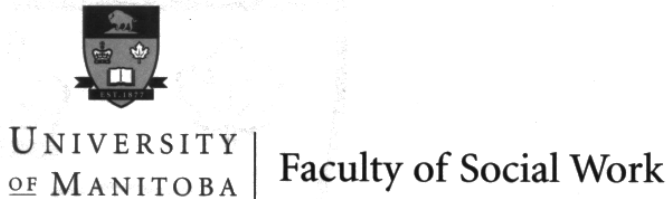
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identity development within the group, and may be asked about the group's influence on your relationships with other Lnu'k, or the kinds of activities you engaged in both on and offline as a result of participating in the group. The researcher may ask additional questions in order to obtain clarification or further elaboration on your responses.

Responses to questions will take about two hours to complete. You may choose to skip over any questions you do not wish to answer. The email interview must be completed by December 2012. You may decide to terminate your involvement at any time. Your decision to participate or decline participation in this study is entirely yours, and will not have any impact on your membership in this social networking group or your future participation in it.

Your responses, as well as the researcher's own experience in the group, will form the data for this study. Though interpretation of the information you provide is primarily the responsibility of the researcher, the researcher will check with you frequently over the course of the study to ensure that interpretation of your information is accurate. Also, during the process of interpreting your information, measures will be taken to ensure that the researcher's own experience within the group does not overshadow the information you provide about your experience.

At the end of the project, which will be in 02/13, you will have the option of receiving *a* brief summary of the findings. As well, at the end of the project the researcher will be presenting the findings to a thesis committee for approval and publication. A copy of the final publication will be made available in the library of the University of Manitoba, and online in the University of Manitoba's electronic thesis collection. In addition, the researcher may attempt to publish the findings or present them at professional conferences. In all cases, however, the researcher will do so without revealing identifying information such as names, addresses, age, sex, place of employment, place of residence, etc. Nonetheless, given the relatively small number of members in the social networking group in relation to the general Lnu'k population, and that other group members may have read your posts and witnessed the experiences you discuss, there is a risk that some elements of your story may be identifiable by others. The researcher will only use quotations from the email discussion after removing identifying details and/or paraphrasing them, so they cannot be attributed to any single person.

If you are a group administrator, or somehow involved in the administration of the social networking group, and would like to participate in this study, you are very welcome to do so. Your contributions to this study may be very important. It is also important to understand, however, that your special status within the group may increase your vulnerability to being identified as a participant in this study. Your experience within the group is unique among participants and the information you share may more easily identify you as being one of the
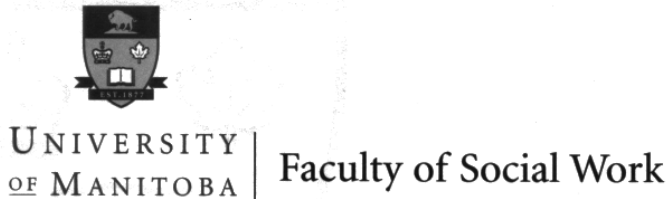
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group administrators. Further, as a group administrator you are more visible and recognizable to others who have read your postings. As such, the information you share about your experience may be easily identifiable. The researcher asks that you give consideration to these additional risks before agreeing to participate.

Optionally, you may wish to be identified in the study. If any participant wishes to be identified for their contributions to this study, they may do so by indicating their consent at the end of this form.

The researcher conducting this study is also a member of this social networking group. Therefore, it is possible that you may know the researcher, or the researcher may know you, through your interactions in the group. Above all, the researcher will not refer to or discuss any of the information you provide for the study, when participating in the social networking group during the study or after it is complete. The only persons who will have access to information collected in the project are the researcher and the research supervisor. All information will be kept strictly confidential. Documents related to the interviews will be stored on the researcher's password-protected personal computer. Digital copies of your emails will be stored on a flash drive in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. Original emails will be completely erased from the researcher's hard drive after each question is complete. Your responses will be entered into a data analysis software program and all personal identifiers will be removed during that process. Data containing personal identifiers will be destroyed immediately after the study is complete, in 02/13. All documents will be shredded and/or deleted one year later, in 02/14.

Your privacy, and the confidentiality of the information you contribute to this study, is important. As such, your email should be password protected, and if possible, encrypted. If at all possible, please use a home computer.

If you do not have a computer at home and only have access to a shared public computer, it is unlikely you will be able to use encrypted email, and your information may be at risk of being accessed by other persons. You may minimize this risk somewhat by never clicking 'remember passwords', always remembering to delete your history and logging out of any email service you may be using on a shared public computer.

The researcher will send you an email with her public key. This will allow you to encrypt the email you send to the researcher, rendering it unreadable for anyone who may intercept it over the internet. If you already use encrypted email, you may provide the researcher with your public key as well, so email she sends you will also be encrypted.
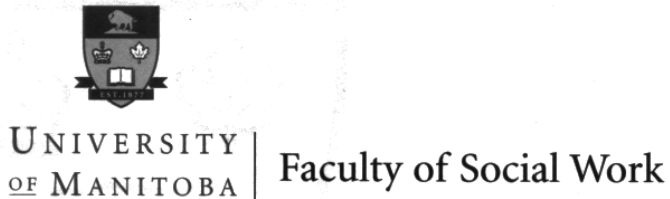
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521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada   R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Social_Work@UManitoba.CA

If you have not used encrypted email before, below is an easy step-by-step process to help you set it up. If you do not want to use the instructions below that will permit the researcher to encrypt her email to you, you can still participate without it. There are risks to this, however. For example, email is stored on servers and people having access to servers (employees at your internet service provider, for example) can access and read these email. Further, email can be intercepted through various other unethical means and the contents read. Encryption ensures your information will remain confidential. Only someone with access to the email account on your computer can read your encrypted email.

An easy way to set up encrypted email is through Thunderbird's 'enigmail' add-on. You will need to install GnuPG. It is available for free from here: http://www.gnupg.org/.

Next, install Thunderbird email on your computer. It is available for free from here: http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/thunderbird/all.html. Once installed, run it.

Install your existing email address on Thunderbird by going on the main menu and clicking File, New and Mail Account. This can be any email address you already use. Enter your email address and password and Thunderbird will complete the process.

Next, on the main menu click Tools, then click Add-ons. In the search box at the top left, enter 'enigmail'. Once it pops up on the screen, click the Install button. The program will now ask you to restart Thunderbird, say yes.

On the main menu click 'OpenPGP', then Key Management. The Key Wizard will open in a new window. Click Generate and then click New Key Pair. You should also enter a pass phrase on this screen. As there is no way to retrieve your pass phrase, make sure it is something you will remember and write it down somewhere. The program will now generate your keys. This may take a few minutes. A window will pop up confirming completion.

Next, generate a Revocation Key, in case you lose your private key or it is somehow compromised. Save this on a disk or flash drive.

Lastly, send the researcher an email with your public key. You can do this by composing an email to umdarrig@cc.umanitoba.ca, selecting OpenPGP on the very top menu and then clicking Send My Public Key.

Email the researcher sends to you can now be encrypted as well. Each time you send an email, click 'OpenPGP' on the email window and click 'encrypt'. Also, you can add a digital
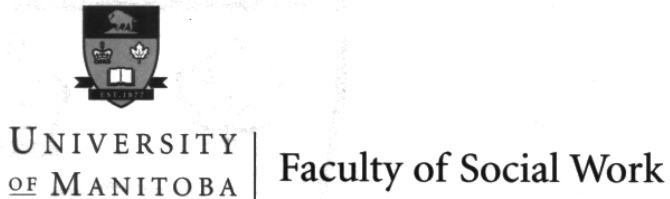
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521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada   R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Social_Work@UManitoba.CA

signature from the same menu. You can use this option for signing the consent form for participation, rather than faxing back the form with an ink signature.

If you have any problems with this process and want to ensure your email is encrypted, please contact the researcher for further assistance.

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. You may fax it back to 1-807-486-1626. If faxing the form, please include your email address on the line indicated below. Optionally, you may email this form back to the researcher at umdarrig@cc.umanitoba.ca with your digital signature included in the email. This is considered equivalent for the purposes of communicating consent.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher from her 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 Research Ethics Board(s) and a representative(s) of the University of Manitoba Research Quality Management / Assurance office may also require access to your research records for safety and quality assurance purposes.

This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 1-204-474-7122. A copy of this consent form, with researcher signature, will be emailed to you to keep for your records and reference.

If you agree to each of the following, please place a check mark in the corresponding box. If you do not agree, leave the box blank:

1. I have read or had read to me the details of this consent form. ( )

2. My questions have been addressed. ( )

3. I, _____ (print name), agree to participate in this study. ( )

UNIVERSITY ᴏꜰ MANITOBA | **Faculty of Social Work**

521 Tier Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada   R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-7050
Fax (204) 474-7594
Social_Work@UManitoba.CA

4.   I agree to be contacted by e-mail if further information is required after the interview. ( )

5.   a) I agree to have the findings (which may include quotations) from this project published or presented in a manner that does not reveal my identity. ( )

OR

      b) I agree to have the findings (which may include quotations) from this project published or presented in a manner that reveals my identity. ( )

6.   Do you wish to receive a summary of the findings? ( ) Yes ( ) No

7.   How do you wish to receive the summary?( ) E-mail   ( ) Surface mail

Email:_____

Address: _____

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix B

Facebook® Wall Post

The following information will be posted by the researcher to the 'wall' of the social networking group. The purpose of this post is to draw participant's attention to the study's consent form, which will be posted in the 'Documents' section of the group. This post may be repeated a number of times in order to ensure that participants have had the opportunity to read it, and to attract sufficient numbers of participants to the study. The 'wall' posting will read:

> Information has been posted to the 'Documents' section of the group regarding
>
> participation in a study. Please read the document titled 'Study Participant Consent Form'
>
> for information on an opportunity to provide your input about your experience
>
> participating in this group.

Further, should any member post to the wall asking a question about the study, the researcher will respond to the member's query with a reply on the group's wall. This is to ensure that any other members who may have similar questions, will also be privy to the information provided.

Appendix C

The primary question for this study is: 'Identity is about how you see yourself, how others see you and how you feel others may see you. Describe how you think your Lnu identity has been impacted by participation in the group'.

Other possible questions that may be asked in order to stimulate further discussion in the interview, are as follows:

8. How did you find out about the group?

9. Why did you join the group?'

10. Describe the kinds of posts/discussion activities that you have read and/or engaged in within this group.

11. Describe how this group has provided an opportunity to learn or discuss issues important to you as Lnu. What are these issues and how are they important to you?

12. Describe any 'off-line' (in-person) activities that you have been involved in, or intend to become involved in, as a result of participation in this group.

13. Describe how you feel participation in this group has impacted your relationships with other Lnu'k, in your family, extended family, community and beyond.

14. Describe the most valuable aspects of participating in these groups.

15. Describe anything you would change about your experience in the group (can be more than one thing).