2016

UNDERSTANDING INUIT AND WORK: AN EXAMINATION OF CULTURAL FACTORS TO DEVELOP TAILORED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

FINAL REPORT | PHASE 1

STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE
Regroupement québécois des organismes
pour le développement de l'employabilité

REGROUPEMENT QUÉBÉCOIS DES ORGANISMES
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We acknowledge the financial support of the Kativik Regional Government, the Canadian Career Development Foundation and the Government of Canada.

ISBN : 978-2-9807438-3-2 (PDF)
978-2-9807438-4-9 (Print)

Legal Deposit: Library and Archives Canada, 2016
Legal Deposit: Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2016

Canada

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Table of Content

List of Tables III
List of Figures III
List of Abbreviations IV
Summary V
Acknowledgements V

Cahpter 1 - Introduction 1

Theoretical Framework 2
Methodology 3
Ethical Considerations 4
Limitations 4

Chapter 2 - Context 7

Geography 7
Political Aspects 9
Demography 14
Society 15
Health 21
Religion 24
Education 24
Language 27
Culture 29

Chapter 3 - Economy and Employment 31

Economic Indicators 31
The Labour Market 33
A Costly Gap 36
Employment Challenges 36

Chapter 4 - Cultural Identity and Self-concept 41

Survival 41
Humility 43
Resilience 43
Cultural Authenticity 44

Chapter 5 - Values and Beliefs 47
Family and Community 47
The Land 49
Time 50
The Role of Education 52
Work and Career 54
Relationship to Money and Paid Work 57

Chapter 6 - Social Dynamics 59
Family Relationships 59
Generational Differences 61
Community Dynamic 63
Inuit-Qallunaat Dynamic 65

Chapter 7 - Communication Styles 69
The Importance of the Language 69
Oral and Non-Verbal Tradition 70
Direct Communication 71
Expressing Emotion 71
Direct Questioning 72
Silences 73
Humour and Metaphor 73

Chapter 8 - Learning Methods 75
Collectivism 75
Observation and experimentation 76
Theory and Abstract Concepts 77
Problem-Solving 78
The Importance of Models 78
Pedagogical Methods 79

Chapter 9 - Conclusion 81

Glossary 83

Bibliography 85

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. The Inuit population in Nunavik and in Montreal 8

Table 2. Age-standardized mortality rates for 100,000 person-years at risk, by sex and cause of death, population aged 1 to 19, in Canada and in Inuit Nunangat, 2004–2008 22

Table 3. Graduation rates (%) of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals aged 18 to 44 (2012) 25

Table 4. Percentage of the Inuit population able to conduct a conversation in an Inuit language (self-identified), by area of residence, Canada, 2011 28

Table 5. Distribution, number and percentage, of regular, full-time jobs by sex and status, Nunavik, 2011 34

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Map of Inuit Nunangat 7

Figure 2. Consumer price indexes by product category, Nunavik, 2011 (as compared to Québec = 100) 32

Figure 3. Percentage of full-time jobs that require a post-secondary diploma or a trades certification in Nunavik, 2011 34

Figure 4. Number of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries working full-time in the main industries in Nunavik, 2011 35

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AANDC	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
APS	Aboriginal Peoples Survey
CCC	Child Care Centre
CPB	Child Protection Branch
CDPDJ	Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
INSPQ	Institut national de santé publique du Québec
ISQ	Institut de la statistique du Québec
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
JBNQA	James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement
KRG	Kativik Regional Government
KSB	Kativik School Board
LFA	Labour Force Survey
NHS	National Household Survey
NLC	Nunavut Literacy Council
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RCAP	Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

SUMMARY

Since the Fall of 2013, the Regroupement québécois des organismes pour le développement de l'employabilité (RQUODE; a Québec-based coalition of organizations involved in employability development) has been researching the key indicators needed to develop a tailored employability intervention for Inuit clients. This research has benefited from the multi-stakeholder partnership responsible for creating the two Ivirtivik Centres and was funded in part by the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) and the Kativik Regional Government (KRG). The goal of this study is to better support the transition of adult Inuit living in Montreal and Nunavik, who are often under-represented in the workforce, into the labour market. In addition to providing a brief political, social, and economic history of the Inuit population in Quebec, the first phase of the project explores the specific characteristics related to the employability of Inuit clients for the purpose of developing a tailored employability intervention. The research team conducted key informant interviews and a scan of the literature to identify the major foundations of traditional Inuit culture and organized them into five themes: cultural identity and self-concept, values and beliefs, social dynamics, communication styles, and learning methods. During the second phase of this project, we will create a reference guide that will act as a resource for the counselors who work with Inuit clients. The goal of this guide is to support counselors in tailoring the career development process and employability interventions to meet the needs of Inuit clients.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report could not have been completed without the collaboration and support of many people.

First and foremost, we must acknowledge the invaluable contribution of all the interview participants. Thank you so much for your interest, generosity, and openness.

We would also like to thank everyone who reviewed and provided feedback on earlier drafts of this report, in particular, Edwidge Desjardins (Université du Québec à Montréal), Richard Desrosiers (Kativik Regional Government), Patricia Dionne (Université de Sherbrooke), Denis Lefebvre, Loïc Lenen (P.S. Jeunesse) and Geneviève Motard (Université Laval). Your comments and suggestions significantly contributed to improving this report; however, we take full responsibility for any errors or omissions.

Finally, this study benefited from the financial support of the Kativik Regional Government and the Canadian Career Development Foundation. We also acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada for the translation of the report.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In the 2011 Census, 59,000 individuals reported that they were Inuit, i.e., approximately 4.2% of the total Canadian Aboriginal population and 0.2% of the entire Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2013c, p. 14–15). The Inuit's long, historical tradition of resilience and survival has allowed them to successfully overcome many day-to-day obstacles and preserve their ancestral culture. Across Canada, Inuit communities confront diverse social, cultural, and economic issues, including access to housing, education and work (Anctil, 2008; KRG – Kativik Regional Government, 2011a; Belisimbi, 2008; Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013). In the face of these difficulties, the young Inuit population—and, more generally, Aboriginal[1] youth—will be called upon to fill an increasingly larger proportion of available jobs in the future, due in part to an aging population (AANDC, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2014a).

Many studies have explored the diverse groups of individuals characterized as being "distant from the labour market"— whether due to a criminal record, being a new immigrant or a high school drop-out— and have highlighted the need to adapt employability interventions to respond to their needs. Several authors also address skills development within Canada's Aboriginal communities, often combining First Nations, Inuit, and Métis in the same category (Antone and Gamlin, 2002; Battiste, 2002; CCL – Canadian Council on Learning, 2008; Cordoba, 2006; George, 2008; Klinga, 2012). Despite the impressive body of academic work in career development and the expertise developed in the field while working with clients, when it comes to the cultural reality and needs of Inuit clients, conventional counselling and job preparation tools fall short (Darou, 1987; Mccormick, 1998; Sue, Arredondo and McDavis, 1992; Sue and Sue, 1990). Faced with a scarcity of tools and resources specifically designed to promote the job integration and retention of this emerging group, it seemed essential to study the specific characteristics of the Inuit culture that might affect their efforts to enter the labour market. The ultimate goal of this project is to design resources and tailor services that are grounded in an Inuit perspective to more effectively respond to their needs.

Before developing an intervention approach adapted to meet the needs of the Inuit population, we first explore the complexities of their geographic, political, demographic, social, and cultural history. We then present a brief overview of the major economic indicators and the employment context for Inuit, particularly in Nunavik, to enable us to better understand the contextual challenges related to professional integration faced by this group. Based on a review of the literature and key informant interviews, the third part of this report identifies the primary characteristics of traditional Inuit culture that affect employment interventions. Before turning to the analysis, we will establish the main foundations of this study, including the theoretical framework, the methodology, and ethical considerations, as well as evaluate the potential contribution of this research and its limitations.

1 See Appendix I for a glossary of important terms.

Theoretical Framework

In order to offer the Inuit communities of Montreal and Nunavik a career development approach that responds to their unique needs and cultural realities, we must first consider their distinctive sociocultural characteristics as well as their barriers to employment. Culturally responsive education theory purports that interventions should recognize, respect, and make use of traditional values, beliefs, and contemporary realities at the heart of Inuit culture "as meaningful sources for creating optimal learning environments [...] Being culturally responsive is more than being respectful, empathetic, or sensitive" (Klump and McNeir, 2005, p. 2). From this perspective, Thomas defines the cultural relevance of an approach as being "the delivery of programs and services so that they are consistent with the cultural identity, communication styles, meaning systems and social networks of clients, program participants, and other stakeholders" (2002, p. 51).

Although some studies refute the effectiveness of adapting Western counselling approaches to clients from other cultures, most authors recognize that "in each counselling situation, the counsellor must be alert to differences between themselves and the client, must determine how these differences shape the client's perceptions, and must then adjust strategies to fit the client" (Korhonen, 2004b , p. 137). Thus, it seems impossible to ignore the cultural dimension in the career or employability development process:

> *Culture is relevant for career practices with all clients. Clients have unique experiences that influence both career-related issues and available resources. Some individuals are positioned as outsiders, or others, in the social construction of culture, on the basis of their ethnicity, gender, religion, ability, sexual orientation, age, and/or social class. The salience of culture for career issues shifts over time and context. (Arthur and Collins, 2011, p. 147)*

In order to be effective, employability interventions and career development—two fundamentally Western concepts—must be adapted to the Inuit culture. According to several authors, many theories, models and interventions in education, psychotherapy, and career counselling, have a tendency to reflect the dominant society's values and characteristics (Arthur and Popadiuk, 2010; O'Connor, Small and Cooney, 2007; McCormick, 1998; McCormick and Amundson, 1997; Minor, 1992; Sue, Arredondo and McDavis, 1992).

> *Theories of career development and models of career counseling contain cultural assumptions. The cultural validity of theories and models based on Western values and tenets, such as individualism and autonomy, the centrality of the work role, affluence, and the linearity or progressive nature of career development, may have limited utility for clients whose worldview is more aligned with collectivistic values. (Arthur and Collins, 2011, p. 147–148)*

In the last few years, a number of authors have addressed the cultural skills that employment and career development counsellors need (Arthur, 2008; Collins and Arthur, 2010a, 2010b; Leong, 2011, 2010). Drawing on earlier research regarding multicultural counselling conducted by Sue and Sue (1990) and Sue, Arredondo and McDavis (1992), Arthur and Collins (2011) advance a conceptual framework of "culture-infused career counselling." This model, which incorporates a more inclusive definition of culture and practice (Collins and Arthur, 2010a), is based on three fundamental areas of competency:

1. The counsellors' understanding and awareness of their own cultural identity, which, among other things, influences their views of the world and of work, their regard for others, and their values.
2. Knowledge and understanding of the client's cultural identity, "including understanding the organizational, social, economic, and political contexts that affect presenting concerns; client career development behavior; and client perspectives on the meaning and relevance of career-related interventions" (Arthur and Collins, 2011, p. 148).

3. Establishing a working relationship with the client that is both effective and sensitive to cultural differences and characterized by an agreement as to the goals pursued and each partner's task in a context of collaboration, trust, and respect (Arthur and Collins, 2011).

This culture-infused career counselling framework recognizes not only the necessity to take into account clients' cultural identities, which includes their world views and belief systems (McCormick and Amundson, 1997), but also the potential influence the counsellors' culture—often rooted in the social mainstream—might have on the client-counsellor relationship.

In short, despite the multitude of qualifiers ("cultural appropriateness", "culturally responsive", "multicultural", "culturally pluralistic", etc.) and how they are used in a range of counselling-related areas, these inter-cultural theories imply a framework of analysis based on the recognition of cultural differences, without hierarchy or judgement, and their repercussions on intervention practices. In keeping with the fundamental premise of this study, these theories illustrate the importance of adapting strategies and techniques to the population's sociocultural characteristics.

Methodology

The goal of this qualitative, exploratory study was to identify the essential principles of the Inuit culture and how they relate to employability. The study was informed by a scan of the literature and through semi-structured interviews with key informants. Research that specifically addressed the Inuit was given priority. The sources reviewed were primarily focused on the province of Quebec (Nunavik and Montreal); however, researchers also looked at studies conducted elsewhere in Canada, including Nunavut.

Twenty-six (26) key informants, including respected members of the Inuit community, counsellors, researchers and representatives from Inuit organizations, were interviewed in Nunavik (Inukjuak and Kuujjuaq), Montreal and Ottawa, in order to capture their perspectives on Inuit cultural characteristics and their impacts on different types of employability interventions. Participants were selected according to the following criteria:

- a comprehensive understanding of Inuit culture;
- involvement within the Inuit community or experience working with Inuit clients; and
- 18 years or older.

The semi-structured interviews included open-ended questions that enabled respondents to elaborate on their responses in the interview. This approach also allowed for additional and unexpected themes to emerge, which contributed to a rich analysis. The interviews were conducted in person in French or English and recorded with the participants' approval. Excerpts of the interviews were then transcribed for the purposes of analysis (Savoie-Zajc, 2009).

When analyzing the data, we paid particular attention to Inuit in an urban context, since very few anthropological studies have addressed this specific group (Kishigami, 2008). When appropriate, we drew parallels between Inuit in urban and non-urban settings, which made it possible to gain a better understanding of the intervention challenges present in each of these two distinct contexts. Unfortunately, the scope and depth of the analysis was limited by the meager data available on Inuit in urban settings.

Finally, the triangulation of the data collected provided an opportunity to cross-check the results, which grounded the research in a more thorough analysis.

Ethical Considerations

This project's major ethical considerations were related to the key informant interviews, specifically issues of informed consent and confidentiality. Respondents were informed about the study's goals, their right to withdraw from the study at any time and their right to refuse to answer any question during the interview process. Excerpts from the qualitative interviews are reproduced in this report in order to illustrate results or conclusions drawn from the research. In order to ensure the confidentiality of respondents, the sources of direct quotes are identified only by the location where those interviewed work (Inukjuak, Kuujjuaq, Montreal or Ottawa). To respect the participants' privacy, Inuit origin is not mentioned at all. The use of the third person (e.g., "they" or "their"), a form adopted by several Inuit respondents during the interview process, does not necessarily coincide with the cultural origin of the person questioned.

Limitations

As for the validity and the reliability of the data collected, certain limitations related to how this study was conducted and should be mentioned.

First of all, it should be noted that responses may be biased due to the respondent's professional position or social or cultural pressure. Furthermore, as with any research project, the very presence of the researchers as well as their outsider position might affect the participants' responses. Also, despite the precautions taken, it is possible that researchers were influenced by their own cultural and socioeconomic biases in the analysis. Because interviews were conducted in English rather than in Inuktitut, it should be noted that, in the case of some Inuit respondents, linguistic and cultural barriers might have hampered the data collection process. Finally, given budgetary and time constraints, the collection of primary data was limited to a small number of interviews (i.e., 12 interviews in an urban context and 14 interviews in Nunavik). Although more than half of the participants or key informants contacted were from the Inuit community, only a third of the interviews (9 out of 26) were conducted with Inuit respondents, both in the North and the South, primarily due to geographic and contextual factors. Despite the small number of interviews, the diversity of participant profiles still allowed for the attainment of a certain level of theoretical saturation (Savoie-Zajc, 2007). It is important to mention, however, that the selection criteria based on community involvement unintentionally generated a sample group of respondents that was, for the most part, employed. Since the participants' socioeconomic profile could not be collected, out of respect for individuals' privacy, determining the impact of the socioeconomic context on the collection of data was not possible.

Although those working in the employment and career development services sector are well aware of the needs of the Inuit, research and resources to support this group is limited and often outdated. While validating the need for this study, the lack of available and current studies also complicated the data collection process. With regards to quantitative data, the most significant limitation stemmed from the insufficient and inconsistent statistics regarding the Inuit population in Canada. At times, statistics were grouped together into a single category termed "Aboriginal" or simply excluded from data collection due to geographical remoteness, or because the sample was too small. For example, Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFA), which provides information on employment and unemployment, excludes "persons living on reserves and other Aboriginal settlements in the provinces" (Statistics Canada, 2015b). In addition, the LFA's national estimates do not take into account the results from the territories, which are presented separately.

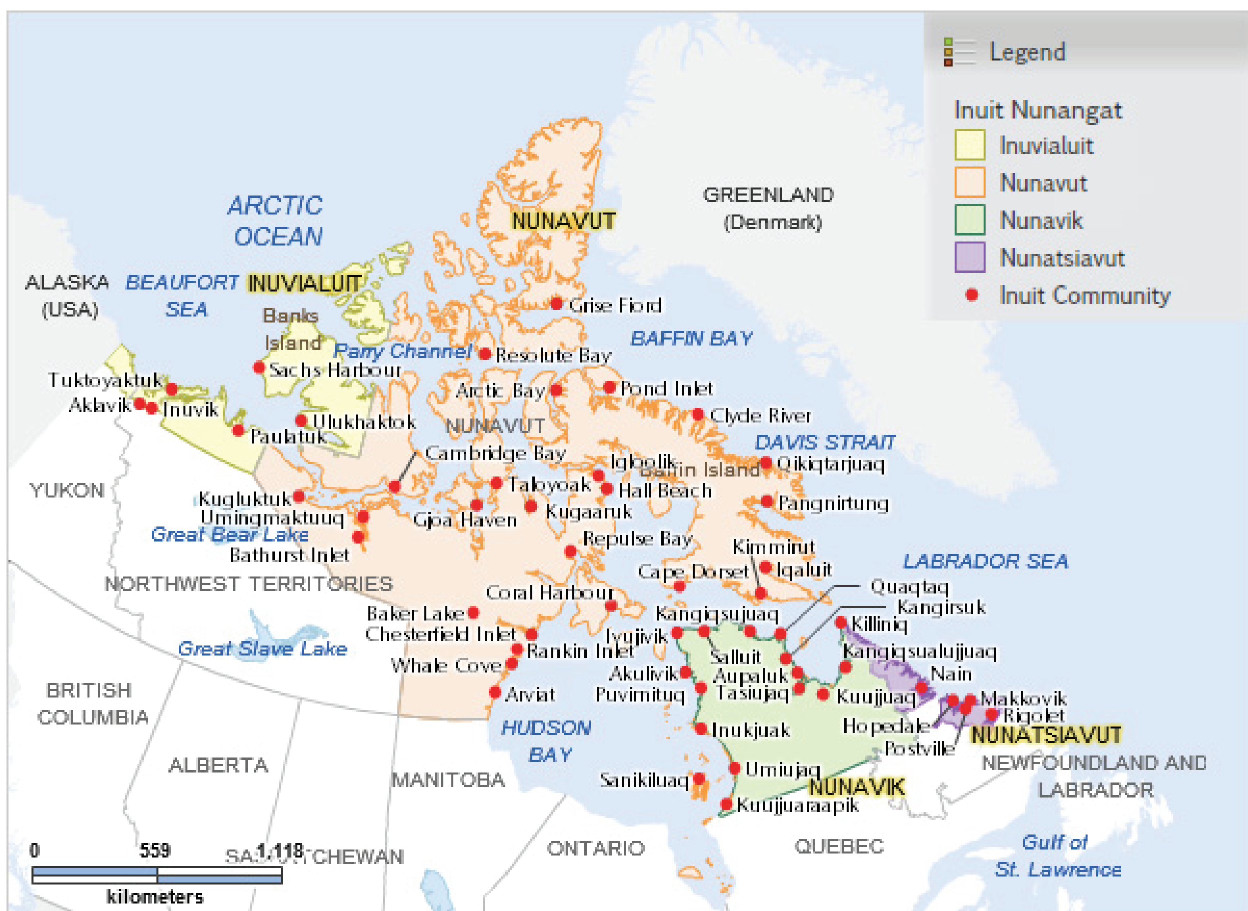
However, given the potential impacts of this research project on the socio-professional integration of the Inuit, these limitations do not undermine its importance. The goal of this research is to optimize employability intervention methods used within Inuit communities by raising awareness and improving understanding of the Inuit's specific cultural characteristics in relation to professional development. Before analyzing the foundation of traditional Inuit culture, we will now briefly examine the socio-political context of the Inuit population in Canada, with particular attention to Inuit living in Quebec when statistics were available.

Context

Inuit are differentiated from other Aboriginal peoples in Canada by, among other things, geography, culture, history, and language. In addition, many political, cultural, social, and economic changes influenced by colonization, the church, trade, and the policies of successive governments have also significantly altered the way of life and social organization in Inuit northern communities over the last decades.

Geography

Figure 1. Map of Inuit Nunangat



Source: AANDC, 2014b

Three quarters of the Inuit population live in Inuit Nunangat, a vast territory that extends from the north of Labrador to the Northwest Territories and accounts for more than one third of Canada's total land mass. Of this three quarters, more than 10,800 Inuit live in Nunavik (18%), a region of Northern Quebec that stretches over more than 500,000 square kilometers to the north of the 55th parallel. As for the Nunavut territory, it is home to nearly half of the Inuit population in Canada (i.e., 46% or 27,070 individuals), while Nunatsiavut, north of Labrador, and the Inuvialuite region of the Northwest Territories are home to 4% and 6% respectively of the country's Inuit. Finally, a growing proportion of the Inuit population lives in urban (17%) or rural (5%) areas outside of Inuit Nunangat (e.g., in Edmonton (1.9%), Montreal (1.5%), and Ottawa-Gatineau (1.2%)) (Statistics Canada, 2013c, p. 14–15).

According to the last national census (2011), roughly 10,800 Inuit are spread out over 14 villages in Nunavik, each with a population between 195 and 2,375 inhabitants. Several hundred kilometres separate these villages located on the banks of Hudson Bay and Ungava Bay (Makivik Corporation, n.d.). Given that there are no roads connecting these villages or linking the villages to the south of the province, the Inuit communities rely almost exclusively on sea and air transportation. The Inuit make up more than 89% of Nunavik's population (Statistics Canada, 2013c, p. 14). In Kuujjuaq, that proportion drops to 78%. Of all of the Inuit communities in Northern Quebec, this central village is home to the highest number of non-Aboriginals (22% or more than 500 inhabitants in 2011) (Statistics Canada, 2014). In addition to differences in population numbers, significant social variances exist between Nunavik's 14 villages, and are most noted between the Hudson Bay and Ungava Bay communities (NRBHSS – Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, 2011, p. 28).

Table 1. The Inuit Population in Nunavik and in Montreal

CITIES AND TOWNS	RESIDENT INUIT POPULATION
Akulivik	585
Aupaluk	175
Chisasibi (Inuit area outside Nunavik)	65
Inukjuak	1,515
Ivujivik	350
Kangiqsualujjuaq (including Killiniq)	810
Kangiqsujuaq	640
Kangirsuk	510
Kuujjuaq	1,785
Kuujjuarapik	495
Puvirnituq	1,560
Quaqtaq	340
Salluit	1,265
Tasiujaq	285
Umiujaq	440
Montreal	900
Total population	**11,720**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2014

Aside from Nunavik, which forms part of Inuit Nunangat, the city of Montreal is home to an Inuit community of about 900 individuals (Statistics Canada, 2013c, p. 15). Other sources estimate that between 1,000 to 1,200 Inuit live in the Montreal area (MSSS – Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux, 2014; Makivik Corporation, 2012a). However, given the absence of official statistics pertaining to the urban Inuit population, it is impossible to determine a figure with any accuracy.

The Inuit are influenced by a number of factors—pull and push—when deciding to leave their village and settle, either temporarily or permanently, in an urban setting. On the one hand, Quebec's Inuit are attracted to urban areas for post-secondary education, job opportunities, and a wealth of health care facilities. On the other hand, housing shortages in Nunavik, the high cost of living in the north, and personal, marital, family and social problems, as well as transfer to a detention centre, might compel Inuit to emigrate toward the south (MSSS, 2014; Savoie and Cornez, 2014; Makivik Corporation, 2012a). Regardless of the reason for the migration, forced or not, the transition may be difficult and cause a culture shock, tinged with political history and diverse socioeconomic issues.

Political Aspects

The complexity of the Inuit nation cannot be understood without examining the political history that has shaped the relations between the Inuit nation and governments as well as the non-Inuit population. This history begins with the first military and commercial alliances with European colonists and extends to recent economic partnership agreements. Although this section is far from exhaustive, we outline the evolution of political relations between the Inuit of Northern Quebec and both national and provincial authorities.

The Hudson's Bay Company

The initial contact between the Inuit and the Europeans were of an *ad hoc* and nearly accidental nature, with the explorers primarily seeking a passage to the hoped-for riches of the Pacific. In 1670, however, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) obtained the exclusive right to a vast territory surrounding the Hudson Bay, known as Rupert's Land, and dedicated it to the fur trade. In 1821, with the dissolution of its only competitor, the North West Company, the HBC became even more powerful because in addition to managing the territory, it also adopted and enforced several laws. The exploitation of raw materials reigned during this period and lasted until after World War II. Because of the commercial trade activities in the fur business, many families were prevented from engaging in subsistence activities. Fluctuations in the price of furs and skins were decided in London or New York. These imposed prices and the dwindling resources due to over-fishing and over-hunting lead to the impoverishment of many Inuit families. In 1870, by signing the Deed of Surrender, the HBC relinquished its claim to Rupert's Land for the purposes of exploitation and colonization to the new Dominion of Canada (The Hudson's Bay Company, n.d.).

First Legislative Measures

King George III's royal proclamation of 1763 is considered to be the Magna Carta of First Nations' rights in matters pertaining to land and ownership. The proclamation followed the signing of the Treaty of Paris and established methods concerning the administration of the colonies. Relations between Aboriginals and the British Crown were primarily dictated by economic and strategic issues pertaining to whale hunting and fur-trapping. However, this relationship was soured by the fallout from the American Revolution. Beginning in the 19th century, colonial fervor and a three-pronged objective—assimilation, civilization and settlement—drove relations between the British and the Canadian administrators and the Aboriginal peoples. Nonetheless, the enforcement of colonization measures varied between the three Aboriginal groups: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

During this time, several legislation measures primarily targeted the First Nations peoples of Canada. The *Gradual Civilization Act* of 1857 declared "that an Indian may not enjoy the rights and privileges of Canadians until he has proved that he is educated, free of debt and of high moral character" (L'Autre Montréal, 2012, p. 5). In addition, paragraph 24 of Section 91 of the *Constitution Act* of 1867 stipulated that the Canadian parliament had legislative jurisdiction over Indians and lands reserved for Indians (Government of Canada, 2014a, p. 4). It was on this basis, in 1876, that the Canadian authorities enacted the *Indian Act*, which used of the term "savages" and deemed First Nations peoples "minor" citizens dedicated to progressive assimilation:

> *The Indian Act was based on the premise that it was incumbent upon the Crown to take care of First Nations and to look to their best interest by acting as a "tutor" to the extent and as long as the Indians didn't fully integrate into Canadian society. (AANDC, 2013a)*

Over time, this act had significant repercussions for Canadian First Nations. Despite the fact that the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in April 1939 that the Inuit were Indians as defined in Section 91, paragraph 24 of the Constitution Act of 1867 (thereby justifying the Quebec government's contention that the Inuit came under federal jurisdiction), the Canadian government continued to exclude the Inuit when enforcing this law (Bonesteel, 2006, p. 8):

> Re Eskimo *continued to remind Canada of its obligation to Inuit, yet Canada sought to ensurethat Inuit remained distinct from First Nations in legislation and governance. (Bonesteel, 2006, p. 7)*

This effort to distinguish between Inuit and First Nations' peoples pushed the Canadian government to grant Inuit the right to vote in the 1950 federal elections, ten years before such a right was granted to First Nations.[2] In addition, the Inuit were explicitly excluded from the *Indian Act* by some amendments made in 1951. This exclusion was not replaced by any other policy or legislation. Therefore, although the Inuit are recognized as having distinctive characteristics, they were, and still are to some extent today, governed by general acts and programs.

Dispossession and Resettlement of the Inuit

In 1953 the federal government forced many Inuit families to move thousands of kilometres north from Inukjuak to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, which are located in the High Arctic. According to accounts of Canadian authorities, the goal of this "relocalization" was to allow the Inuit to preserve their traditional way of life while at the same time, improve their living conditions in a new environment with greater access to natural resources. However, according to several sources, their resettlement was motivated by the federal government's intention to defend Canada's sovereignty in the Arctic during the Cold War and to transform the Inuit from nomads to a settled people (Bonesteel, 2006; Dupré, 2011; Poulin, 2012). Regardless of the reasons, relocating these families from Northern Quebec to the High Arctic forced them to adapt to a much harsher climate and to prolonged periods of day and night (Bonesteel, 2006, p. 12–13). These forced relocations broke the important link between the Inuit and their ancestral lands, causing cultural dislocation. People suffered from a feeling of dispossession, strained family and marital relations, and a breakdown of the Inuit community. These impacts can still be felt today on their identity, and social relationships (RCAP–Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1994; Dupré, 2011).

In the 1950s and 1960s the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and police officials in Quebec commissioned the elimination of sled dogs in the Eastern Arctic and Northern Quebec (Bonesteel, 2006; Chansonneuve, 2007; Makivik Corporation, n.d.). This was yet another instance of colonization that undermined the fragile and inequitable relations between the Inuit and the government. Nominally motivated by safety and public health concerns, this systematic butchery was ordered with no regard for the usefulness of the dogs as a means of transportation and survival for the Inuit communities. The elimination of the dog teams was rooted in the

2 It should be noted that Quebec was the first province to grant Aboriginals the right to vote in 1969.

government's determination to transform the Inuit from nomads to settlers, and contributed to the erosion of the culture by hampering their pursuit of traditional livelihood activities in the region while, at the same time, creating persistent resentment toward the police (Lévesque, 2010). In August 2011, following the publication of the report on Judge Croteau's investigation, the Quebec government finally recognized "the effect that the historic slaughter of sled dogs (Qimmit) had on Inuit society and their way of life" (SAAQ – Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones du Québec, 2011).

In 1955 the Canadian government took charge of formal education in the northern communities, which, until then, had been handled by missionary organizations that had been trying for more than a century to replace traditional teaching methods (Bonesteel, 2006, p. 13).[3] In the 1950s, the implementation of a federal education system paired with the development of governmental housing and expanded health care services, shattered the Inuit's traditional way of life and cultural foundations. Designed to improve living conditions and foster assimilation into Canadian culture, these "rectifications" led, among other things, to sending thousands of Inuit children to residential schools reserved for Aboriginals.

Residential Schools

Beginning in the 19th century, the Church and the Canadian state joined forces to build a network of residential schools to advance their colonial objectives (CDPDPJ – Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, 2009 30). For nearly 150 years, more than 150,000 Inuit, Métis, and First Nations children were removed from their communities and deported to some 130 residential schools established in most Canadian provinces (AANDC, 2012). The missionaries and bureaucrats separated children from their families and justified their actions by stating that this was necessary to eliminate the so-called negative influence of "savages" on their education, to civilize them, and to take them out of their "barbaric state", thereby building a homogeneous Canadian nation.

> *The civilizers in the churches and the department understood this and, moreover, that it would not be accomplished simply by bringing the children into the school. Rather it required a concerted attack on the ontology, on the basic cultural patterning of the children and on their world view. They had to be taught to see and understand the world as a European place within which only European values and beliefs had meaning; thus the wisdom of their cultures would seem to them only savage superstition. A wedge had to be driven not only physically between parent and child but also culturally and spiritually. (CRPA, 1996a, Volume 1, p. 316)*

Their goal was to wipe out the "Indian" in the children by suppressing their "mother tongue, cultural beliefs and Aboriginal identity by teaching them that these aspects of their character were shameful, bad, immoral" (Chansonneuve, 2007, p. 12). Repeated physical punishment, sexual abuse and humiliation often accompanied the imposition of new values, language and faith.

The impacts of tragic physical, psychological, cultural, and spiritual abuse extended well beyond the students. This abuse affected several generations of Aboriginals who still suffer from the impacts of residential schools. On the one hand, Aboriginal peoples loss their sense of belonging, language, and cultural heritage, creating a generational gap and a void in their identity. Having lost touch with traditional learnings, many residential school students were unable to integrate or re-adapt when they returned to their communities. On the other hand, these young students were deprived of emotional care and experiencing community, and as a result often failed to develop adequate parenting and social skills,. This in turn created an intergenerational cycle of dysfunctional relationships (Chansonneuve, 2007). Many students also developed negative coping strategies, including dependant behaviors.

3 It is important to mention that the term "traditional" does not connote "outdated" or "obsolete." On the contrary, as Laugrand emphasizes, the knowledge of the Elders "is always oriented toward the future and [...] its objective is to give younger generations the perspective that will enable them to cope with all the changes they might face" (2008, p. 84).

The communities who took young people in when they left residential schools struggled to respond to individual issues of trauma and social distress. Although residential schools closed at the end of the 20th century, they directly or indirectly contibuted to the marginalization of Aboriginal peoples, who continue to feel their impacts and endure the consequences every day.

In its 2015 report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) concluded that a cultural genocide did indeed occur (CVR, 2015a, p. 1), and called for further action "in order to remedy the legacy left by the residential schools and further the process of reconciliation" (CVR, 2015b, p. 1). The Canadian government also noted the successive failures of its policies for Aboriginals in a White paper published in 1969 on Indian policy, which called for the abrogation of the *Indian Act* of 1876 and the abolition of Indian reserves and Indian status (Government of Canada, 1969). Under the veil of equality and non-discrimination, the policy of "assimilation, pure and simple, of the Aboriginals into the Canadian population" (Rodon, 2003, p. 63) sparked serious debate and led, according to several authors, to a resurgence of Aboriginal claims on a national and international scale.

The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement

The signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) on November 11, 1975, marked a turning point in the political history of the Inuit in Quebec. Ratified by both the Canadian and provincial government, Cree and Inuit representatives, Hydro-Québec, the James Bay Development Corporation, and the James Bay Energy Corporation, the JBNQA stipulates that activities engaged in by the Inuit are primarily under the jurisdiction of Quebec. In negotiating this agreement, Quebec had hoped to increase opportunities for economic development by gaining rights to the Aboriginal lands and solidifying its jurisdiction over this large northern territory (Peters, 1999). In the end, the Quebec government won the right to utilize the resources of a large portion of the land located in the territory covered by the agreement, except for Category 1 protected areas. The James Bay hydroelectric development project launched in the 1970s is an example of this economic development. In return, the two Aboriginal communities, who were parties to the agreement, were granted political and administrative autonomy. This included education, exclusive hunting, fishing, and trapping rights throughout the 150,000 km² area (81,596 km² for the Inuit, 68 790 km² for the Cree), and $225 million in financial compensation (AANDC, 2010).

The JBNQA led to the creation of several Inuit institutions including the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) and the Makivik Corporation. The Makivik Corporation, established in 1975, manages the funds generated by the JBNQA which are earmarked for the Inuit, defends the interests of the Agreement's beneficiaries and works towards the socioeconomic development of the Nunavik region (Makivik Corporation, 2012b). By virtue of the *Act respecting Northern villages and the Kativik Regional Government* (the Kativik Act), the Kativik Regional Government oversees, since 1978, public services provided to the Nunavimmiut (inhabitants of Nunavik), including issues of economic development, employment, childcare services, recreational activities, and the environment (KRG, n.d.). Referendums held in the Aboriginal communities allowed the Cree and the Inuit to ratify the agreement. Three Inuit communities, including Purvinituq, refused to ratify the JBNQA until 1989, citing concerns about education, among other things (Poulin, 2012, p. 5).

From the Constitution Act of 1982 to Present

The *Constitution Act of 1982*, adopted by the Government of Canada and with consent from all the provinces except Quebec, recognizes and confirms both the ancestral rights of Canada's Aboriginal peoples and those rights stemming from treaties. Despite this official confirmation, a robust report published in 1996 by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) deplored the living conditions of Aboriginal populations and proposed a lengthy list of recommendations intended to improve the situation. In addition to recognizing the importance

of Aboriginal autonomy, the Commission drafted 400 recommendations in the framework of a 20-year action plan designed to correct the errors of the past and avoid the costs of maintaining the status quo. The report's recommendations include:

- the recognition of an Aboriginal order of government;
- the creation of an Aboriginal parliament; and
- the adoption of various measures designed to address the social, education, health, and housing needs of Aboriginal peoples (RCAP, 1996a, volume 5).

To realize these goals, the Commission, presided over by René Dussault and Georges Erasmus, recommended an additional budget of $2 billion annually over a period of 15 years.

At the provincial level, in 1983 the Cabinet of PQ premier René Lévesque adopted principles that recognized the need to establish harmonious relations with Aboriginal nations. In addition, Quebec's National Assembly adopted a resolution to "urge the government to pursue negotiations with Aboriginal nations" and ratify agreements to allow them to exercise their :

a) right to self-government within Québec;
b) right to their own language, culture and traditions;
c) right to own and control land;
d) right to hunt, fish, trap, harvest and participate in wildlife management;
e) right to participate in, and benefit from, the economic development of Québec (SAIC – Secrétariat aux affaires intergouvernementales canadiennes, n.d.).

Although lauded by some as the "the basis of the Quebec government's policy pertaining to Aboriginal relations," this political statement has not led to any concrete action since the beginning of the 1980s and remains less definitive than international law or the Canadian Constitution (Sioui, 2013, p. 2).

In 2002 Quebec authorities and the Inuit established a partnership agreement regarding the economic and community development of Nunavik. Topics addressed in the agreement include hydroelectric, mining, and tourism. The Sivunirmut Agreement, which was signed in 2004, established a comprehensive funding method that "enables the KRG to apportion funds in accordance with its priorities as mandated in the agreement" (SAAQ, n.d.).

In December 2007, the governments of Quebec and Canada signed an agreement in principle with the Makivik Corporation, which addressed the creation of a regional government in Nunavik, under the authority of the National Assembly of Quebec and the Parliament of Canada. In April 2011, however, 66% of voters in Nunavik rejected the final version of the project, which would have created a regional government by merging three public organizations—the KRG, the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, and the Kativik School Board. This regional government would have been placed under the jurisdiction of an assembly (without legislative power) and an elected executive council. According to several observers, the agreement's defeat was due in part to the following three reasons: 1) the vagueness of certain provisions contained within the agreement; 2) no guarantee regarding the protection of the Inuit language and culture; and 3) the impatience of several Nunavimmiut who sought a more concrete solution, as opposed to a step-by-step approach (Bertrand, 2012; Papillon, 2011).

International Law

In 2007, after 25 years of negotiations, mostly within the United Nations, 370 million Aboriginals living in 77 countries reached an important breakthrough with the ratification by 143 states of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (Morin, 2012). The declaration outlines both individual and collective rights, and addresses a number of questions including those related to language, education, culture, and health. Article 3 specifies that "Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development" (ONU, 2007). Although an architect and ardent defender of the declaration project for over two decades, Canada refused to ratify the final version in 2007, along with Australia, New Zealand and the United States. The federal government opposed several of the Declaration's provisions.

> *We have stated publicly that we have significant concerns with respect to the wording of the current text, including the provisions on lands, territories and resources; free, prior and informed consent when used as a veto; self-government without recognition of the importance of negotiations; intellectual property; military issues; and the need to achieve an appropriate balance between the rights and obligations of indigenous peoples, member States and third parties. (AANDC, 2007)*

In November 2010, Canadian authorities lent their support to the UNDRIP stating that "the Declaration is a non-legally binding document that does not reflect customary international law nor change Canadian laws [...]" (AANDC, 2011).

It is clear that colonization and government policies of assimilation, including the residential school system, had devastating effects on Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Despite a few attempts to apologize and right these wrongs, Inuit people continue to suffer from a number of behavioural and social issues that stem from this political history, including high rates of suicide, criminality and alcoholism (RCAP, 1996a). These issues both directly and indirectly impact the Inuit people's ability to find and keep work. In addition, the Inuit people form a distinct Aboriginal group not governed by the provisions of the federal government's *Indian Act*. Often though, the Inuit are inappropriately within various First Nations groupings. This leads to uncertain distribution of responsibilities between the various levels of the federal and provincial governments. This ambiguity is most noted in issues of employment and housing, and is especially true in the province of Quebec.

Demography

Over the last three decades, the population of Nunavik has nearly doubled, from 5,860 in 1986 to 10,952 in 2006. Since the 1990s, Nunavik's annual rate of population growth is around 3%. This is nearly three times the provincial rate of 1% (NRBHSS, 2011). Nationally, from 2006 to 2011, the Inuit population has grown by 18.1% or by 9,090 individuals (Statistics Canada, 2013d, p. 8).

With a median age of 23, 18 years younger than the median age of the non-Aboriginal population, the Inuit have the youngest population of the three Aboriginal groups in Canada. In Nunavik, where the median age is estimated to be 21, nearly 40% of the population is 14 years old or younger. This is the highest proportion of the four regions that make up Inuit Nunangat (Statistics Canada, 2013c). By comparison, the median age of the population in Quebec reached 41.5 in 2011 (NRBHSS, 2011, p. 12). The fertility rate in Nunavik is 3.2 children per woman, compared to 1.6 children in the whole province of Quebec. This explains the youthfulness of its Inuit population. Furthermore, in Nunavik, between 2004 and 2008, the mothers' average age was 25 at the time she gave birth, which was slightly younger than in Quebec (29) (NRBHSS, 2011, p. vi).

The high rate of fertility in the Inuit population also affects the size of households. According to the 2006 census figures, the average number of people per Inuit household stood at 3.6, compared to 3.0 for Aboriginals and 2.5 for all Canadian households. Of the four Inuit regions, Nunavik has the highest number of people per household with an average of 4.6 (CMHC – Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2010, p. 2–5), and 25% of households were home to six or more individuals (NRBHSS, 2011, p. 18). Although the size of families is bigger in Nunavik than elsewhere in Quebec, there are a number of others factors that may contribute to the prevalence of large households, including the frequent cohabitation of several families or generations (25%) given the housing difficulties in northern regions (NRBHSS, 2011, p. 18; Statistics Canada, 2008a, 2008b).

Furthermore, although the fertility rate is progressively decreasing and life expectancy is lower than for the overall population, the proportion of Inuit of working age will continue to rise in the future. In Nunavik an aging population is of little concern since only 3% of the inhabitants are 65 years of age or older, a proportion estimated to reach 8% by 2031. Between 2006 and 2011, the average growth rate of this age group was approximately 13% (i.e., 16% on the Hudson Bay coast and 8% on the Ungava Bay coast). In Quebec, the percentage of the population 65 years of age or older reached 16% in 2011 and will continue to climb, reaching 26% by 2031 (NRBHSS, 2011, p. 12–14).

As this young population continues to grow, social services, including housing, education and health care, will continue to struggle to keep up with demand.

Society

Forced to adapt to colonization, the market economy and a rapid shift from a nomadic lifestyle to a sedentary one, the Inuit face many societal difficulties. Without intending to minimize the positive aspects of Inuit communities, this section will provide a brief overview of the major social challenges impacting them, including, isolation, overcrowding, homelessness, physical and mental health problems, addiction, suicide, and violence (RCAP, 1996a).

Social Structure

The Inuit's traditional way of life is defined by its seasonal and nomadic character and its social structure comprised of small familial groups (Bonesteel, 2006, p. 11). Moving according to the seasons and the availability of resources, the Inuit survived by hunting, fishing, and gathering. In the past, the division of labour based on sex was more pronounced among the Inuit than among the other First Nations. According to Duhaime et al., "men and women

divided up tasks in a systematic way: men hunted, handled transportation, built housing and made various tools; women took care of the children, sewed, cooked, and gathered" (2001, p. 99).

European colonization, increased trade, and the development of new infrastructure lead to a series of profound changes in the Inuit's traditional way of life. Some of these changes included the introduction of alcohol and several diseases into the communities. In addition, the fur trade with Europeans diverted the Inuit's attention from their primary subsistence activities and increased their dependence on foreign consumer goods. By the second half of the 20th century, family and communities were no longer responsible for providing care for the aging or educating children. The federal government assumed these roles and established public health care and education systems (Bonesteel, 2006). These new infrastructures, paired with the construction of the first wooden single-family homes, led to a more sedentary way of life in several Inuit communities and an increasingly nuclear family structure. The resulting social and familial dislocation was amplified in the 1950s by the federal government's relocation of the population (Martin, 2003, p. 36).

Isolation and Mobility

In Northern Quebec, the vast distances between communities and from large urban centres present challenges when transporting people, resources, and goods. Villages in Nunavik range from 100 to 850 kilometres apart, and can only be travelled by air and sea routes (in summer only). As noted above, a fifth of the Canadian Inuit population lives outside Inuit Nunangat, either in urban or rural areas. This geographical separation combined with the cost and uncertainty of air transportation, can contribute to a sense of isolation, particularly for those Inuit living in urban settings.

As for communication services, the Nunavimmiut must pay long distance charges for all calls placed to numbers outside of their communities (Duhaime et al., 2000). The internet has allowed some families to stay in touch, however, limited bandwidth, frequent service interruptions, and high subscription fees cause constrained communications. According to the Nunavik Comparative Price Index 2006, a basic internet subscription in Nunavik costs 80% more per month (roughly $60) than in Québec City (Bernard and Duhaime, 2006). In a digitally-connected world, these gaps in broadband internet service coverage in Inuit communities also limits access to e-commerce, education, remote employment, and all the other benefits of online services (CCL, 2009, Government of Canada, 2014b).

According to a study conducted by Statistics Canada, nearly 70% of Inuit adults in Nunavik have lived in the same community all of their lives. "Inuit adults in Nunavik were the least likely to have considered leaving their community. Here, 17% had thought about leaving while figures for the remaining three regions were in the 30 to 40 percent range" (Statistics Canada, 2001). The low rate of mobility in Nunavik could be due in part to family responsibilities, the shortage of job opportunities, and glaring housing problems. It would be interesting to have more complete and recent data on Inuit mobility in order to be able to better understand the repercussions of new technologies and the market economy on the frequency, length of time, and reasons why people relocate.

Overcrowding, Insufficient, and Inadequate Housing

In 2006, more than a quarter of Inuit households (27%) lived in overcrowded housing, compared to 6% of all Canadian households. The housing problems were especially serious in Nunavik where social housing represents approximately 96% of all types of habitation and the rate of overcrowding reached 48% (Duhaime, 2009, p. 8; CMHC, 2010, p. 6). With the highest number of people per household and the lowest number of rooms per dwelling, Nunavik must cope with the harmful consequences of overcrowding, including higher rates of infectious

diseases (like tuberculosis), increased infant mortality rates, and a lack of privacy that increases the risk of abuse and family violence (Duhaime, 2009; ITK – Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2007; Sirois, Montminy and Tremblay, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2008b). According to Duhaime, "the mediocre living conditions in which they live also lead to increased delinquency and influence the physical and psychological health of children and adults" (2009, p. 7).

Overcrowding also accelerates the deterioration of housing. In Nunavik, 40% of Inuit families live in housing needing major repairs, compared to 22% of all those living in Inuit households and 8% of all those in Canadian households. More than half of households in Nunavik (57.0%), of which Inuit households are over-represented (96.4%), compared to their demographic size in the region (82.1%), are urgently in need of affordable housing (CMHC, 2010, p. 7–10).

Under the direction of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, the Makivik Corporation was tasked in 2000 with building various social housing units in Nunavik. Regional stakeholders, however, cornered by a dispute between federal and provincial governments, appear to have only limited autonomy in this regard (Therrien, 2013). An agreement signed in 2005 by Quebec, the Makivik Corporation, and the Government of Canada established a five-year plan for the construction of 275 dwellings. In 2010, the Makivik-Quebec-Canada agreement was renewed and included the construction of an additional 350 dwellings in Nunavik over a five-year period. In addition, the provincial authorities implemented a special catch-up program for the construction of housing in Nunavik. However, for the time being the Canadian Government refuses to contribute to this initiative (Makivik Corporation, 2012a).

Excessive Consumption and Addiction

In Canada, many prejudices exist regarding alcoholism and drug consumption in the Inuit population, and are perpetuated by the media. However, several authors argue that the main problem is not alcoholism but binge drinking. Unlike many other Aboriginal communities in North America, which produce alcoholic drinks for certain rituals and ceremonies, the Inuit discovered alcohol when the Europeans arrived. This could partially explain their lack of familiarity with the physical effects of drinking alcohol and accepted practices governing consumption (Korhonen, 2004a, p. 4).

In 2004, a joint study conducted by Quebec's National Institute of Public Health (INSPQ), and the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services revealed that the proportion of those who occasionally or regularly drink alcohol was lower than elsewhere in the province. Consumption patterns varied from one region to another. In Nunavik, nearly a quarter of those who consumed alcohol (24,4%) admitted to consuming five drinks or more at least once a week over the course of the last year, compared to 7.5% of Quebecois and 7.8% of Canadians. The proportion of drinkers who reported a high monthly rate of consumption reached 42% in Nunavik communities that allow the sale of alcohol. This proportion of drinkers is double that of the percentage in dry communities (Anctil, 2008, p. 4). According to one qualitative study on consumption patterns, the Nunavimmiut use several psychoactive substances (alcohol and drugs) to escape boredom due to the lack of activities or employment, to cope with upheavals in their traditional way of life, to forget their day-to-day problems (e.g., domestic violence, sexual abuse, and suicide), or simply for pleasure (Brunelle et al., 2009). If at first used as a coping strategy, these consumption and dependency behaviours can quickly become the norm and be transferred from one generation to the next (Chansonneuve, 2007).

A study conducted among 248 pregnant women in Nunavik revealed that 38% of respondents had experienced episodes of excessive alcohol consumption. This occurred an average of nine times during their pregnancy and average consumption during these episodes reached 10 alcoholic drinks. More than 30% of respondents admitted to smoking during their pregnancies, with more than half smoking at least 10 cigarettes per day (Muckle et al.,

2011). Given the harmful effects of prenatal exposure to psychoactive substances, such as fetal alcohol syndrome, these statistics, even if they are drawn from a random and non-representative sample, are alarming.

In northern communities, alcohol and drug abuse have repercussions on individuals, their families and communities:

> *Misuse of alcohol has many effects on health but in Inuit the most important are accidents and violence resulting in cuts, bruises, fractures, head injuries, etc. Drownings, falls, frostbite, burns and pneumonia are other results of intoxication and there is a direct association between alcohol misuse and suicides. In a longer perspective, drinking also leads to social problems in the home such as spouse and child abuse or family breakup, and to economic problems and loss of jobs due to instability at work. Finally, fetal alcohol syndrome is a serious condition of infants whose mothers have consumed large amounts of alcohol during pregnancy. (Bjerregard and Young, 1998, p. 158)*

Consumption problems also result in psychological distress, violence, neglect and impoverishment (Brunelle et al., 2009; Korhonen, 2004a; Paul, 2007).

Violence and Abuse

In Canada, Aboriginals are over-represented among the perpetrators and victims of crime both in terms of domestic and non-domestic violence.

In the 2009 General Social Survey, 12% of Aboriginals reported having been a victim of at least one non-domestic crime. This is more than double the percentage of non-Aboriginals (5%). In total, Aboriginals self-reported 173,600 incidents of non-domestic violence or 198 incidents for every 1,000 Aboriginals. In addition, "about 15% of Aboriginal women who had a spouse or common-law partner in the past five years reported being a victim of spousal violence, more than twice the proportion among non-Aboriginal women (6%)" (Perreault, 2011).

Several factors might account for the high crime rates recorded in northern Inuit communities, including the "disintegration of traditional community leadership and social control of behaviour" prompted by the introduction of a non-Inuit policing and justice system (Bonesteel, 2006, p. 20). The significant social and economic changes which occurred between 1950 and 1970 had negative impacts on Inuit crime rates, especially those incidents involving spousal and domestic violence. In this regard, Chartrand and McKay link "high victimization to the overall impact of colonization and the resultant collective and individual 'trauma' and its impacts that flow from cultural disruption" (2006, p. v). Overcrowded housing, the scarcity of professional occupations and the evolution of traditional gender roles also contributed to disrupting the fragile social equilibrium within these recently-established communities (Bonesteel, 2006, p. 20–25).

Many accused perpetrators have a history of childhood violence and abuse. The vicious cycle of repeated abuse also explains the prevalence of violence and other crimes within Aboriginal communities.

> *Nevertheless, the data from this research indicate that 66% of those accused of a sexual assault offence had suffered at least one form of violent abuse in their personal history. For family violence accused, it was higher at 77%. These findings indicate that a personal history of violence is a factor in the dynamics of family violence offences and sexual assault offences among these Aboriginal accused. (Paletta, 2008, p. 25)*

Many authors and community members also denounce under-reporting of violence and abuses,[4] particularly due to the foreignness of the justice system, the trivialization of violence, and the lack of support services available to victims (Chartrand and McKay, 2006; Perreault, 2011). Aside from the immediate effects on family and social environments, this high level of criminality can have longer term impacts on the Inuit's employability.

The Justice System and Incarceration

Although the authority was not formally identified, customary Inuit law imposed clear codes of behaviour that were verbally passed on from one generation to the next. Responsible for maintaining peace and order, the community could consult the Elders for help in making a decision about what punishment to impose. Traditional Inuit law varied considerably from statist law in terms of vision and approach (RCAP, 1996b).

> *Historically, Canadian law has sought to punish the offender and focuses primarily on the offence committed rather than the peculiar details associated with the offender or the victim. The priority within Inuit customary law was not to necessarily punish the offender or provide "justice" per se but rather to ensure that the community returned to a state of harmony, peace and equilibrium. (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 9)*

Traditional penalties for unacceptable behaviour included ignoring a problem, excluding the guilty party physically or socially, gossiping and humiliation. Disagreements might also be settled by wrestling matches or song duels in which opponents ridiculed each other (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 10–13).

Since 1974, an itinerant court has been tasked with administrating justice in the Cree and Inuit communities living above the 49th parallel. With the number of accusations exceeding the number of inhabitants in some villages, this court is overwhelmed. The waiting periods for a hearing are lenghty due to overwhelming demand, adjournments related to difficult weather conditions, and cancellations due to a lack of interpreters. According to the Quebec Bar Association, in Northern Quebec, court facilities are at times unacceptable.

> *Moreover, community centres, arenas or school gymnasiums are used as justice facilities in some villages. It is often cold there. The defence lawyers meet with their clients in unusual places that sometimes don't allow them to ensure full confidentiality of the discussions. The conditions are particularly difficult, not to say appalling, in Inukjuak. In fact, the itinerant Court no longer holds sittings there. (Barreau du Québec, 2014, p. 7)*

So, in addition to being subjected to a foreign and poorly-adapted judicial system, the Nunavimmiut are subject to many operational complications.

Noting their over-representation in federal and provincial correctional facilities (Statistics Canada, 2015a), several authors assert that Aboriginals often fall victim to racial profiling by policing and corrections' systems, particularly in urban areas (Boyer, 2006; NWAC – Native Women's Association of Canada, n.d.). According to the Native Women's Association of Canada, "racist stereotypes, which assume that First Nations, Inuit and Métis girls are criminal by nature, influence the police and courts' responses to Aboriginal young women" (NWAC, n.d., p. 25). The final report of the Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission of Manitoba states that "many police have come to view Aboriginal people not as a community deserving protection, but as a community from which the rest of society must be protected" (Boyer, 2006, p. 18). Since Nunavik does not have a detention centre,[5] individuals convicted in the north must serve their sentences in southern prisons, far from their families and communities.

4 Aboriginal victims of spousal violence are more likely (29%) to report an incident to police than non-Aboriginal victims (15%). The reporting rate for non-spousal violence for the two samples are comparable (Perreault, 2011, p. 12).

5 Considered an "alternative solution to building a detention centre in Nunavik" (Makivik Corporation, 2012b), the goal of Ungaluk (Safer Communities), a joint program of the Makivik Corporation and the Kativik Regional Government, is to combat crime and promote security in Nunavik's 14 villages and in Quebec's urban centres.

The inadequacy or absence of linguistically and culturally adapted services in the corrections environment hardly promote rehabilitation and reintegration (Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2012). For example, in a study conducted in Nunavut, Buckhardt notes that "the [Inuit] offenders found it difficult to communicate with guards who not only did not speak their language, but were unaware of the unique experiences faced through living in Northern communities" (2000, p. 133). Several studies demonstrate that the vast majority of Inuit prisoners (89%) need in-depth intervention targeting problems associated with drug addiction, conjugal and familial relationships, employment, and emotional issues. This is a higher percentage than for First Nations (78%), Métis (73%), and non-Aboriginal prisoners (Moore, 2003). As a result, the Inuit who leave federal penitentiaries and provincial jails are more likely to become at-risk and homeless. At times, court orders prevent some Inuit from returning to their communities in the north, while others are simply no longer welcome. With no other choice, vulnerability can rapidly lead to homelessness, which increases the short-term risk of being incarcerated yet again (Makivik Corporation, 2012a).

Homelessness and Poverty in Urban Settings

Since the early 1980s, the presence of Aboriginal people in Montreal and other cities in the province has grown, changing the demographic profile of these urban centres. Currently, the Inuit population in the Montreal metropolitan area ranges between 900 and 1,200 individuals and about 90 of them are homeless. Thus, even if they represent only 10% of Montreal's Aboriginal community, the Inuit make up 43% of the homeless Aboriginal population (Kishigami, 2008, p. 73–76). According to Kishigami, numerous socioeconomic factors contribute to the homelessness of Inuit in Montreal, including the high rate of unemployment, low education levels, single parent families, language and cultural barriers, as well as racism and discrimination (2008, p. 80). In this regard, he emphasizes that "[t]he majority of homeless Inuit tend to avoid using several of the shelters and charitable organizations because they are discriminated against by non-Inuit workers and homeless persons" (Kishigami, 2008, p. 77). In addition, he notes that alcoholism and drug abuse are more widespread among homeless Inuit than among other homeless people.

Highlighted in a report by the National Aboriginal Health Organization, the situation of Inuit—and Aboriginal—women in urban settings is particularly worrisome.

> *Many women now face desperate circumstances in Canadian towns and cities, a situation compounded by sexist stereotypes and racist attitudes towards Aboriginal women and girls and general indifference to their welfare and safety. (Boyer, 2006 , p. 18)*

According to a report published by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 2014, this extreme brutality led to the death or disappearance of more than 1,180 Aboriginal women between 1980 and 2012 (Amnesty International, 2004; RCMP, 2014).

In addition, the Quebec government's *Policy to Fight Homelessness* notes that the issue of homelessness among the Inuit is hardly limited to urban zones.

> *Hidden homelessness is another alarming phenomenon in Nunavik. This homelessness is experienced by men, women, and entire families who must go from one house to another, from one acquaintance to another, until they wear out their welcome or exhaust the ability of families already living in over-crowded dwellings to house them. (MSSS, 2014, p. 26)*

Hidden homelessness also affects the northern communities of Nunavut (Qulliit Nunavut Status of Women Council, 2007) and exacerbates physical and mental health problems as well as the risk of abuse and violence (Makivik Corporation, 2012a).

In conclusion, Inuit communities contend with a variety of social issues that undermine local development and compromise the future of younger generations. According to a recent report of Quebec's Human Rights and Youth Commission (CDPDJ), the Director of Youth Protection received reports regarding 30% of the children in Nunavik, a rate six times higher than the provincial average (5%) (Sirois and Montminy, 2010, p. 5). In urban settings, the high number of Inuit among the homeless and in the legal system requires linguistic and cultural adjustments to the services offered (MSSS, 2014). In remote areas, concrete and immediate measures should be taken in order to break the intolerable cycle of dependence and violence. These recommendations have already been presented in the final report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples published in 1996: the time for action is long overdue.

Health

In Inuit Nunangat, the life expectancy of Inuit residents is vastly lower than that of other Canadians. Unfortunately, since the collection of some data sources has been curtailed, it is nearly impossible to accurately calculate Inuit life expectancy rates. However, Statistics Canada estimates that "at 67 years in 2001, life expectancy in the Inuit-inhabited areas was about what life expectancy had been for all Canada in 1946" (Wilkins et al., 2014). In addition, while life expectancy for Canadians continues to improve, in several Inuit regions it has stagnated, which has contributed to a widening gap between the two sample groups. In this regard, in 2006 the life expectancy in Inuit Nunangat (70.7) was still 10 years lower than that of other Canadians (80.7) (Peters, 2012, p. 49). Furthermore, also in 2006, the mortality rate of Inuit Nunangat's inhabitants was double the rate in Canada overall. Many factors can be attributed to this gap, including limited access to health care, high infant and child mortality, as well as the high number of deaths by suicide, which are often linked to mental health issues.

Access to Health Care

To receive the Western health care they need, the vast majority of Inuit must leave their villages. Cut off from their support networks often for a lengthy period, this geographical estrangement increases isolation and the financial burden of the sick. In 2006, "Inuit adults were less likely (56%) than those in the total Canadian population (79%) to have contact with a medical doctor like a family doctor or specialist" (Tait, 2008, p. 6). In addition, when consulting a professional unable to speak the local language, Inuit with a poor grasp of English or French must rely on interpreters or members of their families (Archibald and Grey, 2000; Peters, 2012).

Paired with smoking and obesity rates that exceed national averages, limited access to health care services contributes to the high prevalence of chronic illnesses (Peters, 2012), especially since traditional medicine has been weakened by colonization. For example, in the Inuit population, the proportion of smokers reached 60% in 2006, compared to 18% for non-Aboriginals and 36% for the First Nations population (Peters, 2012, p. 53). According to the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, only 39% of Inuit adults (15 and over) in Nunavik reported that they were in excellent or very good health, compared to 48% in Nunavut and 57% for Inuit living outside of Inuit Nunangat (Tait, 2008, p. 10).

Infant and Child Mortality

People living in the Inuit territory often face a higher risk of premature births, still births and infant death (Zhong-Cheng et al., 2010). For instance, between 1999 and 2003, the infant mortality rate (0 to 1 years) in Inuit Nunangat reached 14.8 (for 1,000 live births), more than double the rate (2.8 times) for the rest of Canada (Peters, 2012). Moreover, although the mortality rate for infants and adolescents 1 to 19 years of age living in Inuit Nunangat

has decreased in the last two decades, the rate remains five times higher than the national average. The infant and adolescent mortality rate is particularly alarming in Nunavik, with 307.8 deaths per 100,000 person-years at risk, compared to 188.0 in Inuit Nunangat and 35.3 in Canada overall (Oliver, Peters and Kohen, 2012, p. 3). The following table compares the major causes of death in young people aged 1 to 19 in Canada and in Inuit Nunangat.

Table 2. Age-standardized mortality rates per 100,000 person-years at risk, by sex and cause of death, population aged 1 to 19, in Canada and in Inuit Nunangat, 2004–2008

CAUSE OF DEATH	CANADA			INUIT NUNANGAT		
	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
Communicable diseases	9.9	10.9	8.8	35.6	40.8	30.1
Non-communicable diseases	12.0	13.2	10.9	22.4	18.8	26.1
Unintentional injuries	7.8	10.3	5.1	40.4	58.2	22.0
Intentional injuries	3.1	4.2	2.0	74.9	105.3	43.6
Total	**35.3**	**41.7**	**28.6**	**188.0**	**244.5**	**129.5**

Source: Oliver, Peters and Kohen, 2012, p. 4

Both unintentional and intentional injuries account for 64% of deaths in Inuit Nunangat, compared to 36% in the rest of Canada. In other words, young people living in traditionally Inuit territories were 10 times more likely to die as a result of injuries than other Canadian children.

Suicide

In Inuit Nunangat, suicide impacts many more young people (40%) than elsewhere in Canada (8%). In fact, in Inuit Nunangat, the suicide rate for girls and young women was 20 times higher than that of other young people in Canada. As for boys and young men in Inuit Nunangat, from 2004 to 2008, the suicide rate reached 101.6 deaths per 100,000 person-years at risk, an increase since the period from 1994 to 1998 when it stood at 77.2, compared to 2.9 nationally (Oliver, Peters and Kohen, 2012, p. 34).

> *In 2004–2008, children and teenagers in Inuit Nunangat were more than 30 times as likely to die from suicide as were those in the rest of Canada. Similarly high suicide rates have been reported for the total population in Inuit regions. Half of all deaths of young people in Inuit Nunangat were suicides, compared with approximately 10% in the rest of Canada (Oliver, Peters and Kohen, 2012, p. 5)*

Taken separately, self-inflicted injuries lowered the life expectancy rate for the male Inuit population by 4.5 years between 2004–2008 (Peters, 2012). Although suicide has been a part of the traditional Inuit culture, often involving old and sick men, according to psychiatrist Robert Krauss, a new trend seems to have emerged over the past several decades.

> *In the traditional pattern, middle-aged or older men were involved; motivation for suicide involved sickness, old age, or bereavement; the suicide was undertaken after sober reflection and, at times, consultation with family members who might condone or participate in the act; and suicide was positively sanctioned in the culture. In the emergent pattern, the individuals involved are young; the motivation is obscure and often related to intense and unbearable affective states; the behaviour appears in an abrupt, fit-like, unexpected manner without much warning, often in association with alcohol intoxication; and unlike the traditional pattern, the emergent pattern is negatively sanctioned in the culture. (1971, cited in Hicks, 2007, p. 31)*

This trend was first seen in Inuit communities in northern Alaska and Greenland and has spread to communities in the Canadian Arctic in the 1980s and 1990s. Hicks establishes a time-deferred sequential correlation between direct and active colonization in the Arctic, measured by the drop in communicable diseases due to the introduction of Western medicine and an increase in the suicide rate in Inuit communities. In Nunavik, Hudson Bay villages have been particularly hard hit by this wave of suicides, which the author attributes more to a harmful emotional and psychological environment related to alcohol abuse and violence than to socioeconomic characteristics (Hicks, 2007).

Given the substantial impacts on the individuals and communities affected, suicide prevention measures are urgently needed in Inuit communities. Furthermore, according to the statements made by Upaluk Poppel, representing the Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council, "if the populations of 'mainland' Canada, Denmark and the United States had suicide rates comparable to those of their Inuit populations, national emergencies would be declared" (Poppel, 2005, quoted in Hicks, 2007, p. 31).

Mental Health Issues

No firm statistics exist at either the provincial or federal level regarding the mental health of Inuit people, however, several reports emphasize the prevalence of mental health problems within their population. In a study conducted in Nunavik, Quebec's National Institute of Public Health identified schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression and anxiety disorders as the most widespread mental illnesses in Northern Quebec, noting that the pervasiveness of these mental health problems is more worrisome on the Hudson Bay coast than on the coast of Ungava Bay (Lessard et al., 2008, p. 9). There are a number of risk factors that may explain the high rate of mental disorders in northern communities, including post-traumatic stress, fetal alcohol syndrome, and domestic or spousal violence. The INSPQ also notes the following:

> *Several factors might jeopardize the mental health of the Inuit, including cultural discontinuity, the lack of housing, drug and alcohol use, the population's lack of knowledge about mental health problems, chronic socio-economic difficulties and unemployment. (Lessard et al., 2008, p. III)*

For those suffering from mental illness, various stressors can trigger emotional and psychological instability, which may lead to isolation or hospitalization. Unfortunately, poor access to health care services and the scarcity of specialists in northern communities complicate the diagnosis and treatment of psychological problems and addiction. The accumulation and interaction of these problems can exacerbate symptoms and prompt suicidal thoughts in at-risk individuals (Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, 2004). When seeking employment or attempting to integrate into the workforce, those suffering with a mental disorder also face significant obstacles related to their health issues and social stigmatization.

Finally, despite small improvements in some indicators noted over the last few years, health-related inequalities, such as life expectancy, persist. These inequalities may also be explained by other social and economic factors stemming from colonization, such as territorial expropriation (Richmond and Ross, 2009), discrediting of traditional healing approaches, climate change, the loss of biodiversity in the Arctic (Knotsch and Lamouche, 2010), low education levels, and income disparities (Frohlich, Ross and Richmond, 2006).

Religion

Like many other traditional societies, in Inuit communities "personhood is not an attribute reserved exclusively for human beings but encompasses other non-human beings as well," such as animals, plants, and nature (Ouellette, 2002, p. 110). Thus, human and non-human entities are in constant interaction, creating a strong connection between the individual and his natural environment. As an intermediary between the human and spirit world, the shaman makes use of rituals and recommendations to appease the spirits' anger, which manifests as stormy weather or the disappearance of animals. A gifted healer, the shaman can also treat illness by driving out evil spirits in the body (Minor, 1992). According to Inuit beliefs, based on the permeability of the barriers between the body and the visible world, an individual's spirit survives after his death and finds a new host, typically a newborn.

Beginning in the early 20th century when the missionaries arrived, the Inuit adopted Christianity. Descriptions of the conversion process vary depending on the source. Some authors argue that the conversion of the Inuit to Christianity involved the imposition of foreign religious precepts and the deconstruction of Inuit beliefs by the missionaries (Saladin d'Anglure, 1984). Pointing to the adaptation of Christian symbols and practices to Inuit conceptions (Laugrand, 2002, 1997), other researchers apply a logic of appropriation to describe the Inuit's acceptance of the faith. Whether due to a dynamic of rupture or transformation, the conversion of the Inuit to Christianity led to the abandonment of some traditional practices that "became obsolete because the beliefs related to shamanism no longer held sway or because these practices were demonized and strictly forbidden" by the Christian religion (Ouellette, 2002, p. 124). Although its contemporary manifestations and expressions have been adapted to reflect the change of the times, the Inuit ideology retains essential, ancestral elements and is therefore defined as a mix of traditional beliefs and modern theology (Laugrand and Oosten, 2008; Ouellette, 2002).

Education

The education system in Nunavik was legislated by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement in 1975, and is governed by the Kativik School Board (KSB). Some adjustments have been made to Quebec's general curriculum, including instruction solely in Inuktitut for the first three years of primary school. Residents of Nunavik's 14 communitties can attend school from kindergarten to the fifth year of secondary school in their villages. KSB also offers adult education, distance learning, and technical and professional training in some communities, including Kuujjuaq and Inukjuak (NRBHSS, 2011, p. 20). However, post-secondary education and some more specialized educational programs require students to temporarily relocate to urban centres in the south of the province.

There is a significant gap between the Inuit and the non-Aboriginal populations in scholastic achievement. According to official statistics, in 2012 only 42% of Inuit in Canada had a secondary school diploma or the equivalent, a proportion half that of the non-Aboriginal population (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013, p. 6–7). As for post-secondary diplomas, the percentage drops to 26%, the lowest among the three Aboriginal groups. Given these figures, not only do the Inuit lag behind Canadian citizens overall, but also perform poorer than First Nations peoples living off reserve and the Métis (Bruce and Marlin, 2012; Ciceri and Scott, 2006).

Table 3. Graduation rates (%) of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals aged 18 to 44 (2012)

POPULATION AGED 18 TO 44	SECONDARY SCHOOL DIPLOMA (OR EQUIVALENT)	POST-SECONDARY DIPLOMA
First Nations living off reserve	72	43
Inuit	42	26
Métis	77	47
Non-Aboriginal population	89	64

Source: Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013, p. 6–7

According to results of the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), data on graduation rates for the Inuit population living in Quebec reflected national averages, whereas 50% of Nunavimmiut aged 25 to 64 did not have a diploma of any kind (Nunivaat, 2015). According to the NHS, nearly a third of the Inuit in Quebec had received a post-secondary certificate or diploma: 27.2% had a post-secondary certificate or diploma and 2.6% had earned a university degree, a ratio that reflects the broader picture across Canada (Statistics Canada, 2013b). Although trade school graduation rates appear to be more or less the same for the Inuit and non-Aboriginal populations, significant gaps exist in school attendance and college and university graduation rates (Statistics Canada, 2013a).

According to several key informants and front-line workers, these official statistics fail to paint an accurate picture of education in the Inuit territory, particularly in Quebec. Reports from local stakeholders indicate that, excluding adult education, secondary school graduation rates are between 5% and 10%. Although the lack of data makes it difficult to validate these unofficial accounts, this front-line perspective calls for caution when analyzing official figures. That said, the nuances introduced by this alternative perspective only confirm and even amplify an already alarming assessment.

The dropout rate (i.e. individuals aged 14 to 44 not attending secondary school and not having fulfilled the requirements for the attainment of a secondary school diploma at the time that the Aboriginal Peoples Survey was conducted in 2012) is estimated to be 58% in the Inuit population, compared to 11% among non-Aboriginals (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013, p. 6). In 2006, despite efforts to promote educational success among young people, only 33% of Nunavik's youth, aged 15 to 24, attended an educational institution, compared to 69% in Quebec (NRBHSS, 2011, p. 20).

Educational Challenges in Inuit Communities

Many contextual and gender-centric obstacles plague primary, secondary, and post-secondary studies. Several male Inuit who left school confirm having abandoned their studies due to learning problems (22%), a lack of interest (15%), or a desire to join the workforce. With regards to females, two out of five Inuit women attribute the interruption in their secondary school studies to pregnancy or family responsibilities (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013, p. 37). The negative influence of friends or family members engaged in at-risk behaviours, or who have themselves left school might also prompt disengagement from school and lead to dropping out. Many young Nunavimmiut also suffer from learning disabilities as a result of fetal alcohol syndrome and other effects associated with prenatal alcohol consumption. Compared to young people in urban centres or semi-rural areas, however, "all these disabilities are less likely to be diagnosed or treated in the north due to things such as isolated communities, high costs and high turnover or lack of teachers and other professionals (NLC – Nunavut Literacy Council, 2007, p. 13).

Given the absence of colleges or universities in most of the Inuit territories,[6] the Inuit face additional obstacles when they need to relocate from isolated or rural areas to urban settings to acquire new skills (Holmes, 2005; R.A. Malatest & Associates, 2004). As a result, pursuing studies beyond the fifth year of post-secondary school is synonymous with social and cultural uprooting. In fact, of the Inuit who have earned a post-secondary diploma, half had to leave their families, friends and communities to study in a totally foreign cultural environment (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013; Holmes, 2005). Although at times necessary, relocating is often difficult as a result of the lack of housing in northern communities, increased costs to move to the south,[7] family responsibilities or forced and lengthy geographical estrangement from the community[8] (NLC, 2007, p. 10). In addition, the differences between teaching approaches in the north compared to the south prove difficult for many young people. Racism and discrimination in educational institutions and in the training content also discourage many Inuit from pursuing studies (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008; Rodon, 2008). The Inuit living outside of Inuit Nunangat are consequently twice as likely to report having earned a post-secondary degree (53.3%) than their peers living in one of the four Inuit regions (28.2%) (Statistics Canada, 2013a, p. 8).

In addition, many authors point to the difficulty of both retaining students and finding competent teachers in Inuit territories: "the stark reality of Inuit education today is that roughly three-quarters of the children are not completing high school, and many who do graduate find that their skills don't compare with those of non-Aboriginal graduates" (Audla, 2012). Learning in Inuit communities is further impacted by the inadequacy of the educational system, established by governments in the south, to capture the cultural relevance of course content and learning methods. In addition, learning content in a second language also creates numerous problems (NLC, 2007, p. 5–10). In Nunavik, the first three years of primary school are taught in Inuktitut. In their fourth year, and for the remainder of their education, students must choose between English or French instruction. While there with good intentions, teaching staff who are not trained in indigenous languages and often stay for short periods of time, undermine the effort to establish a trusting relationship between students and teachers.

> *People from southern Canada hold many government positions as teachers, nurses and with many other government/community services. They may not be familiar with the Inuit culture or language; they may have lower expectations of the skills and abilities of Inuit students and employees; they may not know how to best support Inuit youth in the classroom and in the workplace. (NLC, 2007, p. 3)*

With a limited access to complementary educational services, like guidance counselling, psychological counselling related to schooling and remedial teaching, teachers often bear the burden of responding to all students' needs (KRG and Makivik Corporation, 2010; Mueller, 2006). It also limits opportunities for teachers to collaborate with other professionals in the education field. This shortage of expertise in Quebec's Inuit territory can have significant implications on the integration of students with learning difficulties, as well as on the quality of the education offered. To help students catch up and facilitate their transition to post-secondary institutions in urban centres in the south (Holmes, 2005), the Kativik School Board offers Nunavimmiut students opportunities to complete a sixth year of secondary studies in Kangiqsujuaq (or Wakeham Bay).

Finally, several studies have shown that the students' social environment has implications on school performance and attendance (Belisimbi, 2008; Ogbu, 1992; R.A. Malatest & Associates, 2004). This explains, in part, the low level of education in Inuit communities, compared to elsewhere in Canada. Taken together, the numerous challenges facing Inuit populations—including food insecurity, overcrowding, health problems, drug addiction and alcoholism, the prevalence of poverty, spousal violence, and the high suicide rate—have a negative impact on young people's success in school, contribute to their high rate of absenteeism, and prompt students to abandon their studies

6 With its five campuses, the Nunavut Arctic College offers some university-level programs, most notably in education and nursing sciences.

7 Within Québec, Inuit students at the post-secondary level are eligible for various financial aid programs paid for by the Kativik School Board. However, the scarcity of financial resources and the lack of understanding about the financial assistance offered limit their options.

8 As part of the Kativik School Board sponsorship program, postsecondary students are entitled to travel to their home community once or twice a year, in addition to their initial transportation (KSB, 2014, p. 7).

(Belisimbi, 2008, p. 83). Nonetheless, some authors wonder if the indicators "that, until now, have served to illustrate the failure of Inuit education (i.e., absenteeism, a lack of interest in reading, etc.) might, in fact, express Inuit resistance to an educational system still based on an ideology of assimilation" (Laugrand, 2008, p. 91).

Impacts of Low Education Levels

In Inuit communities, under-education has a significant impact on the socioeconomic development of these populations: "low educational outcomes are associated with adverse social implications, including greater unemployment, greater numbers of youth entering the criminal justice system, and greater incidences of illness and poverty" (Audla, 2012). In the last few years, many efforts have been undertaken to reduce the drop-out rate, including the Esuma Project[9] and the establishment of a Nunavik-wide network of childcare services. Currently, 16 childcare centres offer educational programs for children aged 0 to 5 in Inuktitut and are adapted to the Inuit culture. A nutrition program, using local foods, was also introduced in childcare centres with the goal of promoting optimal childhood development and reducing the future risk of learning disabilities linked to poor nutrition. In addition to generating more than 250 jobs in the 14 villages (KRG, 2013), this early-intervention initiative eases the entry of children into the formal education system by offering them a healthy and safe environment that promotes equal opportunity, socialization, and the development of their potential. Given the scope of the challenges, however, other efforts should be made to reduce the educational gap that plagues the Inuit and, more generally, Aboriginal communities.

Language

Aboriginal Language

The Inuit languages are the second most common among Aboriginal language families in Canada, with Inuktitut being the Inuit language most frequently reported (Statistics Canada, 2012, p. 2). Some 35,000 Inuit reported being able to conduct a conversation in Inuktitut, compared to several hundred individuals for Inuinnaqtun (575), Inuvialuktun (625), or another Inuit language (285). A very small proportion of Inuit speak other Aboriginal languages, for example, Cree (150) or Montagnais (95) (Statistics Canada, 2013d, p. 8).

Although 63.3% of the Inuit population in Canada reports being able to converse in one of the Inuit languages, the mastery of these languages varies according to the region of residence, both inside and outside Inuit Nunangat. While nearly all the Inuit living in Nunavik (99.1%) reported being able to conduct a conversation in an Inuit language,[10] the proportion drops to 89.1% for Inuit living in Nunavut. The percentage of Inuit able to converse in an Aboriginal language falls off dramatically in Nunatsiavut, in the Inuvialuite region of the Northwest Territories, and even more significantly outside traditional Inuit territory (Statistics Canada, 2013d, p. 9).

9 For more information regarding this program funding various school perseverance initiatives in Nunavik, please visit esuma.ca

10 According to the 2011 National Household Survey, this proportion stands at 88.1% for Inuit living in Quebec (Statistics Canada, 2014).

Table 4. Percentage of the Inuit population able to conduct a conversation in an Inuit language (self-identified), by area of residence, Canada, 2011

AREA OF RESIDENCE	PERCENTAGE (%) OF INUIT REPORTING BEING ABLE TO CONDUCT A CONVERSATION IN AN INUIT LANGUAGE
Total Inuit population	63.3
Inuit Nunangat	82.3
Nunatsiavut	24.9
Nunavik	99.1
Nunavut	89.0
Inuvialuit Region	20.1
Outside of Inuit Nunangat	10.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 2013d, p. 9

In absolute terms, the number of Inuit who reported being able to converse in an Inuit language increased between 2006 and 2011. The proportion relative to the Inuit population, however, dropped more than five percentage points, from 68.8% in 2006 to 63.3% in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2013d, p. 8). Only 2.5% of Inuit who identified their mother tongue as an Aboriginal language, confirmed being unable to hold a conversation in that language, a proportion below the average for the three large Aboriginal groups (6.9%) (Statistics Canada, 2013, p. 6).

The proportion of Inuit who reported that they were able to conduct a conversation in an Inuit language is surprising given that several studies have decried a loss of fluency, particularly among young Nunavimmiut. The conclusions of the Avataq Cultural Institute's Inuktituurniup Satuurtaugasuarninga Project gives voice to some of these concerns, citing, among other things, the decline in the quality of Inuktitut in Nunavik, including incorrect grammar and syntax, poor vocabulary, and a blending of Inuktitut and English (Avataq Cultural Institute, 2009). Although less than most other Aboriginal languages, Inuktitut is deterioriating primarily due to the predominance of the Anglo-Saxon culture (NLC, 2007, p. 3) . In this regard, only 22.4% of First Nations and 2.5% of Métis reported being able to conduct a conversation in an Aboriginal language (Statistics Canada, 2013d, p. 4).

Grounded in a culture of oral tradition, the Inuit use two writing systems: a symbolic system and the Latin alphabet, both imported by Christian missionaries. In Nunavik and Nunavut, the syllabic system dominates, even though the alphabetic writing system is also used (Pirurvik Centre, 2015).

Mastery of the Official Languages

Across Canada, more than nine out of 10 Inuit reported being able to conduct a conversation in a non-Aboriginal language, either English (83.4%), French (2%), or both (6.2%). In other words, nearly one-tenth of Inuit (8.5%) reported not knowing either English or French, which is the highest proportion among the three Aboriginal groups. By comparison, roughly 10% of Inuit reported a non-Aboriginal language as their mother tongue (Statistics Canada, 2013d, p. 5).

For the majority of the population in Nunavik, English is their second language. However, French is gaining traction as a third language in both public institutions and teaching establishments starting in the third year of primary school. According to available data, half of the students in Nunavik chose to pursue their studies in French. In 2004, 39% of the 2,900 students in Nunavik were enrolled in the French sector, compared to 35% in the English

sector (Daveluy, 2009, p. 181). Furthermore, in order to foster multilingualism within the family, several Inuit families in Nunavik have decided to alternate their choice of the language of instruction (i.e., enrolling their first child in the French sector, the second in the English sector, and so on). Thus, in 2011, more than one out of five residents of Nunavik knew both of Canada's official languages,[11] a proportion that has increased steadily since 2001 (18.1%) (ISQ – Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2015).

Culture

Subsistence activities such as fishing, hunting, and gathering form the bedrock of the Inuit's rich cultural heritage and provide the traditional foods that have been the dietary basis of their communities for many generations. Other ancestral activities, like sewing, in addition to being crucial to the group's survival in a harsh climate, illustrate the know-how of the Inuit people. From an artistic point of view, the Inuit are recognized worldwide for their stone, wood, and ivory sculpture, as well as for *katajjaniq*, the Inuktitut word for throat singing. Moreover, according to Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, "while differences exist among modern Inuit as to how closely they follow traditional values, all Inuit are proud of their culture and recognize the importance of keeping it alive" (2006, p. 4).

In conclusion, the repercussions of colonization on traditional Inuit society are still present in various spheres of everyday life. The many political and social changes brought about by colonization not only changed the social relationships between the Inuit, but also those between the Inuit and non-Inuit. This brief summary of the difficulties that Inuit communities face should not minimize the strengths and assets of this population's rich cultural past. In the last several decades, a number of advancements have been made in several villages, particularly with regards to the development of the tourism industry, the extraction of natural resources, and sports activities. In this context of perpetual evolution, the new dual economy and access to the labour market play a dominant role.

11 It should be noted, however, that the proportion of Nunavimmiut with a knowledge of only French has dropped from 10.7% to 5,6% in 2011 (ISQ, 2015).

CHAPTER 3

Economy and Employment

In addition to the demographic, linguistic, historical and social framework, a significant economic dimension, coloured by the state of the labour market and political issues, shapes the current Inuit context. After presenting some indicators related to the economy and the Inuit's participation in the labour market, this chapter will identify the primary obstacles that hamper their professional integration at both the national and provincial level.

Economic Indicators

Aboriginal communities are among the poorest in Canada, and according to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), the Inuit in Northern Quebec have the lowest income levels of all the Inuit communities nationwide (Duhaime, 2009; ITK and INAC, 2007).

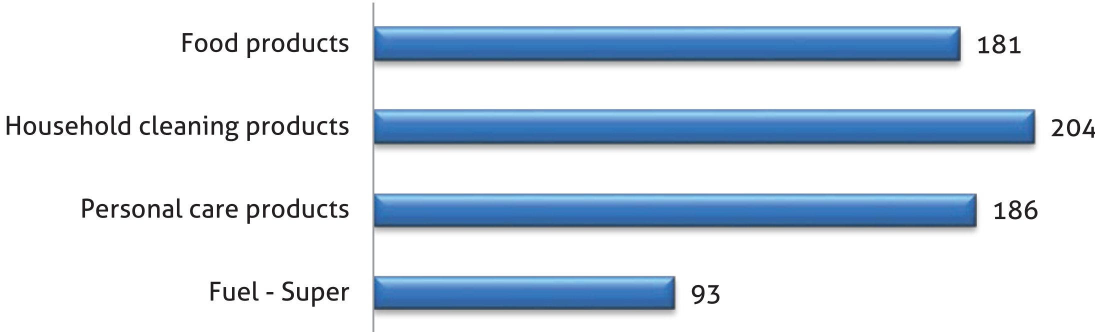
In 2006, the median annual income for Aboriginals was a meager $18,962; 30% lower than the median income of non-Aboriginals (Wilson and MacDonald, 2010, p. 3). In this regard, it is important to note that rural Aboriginal communities often benefit from other sources of non-monetary income that are not reflected in census data, including gathering, hunting, and fishing. In Nunavik, Inuit populations also receive financial compensation from mining companies established in their territory based on proximity to the mining site. For example, from 2004 to 2012, pursuant to an agreement signed with Xstrata Nickel Mine Raglan (now Glencore), the inhabitants of Salluit (45%), Kangirsujuaq (30%), and all of Nunavik (25%) shared $115.5 million in compensation (Philie, 2013, p. 131). Nonetheless, the median income of Inuit living in rural areas remains $7,000 lower than those of Inuit living in urban areas (Wilson and MacDonald, 2010, p. 11–13).

Although difficult to measure precisely, Duhaime estimates that, in 2005, poverty affected 21% to 28% of households in Nunavik; these rates are "two or three times higher than those reported in all of Quebec by the Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ)" (2009 , p. 18). According to the ISQ, in 2005 the low income rate was 21.4% in Nunavik. In quantitative terms, this rather conservative estimate translates into 1,680 inhabitants living in poverty (Duhaime, 2009, p. 15).

There are a number of reasons that explain, at least in part, this endemic and persistent poverty. Low levels of education among the Inuit limits their ability to obtain skilled and well-paid employment (Duhaime, 2009). In addition, a salary gap still exists between Inuit workers and their non-Aboriginal peers (Pendakur and Pendakur, 2008). Poor budget management, sometimes related to gambling, alcoholism, or drug addiction, may amplify this (Chabot, 2004; Duhaime, 2009). Not only do Inuit households have to support a higher number of dependents, compared to the average Canadian household, but they also contend with a much higher cost of living in the north that severely limits their buying power (ITK and INAC, 2007, p. 3–10).

Despite subsidy programs implemented to bridge the pricing gap, including *Nutrition North Canada* managed by the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) and the food program overseen by the Kativik Regional Government and the Mativik Corporation, everyday consumer products remain expensive in Nunavik (Duhaime and Caron, 2013, p. 2). For example, according the Nunavik Comparative Price Index 2011, on average, food products cost 81% more in Nunavik than in Québec (Duhaime and Caron, 2012, p. 4).

Figure 2. Consumer price indexes by product category, Nunavik, 2011 (compared to Québec = 100)



Source: Duhaime and Caron, 2012, p. 4

These significant and persistent gaps place Nunavik's residents at a distinct disadvantage, and affect nearly all budget line items, with the exception of housing and gasoline. Pro-rated federal and provincial taxes are added to a price tag already inflated by the high cost of transportation and warehousing in the north (Duhaime and Caron, 2013, 2012). Only Kuujjuaq, the major town in Nunavik, seems to escape somewhat from this adverse logic. While the price of a food basket there was roughly 25% less than in other towns in Nunavik, it was still 50% more expensive than in the metropolitan region of Québec (Duhaime and Caron, 2012, p. 7). In addition, all of the villages in Northern Quebec are subject to a limited number of retailers and a small variety of available goods.

High food prices increase the risk of undernourishment and malnutrition. In the 2004 Qanuippitaa Survey, jointly funded by the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ) and the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, a quarter of Nunavik's residents (24%) reported a shortage of food in the preceding month (Anctil, 2008, p. 4). Food insecurity affects more than a third of the Nunavimmiut living on the Hudson Bay coast; a disturbing figure considering the negative impacts of a poor diet on a populations's physical, mental, and social health (NRBHSS, 2011, p. 26).

In short, many of the harmful consequences to both individual and community development, including food insecurity, material deprivation, indebtedness, poor health and housing issues, may be attributed to the endemic poverty affecting Inuit populations (Duhaime, 2009). In order to combat this poverty, Wilson and MacDonald stress the need for employment equity: "[T]here must be jobs available across sectors, pay levels must be roughly equivalent and workforce entrants must be greeted without bias and suspicion" (2010, p. 19). For the Inuit, however, many employment disparities continue to exist.

The Labour Market

The Inuit first entered the market economy in the 1930s when Catholic missionaries introduced the concept of paid work through the establishment of sawmills and bakeries in southern James Bay (Poulin, 2012, p. 2). The propagation of salaried work in the 1950s redefined roles and responsibilities within northern communities, and rapidly changed them from nomadic to sedentary people (Duhaime and et al., 2001). Currently, Nunavik's labour market includes a combination of traditional activities and salaried work (Belisimbi, 2008; Chabot 2001, 2004).

Economic and sociocultural factors may explain why traditional subsistence activities like hunting, fishing, and gathering continue to flourish. In addition to supplying *niqituinnaq* (country food), these activities contribute to strengthening social ties (Chabot, 2003; Duhaime et al., 2003). In Nunavik, nearly eight out of 10 adults participate in traditional food-gathering activities, the highest proportion across all four Inuit regions in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2001, p. 9). In many cases, these activities are an alternative to purchasing expensive and often nutritionally inferior food. The qualifications required to work in a monetized labour market differ from the skills generally valued in Inuit communities. As a result, in a transitional economy where salaried employment and traditional activities co-exist, certain difficulties may arise (NLC, 2007, p. 2). Furthermore, since conventional employment indicators do not take into account the non-monetary, albeit essential, contribution made by traditional activities, they fail to adequately reflect the complex reality of the labour market in Northern Quebec's communities (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013; ITK and INAC, 2007).

In 2011, the unemployment rate for Inuit aged 15 and over across Canada was 19.6%, compared to 7.5% for the non-Aboriginal population. Also in 2011, as in 2006, Inuit women (16.1%) fared better than men (22.9%), with a gap of nearly seven percentage points between their respective rates of unemployment. It should be noted that the unemployment rate is often underestimated in small, isolated regions where the number of jobs is limited. When their job-seeking efforts are unsuccessful, individuals stop looking and, as a result, are no longer counted among the active population (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013). Thus, in 2011, the activity rate of Inuit aged 25 to 64 was estimated to be 71%, two points lower than in 2006 (AANDC, 2013b).

Aboriginal populations were also especially hard-hit by the recession of 2008–2009, particularly in the province of Quebec (CSIS – Centre for the Study of Living Standards, 2012). As Usalcas stressed, "[t]he 2008-2009 labour market downturn had a longer and deeper impact on the Aboriginal workforce compared to non-Aboriginal workers. This widened the gap in the rates of participation, employment and unemployment between both populations" (2011, p. 27). In addition, this more pronounced effect of the economic slow-down on Aboriginal peoples resulted in a decline in employment that persisted up until 2010.

According to NHS data in Quebec, the unemployment rate of Inuit aged 15 and over rose to 16.3% in 2011, more than double the provincial rate (Statistics Canada, 2014). Despite the recorded increase in unemployment since the 1990s, Nunavik has the lowest rates of the four regions in Inuit Nunangat: 14.7% in 2001 and 18.8% in 2006. As in several regions, Aboriginal or not, the unemployment rate proves to be particularly high for men and young people aged 15 to 24 (NRBHSS, 2011, p. 27).

In 2011, the Kativik Regional Government counted 4,179 regular, full-time jobs in the territory, an increase of more than 30% as compared to 2005. Excluding the mining sector, this increase is 21% for the same period. These jobs are distributed equally among beneficiaries of the JBNQA (51%) and non-beneficiaries (49%), i.e., non-Inuit workers coming from outside Nunavik (KRG, 2011b).

Table 5. Distribution, Number and Percentage, of Regular, Full-time Jobs by Sex and Status, Nunavik, 2011

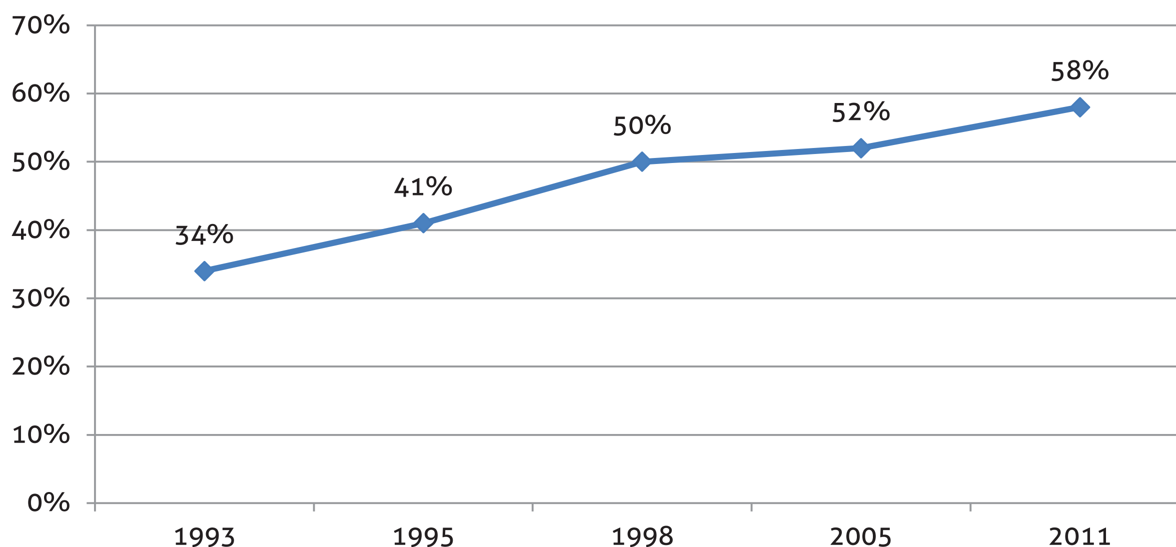
	ALL OF NUNAVIK		COMMUNITIES ONLY		MINING SITES ONLY	
Total	**4,179**	**100%**	**3,171**	**76%**	**1,008**	**24%**
Beneficiaries	2,124	51%	1,976	62%	148	15%
Non-beneficiaries	2,055	49%	1,195	38%	860	85%
Men	2,492	60%	1,587	50%	905	90%
Women	1,687	40%	1,584	50%	103	10%

Source: KRG, 2011b, p. 12

In this transitional economy, however, non-beneficiaries occupy an increasingly larger part of the northern labour market, absorbing nearly two-thirds of all new full-time jobs created between 2005 and 2011 (KRG, 2011b, p. 13–15). Furthermore, workers coming from outside Nunavik occupy 85% of the jobs in the mining sector, as compared to 38% of the jobs in the various communities.

The expansion of the salaried economy and, more particularly, the growth in the mining sector requires an increasingly skilled labour force. Thus, the percentage of full-time jobs requiring a post-secondary diploma or trades certificate has increased from 34% in 1993 to 58% in 2011 (KRG, 2011b, p. 30).

Figure 3. Percentage of full-time jobs that require a post-secondary diploma or a trades certification in Nunavik, 2011



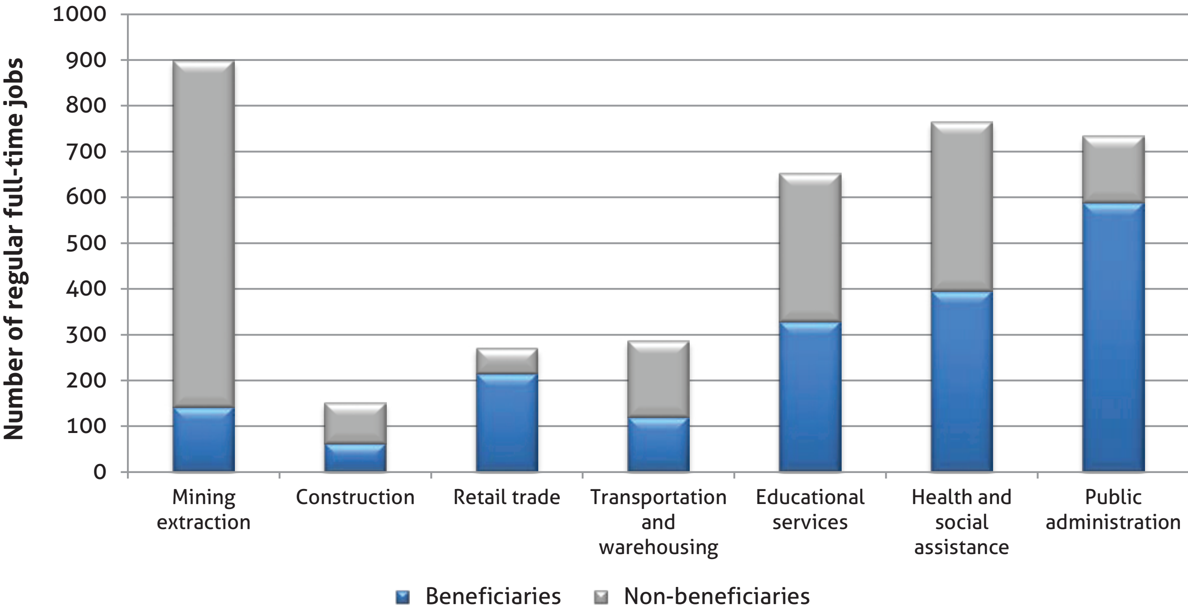
Source: KRG, 2011b 30

Although men dominate the labour market overall, filling 60% of regular, full-time positions, the representation of both men and women has reached parity (50% each), except for mining sites where the majority of jobs are still held by men (90%) (KRG, 2011b, p. 13–15).

According to KRG data, "[i]n 2011, of the 4,179 full-time workers in Nunavik, 1,648 (40%) were employed by private businesses and co-operatives, 2,188 (52%) by public and para-public organizations, and 343 (8%) by non-profit organizations" (KRG, 2011b, p. 15). Furthermore, non-beneficiaries are over-represented in the private sector, while the majority of beneficiaries are to be found in public and para-public organizations (59%) (KRG, 2011b, p. 15).

In the Nunavik territory, the majority of regular jobs are concentrated within four large industries: mining, oil and gas extraction (22%), health care and social assistance (18%), public administration 18%), and educational services (16%). Less common sectors include transportation and warehousing (7%), retail trade (6%), and construction (4%) (KRG, 2011b, p. 19). The JBNQA beneficiaries represent the majority of those working in public administration and retail trade, while workers from outside the territory (37%) are concentrated in the mining extraction sector (KRG, 2011b, p. 20).

Figure 4. Number of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries working full-time in the main industries in Nunavik, 2011



Source: KRG, 2011b, p. 20

Although half of the available jobs in Nunavik are regular, full-time positions, a very high rate of casual work persists and the unemployment rate remains high. In Nunavik, part-time jobs made up 12% of the labour market, and temporary or seasonal work took 34% of all the available jobs in 2011 (KRG, 2011b). Involuntary part-time work affects a large number of employees in northern communities. In fact, half of the Inuit who work part-time reported that they had been unable to find full-time work (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013, p. 53). Although, in a sense, the sporadic nature of the jobs offered in the Arctic encourages the pursuit of subsistence activities, by accommodating the intermittent character of hunting, fishing, and gathering (Duhaime, 1991; Belisimbi, 2008). The irregular and limited monetary gains derived from these activities might also limit, or even completely exhaust, the funds required to engage in them.

Taken together, these labour market indicators demonstrate the complexity of the northern economic context for Inuit people. Although the Inuit filled half of all the full-time jobs in Nunavik in 2011, the gap between beneficiaries and non-Inuit continues to increase, as outside labour grows in the territory. In addition, many

Inuit fill entry-level jobs that demand few skills and often return lower wages; a situation that often results in high staff turn-over rate. These disparities in economic performance come at a high social and economic cost for Canadian society.

A Costly Gap

Over the years, many researchers have evaluated the socioeconomic costs of the difficult employment situation for Aboriginals. Many have taken a closer look at what higher levels of education and improved professional performance might mean for Canada's First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. IThe Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples report of 1996 estimated that the social cost of the status quo was $7.5 billion annually; $5.8 billion in lost productivity and $1.7 billion in expenses related to health care and social services (RCAP, 1996a, volume 5). Sharpe et al. (2009) evaluated the potential financial benefits that would result from the elimination of gaps in employment and labour market participation. By 2026, these benefits would allow Canadian Aboriginals to reach the levels already obtained by non-Aboriginals in 2001.

> *If this were to happen, the authors estimate a total increase in income levels of $36.5 billion by 2026. Tax revenues would be $3.5 billion higher annually, and government expenditures would decrease by as much as $14.2 billion as a result of increased social well-being among Aboriginal people. Canada's GDP could increase by an estimated $401 billion by 2026. (Sharpe et al., 2009, cited in Bruce and Marlin, 2012, p. 15)*

In other words, improved labour market outcomes and increased productivity for Aboriginals from 2001 to 2026 would translate into $401 billion in additional resources and $115 billion in costs averted, resulting in cumulative benefits of over $500 billion (in 2006 dollars) (Sharpe and Arsenault, 2010; Sharpe et al., 2009). The advantages to bridging this gap go far beyond monetary considerations. A better socioeconomic situation would also improve the populations' physical and mental health, and general well-being (NRBHSS, 2011).

Reducing the educational and economic disparities between Aboriginal peoples and the overall population would, as a result, have a real impact on the quality of life of Aboriginal communities and on economic development in Canada. As Wilson and MacDonald point out, "investment is, however, only part of the answer. The challenges are complex and solutions require an understanding of the different environments in which solutions would be implemented as well as the root causes of the observable data. To invest effectively, one must understand current conditions in their historical context" (2010, p. 5).

Despite this moral, social, and economic imperative, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis continue to lag behind the rest of Canada's citizens. From a historical and socioeconomic perspective, several internal and external factors account for the low participation of Aboriginals in the labour market.

Employment Challenges

Although the importance attributed to these factors differ from one source to another, the Inuit's difficulty in securing employment and low levels of income are generally linked to low levels of education, inadequate training, poor mastery of the two official languages, the scarcity of jobs in northern communities, discrimination, and the innate structure of the labour market (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013; Ciceri and Scott, 2006; Government of Nunavut, 2006; Howard, Edge and Watt, 2012; Pendakur and Pendakur, 2008; Wilson and Macdonald, 2010). Far from exhaustive, this next section summarizes the major employment challenges for Inuit in northern and urban settings.

Low Levels of Education and Training

In general, the higher the Inuits' level of education, the more likely they were to be employed (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013, p. 51). According to results of the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS), the employment rate rises with the level of education, as does the median income. Thus, when the APS was conducted, 71% of Inuit with a post-secondary degree were employed, compared to 44% of those who had left school. As for income ranges, the median income of Inuit graduates was $20,000 higher than the income of those who had left school, i.e., twice as high as that for First Nations living off reserve and Métis (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013). Indeed, as less than half have earned a secondary school diploma nationwide, Inuit seeking employment regularly cite a lack of training and schooling as substantial barriers to professional integration.

Discrepancy Between Labour Supply and Demand

For the Inuit, particularly those in northern communities, an increase in the proportion of skilled jobs presents yet another difficulty in securing employment. In many cases the Nunavimmiuts' training does not match the skills required for the jobs created in the territory, creating a discrepancy between labour supply and demand (KRG, 2011b; Belisimbi, 2008). Also, younger workers often have a hard time finding their first job since employees who fill entry-level positions tend to remain at this level over the long term. This continues to be true even if they change employers or sporadically leave the labour market due to a lack of interest, self-esteem, supervision or training (prior to taking the position or on the job). This professional mobility, especially at the entry level, also complicates internal recruitment for positions that demand a higher skill set. Thus, in several Inuit communities, most specialized jobs are filled by Qallunaat (non-Inuit) from the south.

Language and Literacy

Literacy is an educational cornerstone that extends beyond basic reading, writing, and math skills acquisition, and represents the ability to communicate fully and fluently in a language. As Patrick and Tomiak illustrate, although a solid mastery of Inuktitut is an indisputable asset, understanding only one language may create significant obstacles.

> *If your primary language is Inuktitut, in some ways that's helpful, because there are jobs within federal and provincial Inuit organizations and service delivery agencies, such as ours, where Inuktitut is an asset, but overall it's hard to get a job in the mainstream if your primary language is Inuktitut. (2008, p. 61)*

Most Canadian employers demand functional bilingualism that pairs mastery of one of the two official languages with Inuktitut. In this regard, according to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), "incomplete high school combined with low English literacy skills make it difficult to enter and succeed in the system" (ITK, 2005, p. 3). For many employees in the province of Quebec, the added value of mastering both of Canada's official languages, particularly in Montreal, further complicates the professional integration process for Inuit in urban settings. Thus, a poor understanding of English or French can seriously limit job and socialization opportunities outside of Inuit Nunangat, as well as in the four Inuit regions (Government of Nunavut, 2006; Patrick and Tomiak, 2008).

Limited Professional Opportunities

Despite the growth of the labour market over the past few years, slow economic development at the local level has resulted in limited job opportunities in Inuit territory (Government of Nunavut, 2006). Some investors and entrepreneurs have been discouraged by the high cost of living, the housing crisis, and the small size of

the markets in isolated regions (Poulin, 2012). As a result, many Inuit frequently cite limited opportunities as their top concern for seeking employment (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013). This perception, well-founded or not, also serves as a significant source of frustration for unemployed Inuit who wish to join the labour market. "For Aboriginal people living in large urban centres [...] their labour force participation rates are higher and their unemployment rates are lower than those of Aboriginal people living in small communities" (Bruce and Marlin, 2012, p. 2). In 2011, the unemployment rate dropped three percentage points to 17% for Inuit aged 25 to 64 living outside of Inuit Nunangat, compared to the average unemployment rate of 20% for Inuit nationwide.

Experience and Understanding of the Labour Market

According to APS results, Inuit searching for, but not finding work, also attribute this to "lacking the necessary work experience (55%), and not knowing where to look (41%)" (Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013, p. 48). In addition, according to the Nunavut Literacy Council (NLC), young people lack the basic skills required to find and keep a job.

> *There was broad agreement that the gap between available jobs and local youth to fill them related primarily to a lack of literacy and essential skills. Work readiness skills include things such as appropriate behaviours in the workplace, showing up for work on time and on a regular basis, basic technical skills and other essential skills including literacy. (NLC, 2007, p. 13)*

Their lack of familiarity with the labour market, which has been imported from the south, presents significant challenges. These Inuit struggle to understand basic job-hunting techniques, such as writing a curriculum vitae or passing a job interview, because they differ substantially from their experiences in the north.

Geographical Distance

For young Aboriginal people, their place of residence has a significant impact on academic success and access to the labour market (Bruce and Marlin, 2012; Ciceri and Scott, 2006). Young Inuit in Nunavik who must leave their community in order to pursue post-secondary studies in an urban setting often contend with an array of challenges, including isolation, culture shock, and the absence of their family and social networks. Bruce and Marlin (2012) point out that young Aboriginal people from isolated rural communities in the north are twice as likely to abandon their studies and four times less likely to

attend a post-secondary institution than their non-Aboriginal peers. Since only air routes connect the 14 villages in Nunavik, geographical distance also has an impact on the mobility of workers. The housing crisis that afflicts northern communities also limits labour mobility. In Nunavik, although most of the major collective bargaining agreements include a housing allocation provision for employees who relocate, some study respondents suggest that, while this provision is applied automatically for non-Inuit workers from the south, it is not a matter of course when it comes to Inuit workers coming from another village.

Seasonal Constraints

In Nunavik, winter wind chill can drive temperatures down to 50°C below zero and can also bring its fair share of blizzards and storms. In addition to limiting workers' movements, harsh weather can delay work contracts. Snow and ice cover the ground nine months out of the year, with maritime transportation only possible between June and October. Boat transportation and outdoor economic activities, often within the construction sector, can come to an end prematurely with the arrival of cold weather and the first snow, sometimes as early as mid-September.

The hunting and fishing seasons, determined by weather conditions and animal migrations, often temporary suspend inside work for many Inuit employees as these periods are devoted to securing the traditional food supply (Swanson, 2003).

Mutual Prejudice

Despite efforts to raise awareness of Aboriginal people's way of life, prejudices and stereotypes continue to persist, and are often perpetuated by mass media.

> *Employer surveys on hiring Aboriginal workers have uncovered concerns related to basic skill levels, training completion rates, and the potential for cultural misunderstandings that may impact working relationships. Some studies have ascertained that employer perceptions of Aboriginal workers often stem from prejudices and assumptions that reflect historical stereotypes. (Bruce and Marlin, 2012, p. 4)*

In particular, to promote the hiring and retention of Aboriginal workers, Bruce and Marlin (2012) suggest demystifying the Aboriginal culture, diversifying recruitment and networking methods in order to include a more diversified potential employee pool, and increasing professional mobility. In return, some respondents stressed the necessity to dismantle prejudices within Inuit communities toward non-Inuit populations and professionals, who might still be seen as agents of colonization and assimilation.

Additional Challenges in Urban Environments

In addition to cultural disorientation and isolation, Inuit who move from the North to urban environments in the South, whether voluntarily or not, must adjust their expectations around salary. While the minimum wage in Quebec is $10.55 an hour,[12] entry-level jobs in Nunavik offer a rate of $16 to $18 an hour, due to the high cost of living. In addition, in large urban areas, job seekers encounter a much more competitive labour market where dozens of workers with a range of skills apply for the same position. Less familiar with the Inuit way of life, non-Inuit urban employers might be less inclined to offer mentoring or accommodations likely to encourage integration and retention. Consequently, the economic context in the south amplifies other difficulties for Inuit who move from the North, including lack of education and familiarity with the labour market.

12 As of May 1, 2015

In sum, employment barriers, including low education levels and substance abuse, as well as contextual impediments, like geographic distance and the state of the economy, negatively impact Inuit's integration into employment. According to several respondents and researchers, the innate structure of the labour market—where the lack of flexibility and the goals of the market economy clash with the Inuit's way of life and values—comes with its own challenges.

To enable the Inuit to participate in the global economic system in a way that is consistent with their values and way of life, we need to respect and integrate ancient Inuit culture into employment interventions (NLC, 2007). To promote the acquisition and development of employability skills, it is essential to consider the specific culture of Aboriginal clients and other underrepresented groups in labour market intervention methods. In this study we have collected data from key informants and conducted a review of the literature to identify the major foundations of traditional Inuit culture and have organized them into five themes: cultural identity and the self-concept (chapter 4), values and beliefs (chapter 5), social dynamics (chapter 6), styles of communications (chapter 7), and learning methods (chapter 8). However, it is important to remember that the cultural premises presented in the next chapters are founded on an empirical generalization of the research and may, as a result, be experienced differently by individual clients.

CHAPTER 4

Cultural Identity and Self-concept

Founded on both present and past observations, the collective and individual identity of the Inuit are based on their relationships with diverse elements including the environment, family, community and religion. Evolving to keep pace with social, political, and historical changes (Dorais, 2011, 2005, 2004b), the Inuit identity is also closely connected to gender, social class, religion, and culture or the political community (Bouchard, 2008). (Bouchard, 2008). Cultural identity develops in a context of otherness, through interaction with bearers of a different culture (Dorais, 2004b, 1994). In recent decades, however, the profound transformations experienced by the Inuit population have shaken their self-representation and sense of cultural belonging. This chapter explores the Inuit's cultural identity and concept of self, defined as the way of seeing oneself based on one's experiences in comparison with others (Ruel, 1987). The chapter will focus on notions of survival, humility, reliance, and authenticity.

Survival

In the extremely hostile environment of the Arctic, the notion of survival is a principle foundation of Inuit identity.

> *It is a culture of survival. Every day is about survival. They live in an environment, a climate that threatens their lives constantly, so the survival of the many is so important. If one person is neglectful, it could mean the death of the whole group. So there is that tie. I think, because of that, there is a sense of collaboration and working together that is very hard for us to understand. It is life and death. And everyone has their role and everyone has their part in this and they have to do it. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

The harsh environment, combined with a scarcity of resources, has driven social organization, the development of technical skills, and the world view of this ancient people. The identity of the Inuit people is grounded in the principle of survival and the notion of individual, results-oriented responsibility.

A Perspective of Individual Responsibility

In order to ensure peaceful coexistence in a community that relies on interdependence to survive, Inuit socialization practices encourage mutual respect, good behaviour, tolerance toward community members, and confidence (Arnakak, 2002; Kingston, 2008; Wihak and Merali, 2003). Their actions are informed by a perspective of individual responsibility. From a very young age the Inuit are encouraged to make their own choices while, at the same time, considering the impacts of those choices on the community.

> *They [the Inuit] believe that each person has the capacity – and the personal responsibility – to learn, to think about their goals, actions, and consequences, and to act in ways that lead to positive outcomes for themselves and, when necessary, for the group - and that different circumstances require different analyses and action. (Korhonen, 2002, p. 196)*

One key informant pointed out that "kids are expected very early to contribute to the family and the community" (Respondent, Ottawa). Through various subsistence activities, like hunting, fishing, gathering, and sewing, the participation—and responsibility—of each member historically ensured the community's survival. Consequently, since the practice and mastery of assigned tasks shaped one's reputation, individuals had to perform their functions well. Even today, to ensure that work is done well, Elders will teasingly point out their mentees' flaws and oversights.

> FROM A VERY YOUNG AGE, THE INUIT ARE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE THEIR OWN CHOICES WHILE, AT THE SAME TIME, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE IMPACTS OF THOSE CHOICES ON THE COMMUNITY.

> *[...] when you are cutting up a caribou, or a seal or a goose and you are looking like you are not doing it properly the Elders like to say "he is a liar". I don't know why but because you are not able to do this properly you are a liar. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

These traditional roles elicited the respect of peers and still form the basis of Inuit identity. However, the emeregence of paid work within Inuit communities, introduced new, non-traditional professional roles, like those in administration and mining.

A Results-Oriented Mindset

An action- and outcome-oriented mindset is a distinctive characteristic of the Inuit people. As one key informant points out, "in the Inuit culture, it's not about 'why' but 'what' must be done" (Respondent, Montreal). These behaviours, grounded in steps towards action and the quest for immediate results, directly influence the practices of employment counsellors who must try to reconcile this short-term outlook with the long-term goals of a professional integration process. Methods designed to stimulate introspection and self-knowledge might be seen as a "waste of time" for someone seeking temporary employment. In addition to increasing the counsellor's work load, competing goals can create a disconnect with clients who are discouraged by the "slowness" of the process. It is important to outline the various steps of the employment counselling process with clients in the very first interview to build consensus and ensure that the clients feel their needs are being met.

Like many Aboriginal communities, the Inuit adopt a holistic philosophy based on interconnection and interdependence.

> *Within Inuit, and perhaps all land-based indigenous cultures, all aspects of life are seen as connected to each other in a web of infinite relationships. No part of life is separate from another part. [...] It is not possible to understand one person, or one event by itself, without putting that person or event in its full historical, biological and spiritual context. (Levan, 2003, p. 3)*

At the individual level, this means that isolating the aspects of a person's spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being is impossible. Therefore, employment interventions must take an integrated approach to consider all of the elements of an Inuk person. Given that the Inuit's identity is founded on relationships, individuals have a responsibility to consider the impacts of his or her actions on the environment and the community. In an intervention context, strategies that apply an integrated approach and consider all aspects of the person, including family, Elders, environment, and the community will yield lasting results (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2008). Most counselling concepts are based on the client's needs and assume that one is profoundly aware of oneself. A contextualized approach integrates the context of the individual's life and takes into account the impacts of the career development process on all aspects of the individual's being, and has been successfully tested with individuals distant from the labour market (Michaud et al., 2012). Over time,

this interdependence between nature and the community and the idea of survival have made the Inuit people unassuming and resilient.

Humility

In the face of the powerful forces of nature and endowed with a solid understanding of the universe, the Inuit demonstrate great humility and understanding of their individual limits. These characteristics are not only valued, but grounded in the Inuit culture.

> *There is also this whole thing about humility. Not taking pride in the ego of the individual. I was remembering reading where if a hunter went out and hunted to prove what a great hunter he was for his own aggrandisement, the animals would know and would not come to him. And so the whole clan would suffer. He had to go out with humility and respect. This wasn't about being a great hunter; this was about honoring the land, respecting the animals and asking for their sacrifice so that his people could survive. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

Demonstrations of modesty abound in the Inuit culture and can be perceived by non-Inuit, often incorrectly, as profound shyness or even a lack of self-esteem. According to Korhonen, "modesty about one's accomplishments was also valued, for boasting could lead to envy in others and possibly actions injurious to the welfare of the group, including murder of the envied person" (2002, p. 211). The idea of talking about themselves generally makes the Inuit feel uncomfortable, compared to Westerners who often highlight their skills and assets. For example, during job interviews, the Inuit might find it difficult to respond to questions about their strengths and past accomplishments. These discussions, which are centered on the individual, fly in the face of traditional Inuit values. Modesty might also explain their hesitation when faced with career choices. Inuit people are not accustomed to imagine themselves in a professional role in the future.

> *To think about the future "Oh, in ten years I am going to be this or I am going to be that" is a form of pretention. That is being pretentious. How would you know if you are going to be here in ten years, let alone what you are going to do? (Respondent, Ottawa)*

While the Inuit may find it difficult to situate themselves within Western culture because of their humility, this characteristic could not be used to explain passiveness in the ancestral culture. On the contrary, modesty sparked perseverance in action. This unassertive temperament, influenced by religion and culture, can affect career development in various ways. As a result it is important to adapt employment interventions to meet the individualized needs of Inuit clients. Among other things, adjustments must be made to interview preparation methods and professional networking concepts.

Resilience

Grounded in their ability to overcome the powerful forces of nature and colonization, resilience is at the heart of Inuit identity (Dion Stout et Kipling, 2003; Kirmayer et al., 2011; Minor, 1992).

> *They are incredibly resilient. They have to be. There is often a lot of tragedies in their culture. I think this has always been. Children die, people die, because of the extremes of the weather and the dangers in the land. There is kind of an acceptance within the group and the individual. Because you have to go on, you can't stop and be paralyzed by grief or you die. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

Inuit Elders in Nunavut stress that "traditionally, children were taught from an early age that life will often be difficult but that difficulties will pass or can be overcome" (Korhonen, 2007, p. 2). This demonstrates that ancestral teachings emphasized the importance of managing one's emotions and having patience.

Aware of how little control they have over the natural environment, the Inuit learn at a very young age that they have no other choice but to wait for weather conditions to become more suitable for hunting, fishing, or other forms of outdoor activities.

> *Patience and the ability to accept those realities that are beyond one's control are two other valued character traits. These attitudes were essential to maintaining subsistence in the Arctic, be it waiting patiently for hours at a time by a seal's breathing hole or being unable to travel or hunt for days and weeks due to violent and lengthy storms. (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 32)*

When confronted by an undesirable situation over which they have no control, the Inuit generally prefer to wait until the situation works itself out. There are many areas of day-to-day life that require patience. According to Kirmayer et al., "faced with adversity, [Inuit] people talk of hope and wait for it to reveal itself" (2011, p. 88). For non-Inuit, this attitude is easily, if incorrectly, confused with a sort of acquiescence or detachment. Similarly, when seeking employment, the Inuit are subject to the external conditions of the environment. For example, despite their perceptions of a limited labour market, they will tend to wait for a suitable job offer to turn up rather than explore the hidden market or initiate an entrepreneurial project.

In addition, developing emotional stability by learning to confront fears and control one's emotions in trying situations, is of vital importance in the Inuit culture. By avoiding panic, one is better able to look for solutions, which are crucial to the group's survival.

> *One example of the Inuit way is leaming to control one's emotions. The absence of such control can be disastrous, even fatal. The worst response to an unexpected storm or to a broken motor hundreds of miles from the nearest settlement is to panic so that one cannot think clearly or calmly. (Searles, 2008, p. 250)*

> *Control of nature was necessary for survival, and such control was possible through the observation of rules and taboos. Negative emotions and interpersonal problems, which could be detrimental to both the individual and the group, could be controlled by personal behaviour and attitude: that is, by talking about problems, changing one's thoughts, assessment and reflection. (Korhonen, 2002, p. 196)*

To achieve mental and emotional balance, Inuit Elders insisted on developing resources to transform thoughts and attitudes (Korhonen, 2007). For some Inuit in crisis situations, getting a job is seen as a speedy solution to personal, family, or social difficulties and, in the short-term, a way to attain emotional peace. Isolation and survival in a hostile environment without external interference for thousands of years created a patient and resilient society, while also engendering a marked sense of resourcefulness and strong determination. That said, as in any society, making an over-arching generalization is impossible given individual nuances and in light of the changes underway.

Cultural Authenticity

The definition of a "true Inuk" may differ depending on the respondent, however, the notion of authenticity remains essential in the Inuit culture. According to Searles (2010), a true Inuk must devote time to traditional subsistence activities, whether on land or sea, or in the territory. In this way, they are exposed to the conditions necessary for their cognitive, moral, and emotional development, in addition to learning how to manage unexpected and sometimes risky situations (Briggs, 1991). This authentic cultural identity is also related to the idea of survival.

In Inuit society, one of the most important and respected characteristics of a successful person is their capacity for self-reliance and their ability to meet life's challenges with innovation, resourcefulness and perseverance. Traditionally, these traits would greatly increase the chance of survival for the individual and the group. (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 32)

Dorais expands on this notion by explaining that "to be an Inutuinnaq, a "genuine Inuk", one must have at least one Inuk parent, speak Inuktitut, and abide by Christian morality, which is seen as continuing traditional values" (2005, p. 6). Thus, according to Searles, "[...] those Inuit who have little knowledge of the past, or who do not speak Inuktitut or do not know the traditional activities associated with the past such as certain types of hunting and fishing practices, for example, are not considered to be authentically Inuit" (2010, p. 155–156). Cultural authenticity encompasses not only participation in traditional activities, but also the appropriate application of know-how and the technical execution of related tasks.

DESPITE THEIR RESILIENCE, THE RAPID CHANGES FORCEFULLY BROUGHT ABOUT BY COLONIZATION HAVE GREATLY IMPACTED INUIT INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETY.

Despite their resilience, the rapid changes forcefully brought about by colonization have greatly impacted Inuit individuals and society.

The culture is transitioning, from being nomad less than 100 years ago to Internet and television today. There is a struggle between whether they should hold on to their culture which is a lifestyle, versus having a career and making monetary gain, which is also a lifestyle. The two are hard to mix. [...] It is a big balancing act and I myself still struggle with that. (Respondent, Inukjuak)

Hunters and fishers, the Inuit risk losing their bearings in terms of identity and culture as the market economy imposes new monetary rules that alter traditional roles. According to a key informant from Inukjuak, "It is getting harder and harder to hunt although we still want to do it. Because of economic constraints, we are less able to do it, we are more dependent on store food" (Respondent, Inukjuak). When thinking about the different understandings of what it means to be a "true Inuk", some respondents believe that finding a balance between preserving the traditional culture and adopting a Western lifestyle is inevitable.

The Inuit are caught between two worlds as they strive to preserve a strong cultural identity in the face of both colonization and modernity (Mark, 2011; Sirois, Montminy and Tremblay, 2007). These external forces place great pressure on the social fabric of northern communities and undermine the confidence of many Inuit.

My mom was raised by my grandmother who was told that the culture was no good. Even my mom was told that. They didn't know how to live anymore. When they were told that their language was not good, they didn't know what to do anymore. They were taught their culture by the priest, the police. They just did what they were told, not what they believed in. Maybe there they lost their confidence. (Respondent, Nunavik)

Given that the foundations of their cultural identity have been shaken, intervention techniques employed by counsellors must be adjusted when working with Inuit clients. Before taking any formal steps in the counselling process, counsellors should support clients to regain their confidence. Counsellors must recognize that less confident clients may require more time and a more compassionate approach before moving into the job seeking process.

I think the first thing they should work on [for employment preparation] is the confidence thing, because most of the clients I get, they are not confident enough even to look for jobs. [...] Some people think that they are not good enough or that they will not do good at their jobs. (Respondent, Nunavik)

The process of employment preparation can drag on over time and prove difficult for both the client and the counsellor. Some Inuit clients, confronted by the fear of failure and judgement, will simply refuse to apply for jobs that require a secondary school diploma or an interview. It is important for counsellors to suggest learning opportunities of appropriate difficulty so that clients can build their self-esteem as they meet various objectives (Seligman, 1995, p. 33, cited in Korhonen, 2007, p. 31). It is also important to avoid patronizing clients. While small successes should be rewarded, expected results should not be given overwhelming praise. As a coach and motivator, the employment professional should express confidence in a client's abilities through words and actions (Korhonen, 2007).

In conclusion, the concept of self within Inuit culture combines for some with low self-esteem and impacts the employability process in many ways. The traditional employment counselling process is not only foreign, but may be inconsistent with some of the foundations of Inuit identity, including the short-term survival imperative and the principle of humility. As the number of people living in Nunavik from the south continues to grow (KRG, 2011b), Inuit's sense of identity will also be influenced by their relationships with non-Aboriginal peoples (Dorais, 2004b). There is a danger that if this increased and prolonged contact with non-Aboriginal culture becomes entrenched in an unequal balance of power, the Inuit's cultural identity may be further compromised. Given these circumstances it is important to promote the clients' development of a strong personal and collective identity in the career development process, particularly through their involvement in the Inuit and non-Inuit community.

CHAPTER 5

Values and Beliefs

Inuit culture is embedded in the unique character of their group, even if the importance of traditional values vary from one individual to another (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006). These values and beliefs are instilled with meaning that relates directly to the Inuit's nomadic way of life and survival. As a result, the priority given to family and the land shape their relationship to time, their concept of work, and the role of education.

Family and Community

Unlike Western societies that are based more on individual dynamics, the community takes precedence in Inuit culture (Hofstede, 1983). Thus, in a broad sense, the family and the clan form the basis of Inuit society (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2008).

> *Family for me is very important. Even the extended family, like all my aunts, all my cousins, the older siblings of my grandmother, their children. We call that a family, not just me, my husband and my kids. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

In addition, their ancestral culture also encourages eponymous naming practices (Searles, 2008). This practice is more than simply passing on a name to a new baby; when giving a baby the name of someone who recently died, the parents are contributing to creating the Inuk's identity.

> *One of the most widely recognized transmitters of Inuit identity substance is the soul name. A belief among many Inuit throughout the North American Arctic and Greenland is that souls are embedded in Inuit names, such that to confer a name upon a newborn is equivalent to giving that baby a soul. Through atiit (names) individuals begin to acquire the substance that constitutes Inuit identity. (Searles, 2008, p. 242)*

As part of this tradition, the deceased person's soul is reborn in a new body and accompanies the child as he discovers the world (Alia, 2007; Dorais, 2004b; Ouellette, 2002; Searles, 2008). Within the Inuit culture it is believed that the child will inherit the characteristics and skills of his Sanijiauk or donor through their name, which can transfer certain aspects of a soul, like memory and personality traits (Kublu and Oosten 1999; Searles, 2008). One Inuit respondent points out that attributing a name to an individual can also influence that person's professional path.

> *My namesake was like this, so I am going to be like that too. She was a sewer, so she wants to be a sewer. Because she is the namesake of that person. He was a hunter, I am going to be a hunter. I am going to be a sells person because he was a sells person. (Respondent, Montreal)*

The name chosen, often through the family, becomes the vector of an Inuk's identity within the community or family, as well as, a personal identity. So, an individual's identity is defined not only by belonging to the group but also by ancestral ties.

The Inuit's responsibility to their family can often restrict their availability and mobility when considering further education and employment.

Learners put the needs of their families first and so sometimes it may seem that learners are not motivated. A person may feel it is more important to take care of her/his particular ailment than to attend work or school. This attitude extends to family members. The immediate welfare of a learner's child has priority over attendance or completion of an assignment. (Swanson, 2002, p. 35)

As a result, it may be difficult or even impossible, for an Inuk to relocate to another village or urban centre to pursue an academic or professional path. Monetary factors and family responsibilities aggravate certain fears tied to physical distance, boredom, and potential social segregation. The departure of a loved one might elicit the opposition of some community members, complicating the Inuk's decision to move and creating feelings of guilt (NLC, 2007). For Inuit who do decide to move to pursue studies or job opportunities, homesickness can force them to abandon their projects and return to the community earlier than planned.

The Inuit's strong sense of family and community are closely tied to the value that they place on sharing and mutual support. Many key informants emphasized the importance of these values in the Inuit community:

Sharing is hugely important. And it is not even about generosity. It is about understanding that what you have really isn't yours, it belongs to everyone. (Respondent, Ottawa)

For me it is impossible: I would never say no to someone who is hungry or thirsty. Everybody is like that. I would say it is part of the culture. (Respondent, Inukjuak)

In northern communities, an individual can often act as a pivot for the family, redistributing money or food resources to the clan. This principle of sharing can therefore affect labour market attachment (Duhaime, 1991).

The relationships to the labour market are different because a lot of people's livelihoods depend on the help they get from others and, at some point, they're going to work and do the same thing. (Respondent, Montreal)

Those who are unemployed or living on a meagre income often ask for material or monetary help from those who are working. Such requests put substantial strain on workers, but given their collective values, refusing to share is simply not an option.

The first rule is to help each other. But sometimes it's hard because some of them take advantage of you, for helping. For me personally, my two aunts don't work and they abuse alcohol and drugs, they don't buy the food and stuff they need to survive. They just go to my place or my cousin's place to eat. There is a downside for helping each other. (Respondent, Inukjuak)

This pressure to share money and resources is linked to the increasingly nuclear family structure, social problems, and income disparities, and may unfortunately create frustration within families and communities.

In short, the family and the community provide a model for personal growth and professional choices and play a central role in the development and shaping of an individual. As a result, the family and community can also influence an individual's perception of the labour market. When thinking about the career development process, counsellors should work with Inuit clients to see how their career choice could contribute to the family's clan or community. Although these values of community and family sharing are noble, one must also be aware of the risks of being taken advantage of. Embedded within the Inuit culture, it is essential that the role of family and community be integrated into the career development process for it to be successful.

The Land

For thousands of years, the Inuit have professed a deep love and respect for the land. For them, the land, *nuna* in Inuktitut, represents far more than a simple source of life, rather it speaks to survival and life lessons.

> *The land. It is hard to describe it, but it is as if it is their skin. It is so vital, it has been vital for thousands of years of providing what they need to survive. And there is such an honour and love for the land [...] it is very vital for them to keep that connection. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

> *The connection with the land is again who they are. They live in harmony, they live in oneness with the land. They are part of it and it is part of them. They don't make the separation. The land gives them what they need to survive and they see it that way. They would not survive without the animals, the tundra. And the land is a text, it teaches them all the time. The snow, the sky, the wind, all of that is teaching them all the time: what to look for, how to look for it, where the animals are, where they should build their shelter, what direction they should go in. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

This vital connection with the land, similar to other Aboriginal groups, is consistent with their holistic philosophy and essential to their survival and the continuity of their culture. According to several key informants, this relationship to the territory is essential for maintaining physical and emotional well-being.

> *I love being on the land, it gives you a sense of calmness, it refreshes you. When you are connected to the land, you feel more alive. At least for me, this is how I feel. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Indeed, Saladin D'Anglure stresses that the real Inuit territory begins beyond the villages built by the Qallunaat.

> *When [the] Whites built the first Euro-Canadian institutions in the northern territories, the Inuit set up a division between the sites chosen, developed, and named by the Whites, and the rest of the territory, where often they would go to find peace, tranquillity, and tradition. (2004, p. 116)*

The Inuit also enjoy *nirituinaq*, or "country food", which furthers the principles of assuming responsibility and contributing to the community through sharing (Searles, 2010).

Subsistence Activities in the Territory

The Inuit's unique connection to the environment is closely related to their vision of the world and their identity, particularly as it relates to their working lives. Their participation in traditional activities positively impacts their self-esteem and sense of belonging and allows them to live a more balanced life (Korhonen, 2007; Philie, 2013). Therefore, it is important to foster this connection with the land and ancestral culture, to support and complement formal education.

> *We have to have a balance, southern education, southern support services, traditional education, traditional support services. I know this has been left behind. [...] there is a lot of support services, there is a lot of funding, emphasis on southern education, on the southern way of life, to have a job, to have a career, to have a retirement plan that is very much the normal aspect of southern modern way of life. Traditionally it is kind of being left behind and there is not much support. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

An employability approach that includes activities related to the land—in the form of symbols, stories, or outings accompanied by guides or Elders—can have a positive impact on the career development process. For example, some communities in Nunavut offer programs based on the development of traditional skills for young people who are in danger of being expelled from the formal school system. These programs allow young people to contribute to their family's and community's survival and well-being. They "can be very effective in re-engaging

marginalized youth in an effort to reduce social and economic barriers and decrease youth isolation and societal alienation" (NLC, 2007, p. 12). Their relationship to the land, dictated by the environment and animal migrations, guides most of their traditional activities and governs how they use their time.

Time

By basing their activities and decisions on the seasons and weather conditions, the Inuit perceive time as a succession of present moments.

> *For the Inuit, the present moment matters more than the future. They take one day at a time. Today, we have something to eat; tomorrow, we'll see. [...] Today, the caribou arrive and we will hunt because, tomorrow, they will no longer be there. The future isn't what counts. It's not in their survival mentality. The important thing is to get through today and that it be pleasant. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

Unlike Western societies where time plays out like a movie or in perpetual movement toward the future, for the Inuit, time is like a series of photographs. Unidirectional, Eurocentric time is measured and accumulates according to a linear succession of events. In sharp contrast, the repetition of days, the changing of seasons, and the chain of facts, events, and generations form the Inuit's circular perception of time.

> *In societies governed by a cyclical sense of time, there is no demarcation between past, present, and future, for, according to the actors, the three blend. The past and the future melt into the present, a present where the actors live. (Gui Ekwa, 1995, p. 4)*

Although the Inuit share stories and learned lessons from the past, their focus is on the present and the short term (Gombay, 2009).

> *She told me: "That's the past, that's the past. Why do you talk to me about the past? We have to work today." (Respondent, Montreal)*

This perception of time guides their rhythm of activities and their ability—or desire—to project themselves into the future.

The Rhythm of Activities

Given their cyclical understanding of time, the Inuit generally don't rush to complete tasks. They savour the present moment and take the time to do their work well.

> *One young Inuit man explained that when he began living with his father at a hunting camp, his father said that he did not need to rush anything. "He told me to take my time". Only by learning to take one's time, by learning to approach tasks patiently and calmly, can a person become a successful hunter, an activity that requires a great deal of persistence and patience. (Searles, 2008, p. 248)*

> *When we don't have to do something, we take the time to be together and to relax. It is not to be lazy, it is to appreciate the time you have. (Respondent Kuujjuaq)*

While Western philosophy is often focused on personal fulfillment through the search for new objectives in order to make use of time, the Inuit appreciate moments of rest. Since so many of Inuit's activities are dictated by nature, the commitment to a schedule often makes them uncomfortable (Swanson, 2003).

Time there is dictated by nature, by the weather, by night and day, and cycles. Your tasks that you do at a certain time are dictated by the weather and by nature. It is not a forced schedule; it is a framework of time based on nature. [...] There is a sense of freedom in that, in being in tune with something larger than yourself, greater than yourself. The whole concept of 9 to 5, every day, no matter what it's like outside, this is when you work, that would be a very difficult transition to make. (Respondent, Ottawa)

The Inuit recognize that day-to-day tasks may be interrupted in order to respond to more pressing needs. They seem very comfortable with the idea of perpetual change and share an awareness of people's vulnerability in the face of the elements.

This circular perception of time can affect career development initiatives, especially the linear and direct aspects of the process. For example, it is likely that Inuit clients expect the job-search process, including the development of their curriculum vitae, to take only one visit with a counsellor. When they realize that the process takes much more time than this, they may abandon the process altogether. Only if they have established a relationship of trust with the counsellor may they come back when they again feel the need. The process can also be interrupted for several weeks or even months when family or circumstantial obligations arise, including, the illness of a loved one, birth of a child, or the arrival of the caribou. Temporarily abandoning the process does not necessarily mean that the service offered fell short; clients will likely return when the necessary conditions allow. In such cases, counsellors owe it to themselves to demonstrate flexibility and adapt the measures of success of their interventions to minimize their discouragement. Furthermore, the structure of the labour market involves a wider and longer sense of time than the present. The Inuit may also struggle with the more rigid schedules imposed by employers, particularly outside of Nunavik, which will impact their ability to find and keep a job.

Today, survival depends on having access to cash, which generally comes with employment, which, in turn, relies on participation in the institutions associated with Euro-Canadians. As a result, Inuit are forced to conform to non-Inuit time in order to survive. (Gombay, 2009, p. 9)

In sum, Western standardized routines and norms leave little room for the spontaneity of the Inuit's way of life.

Long-Term Planning and Control Over the Future

Several respondents pointed out that the Inuit's focus on the present improves their adaptability, but can hamper long-term planning efforts and their ability to evaluate the big picture.

Not the same idea of insecurity, of the future. Worrying so much about the future, putting money aside, and have retirement plans, those are White values. It's not natural. (Respondent, Montreal)

A lot of the families that I know, they don't visualize, they just go day by day. What are we going to eat tomorrow, how are we going to have money to eat tomorrow? It's not planned, they are just living. There is no visual about the future. (Respondent, Montreal)

In a traditional society, where foresight is more important than forecasts (Gui Ekwa, 1995), making a choice that has no immediate reward can be difficult:

It is hard to convince them that it's going to pay off in the long run. Most people are looking short-term. It is not going to benefit me right now so it is not worth it. (Respondent, Inukjuak)

Seeing the future as unpredictable and uncontrollable alleviates the insecurity surrounding it (Gombay, 2009). Their reluctance to predict and project oneself into the future is corroborated by empirical studies conducted in the field.

One Inuit woman thought that Qallunaat [White people] plan everything in advance as if they can control the future, whereas traditional Inuit learn how to relinquish a desire to control time in order to become more aware of, and therefore better able to yield to, the rhythm and movements of weather, tides, animals, seasons, etc. (Searles, 2008, p. 248)

In this sense, it seems essential to distinguish between the inability to plan long-term and indifference. If the Inuit demonstrate little inclination to plan for the future, it's not because they are incapable of developing long-term plans, but because they don't see the relevance of trying to predict the unpredictable (Korhonen, 2004b). Rather than seeing this as sign of detachment or disorganization, their lack of planning should be recognized as a sign of humility (Bourdieu, 1963).

It is more about the present than the future. For most people I know, you can plan all you want, but at the end of the day, you're still a person, an Inuk. You can't tell what is going to happen in the future. (Respondent, Inukjuak)

The concept of time is directly connected to the Inuit's relationship with the environment and their cultural tradition of living in the present. This can be especially challenging when they are asked to envision themselves in a future professional role in an externally imposed context. When thinking about the job-seeking process it is important for the counsellor to proceed step-by-step, setting simple and attainable short-term goals toward a more ambitious final objective (Korhonen, 2007; Swanson, 2003). The counsellor must find the balance between demonstrating flexibility, while avoiding imposing a too rigid process. To do this well, it will be important for the counsellor to provide clear criteria for success and well-defined expectations in order to make the client responsible for their time and move through the professional development process, from the early stages of looking for employment through to keeping a job.

The Role of Education

The Inuit's motivation to stay in school and complete thier formal education is impacted by both their scepticism with the short- or mid-term effects of school-based training and the scarcity of jobs in Northern communities (Douglas, 2009; Holmes, 2005; Laugrand, 2008). These two factors also explain the mixed reactions regarding formal education.

Fairly often, parents cannot show their children how to read and write because they don't know how to do either. This creates a big difference. The children don't see the importance of continuing to read and write because their parents don't know how and have functioned that way all their lives. The starting point is not the same. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)

The negative experiences of previous generations—victims of mistreatment, psychological harassment, and sexual abuse at the hands of the church and the state in the residential schools—affects new cohorts of Inuit students who still fear the education system's possible assimilationist objectives (Belisimbi, 2008; Holmes, 2005; Swanson, 2003). The Inuit place more value on learning through experience and practice, rather than the unfamiliar teaching structure imported during colonization.

Both my parents didn't finish high school. I myself didn't do so well in school. They did push me to stay in school, they supported me. But once I finished high school and I was able to make my own education decisions, I decided that work experience is a lot more important than the education that is provided for us in that structure. (Respondent, Inukjuak)

In the Inuit culture, knowledge alone does not earn the respect of peers. Knowledge must be put into practice over time and only when skills are demonstrated through action can one be recognized as a true expert qualified to teach.

[The Elders] are the experts because they have done it for a very long time. So you go to the people who are recognized for having done something well and done it for a while. So those are the experts. (Respondent, Montreal)

The literature pertaining to education methods, pedagogical orientations, and transferable knowledge also reveal numerous criticisms.

The lack of support for learning and staff training are other problems that put training at risk and account for student drop-out rates significantly higher than the national average. Others emphasize the conflicts and stressful situations that school education generates for families or seriously wonder about the relevance of some course content given the real opportunities for graduates, without forgetting, obviously, the myriad fears concerning the disappearance of the Inuit language and culture, knowledge about the environment, and the skills required to live in the Arctic. (Laugrand and Oosten, 2009, p. 14)

In addition to the various learning methods used (which will be discussed in Chapter 8), the educational system in Quebec centres around the pivotal role of the teacher and imposes a more rapid, decontextualized, and standardized approach (Douglas, 2009). While group survival informs Inuit socialization and teaching methods, Qallunaat education puts a greater emphasis on competitiveness and the interests of individuals in a market economy guided by consumerism. These disparities worry the Elders and other members of the community who fear for the loss of traditional knowledge and values (Douglas, 2009; Laugrand, 2008; Laugrand and Oosten, 2011).

Despite their concerns, several key informants have noticed a change in the perception of education within Inuit communities. The value of education is gaining ground with some who see it playing an essential role in enabling Inuit to meet the needs of their family, hold key positions in their community, and, ultimately, to gain control over their destiny.

[The youth] are in a situation where if you don't get a good education, you are going to be on welfare and when you are on welfare, you are not in a good position to support your family. [...] If you don't really have a good southern education or a traditional education, you are not well educated to take care of your children. (Respondent, Inukjuak)

These competing views around formal education illustrate the dilemma between tradition and modernity, between preservation of the Inuit culture and language and participation in a globalized economy (Dorais, 2011). According to Dolan, of the majority of Aboriginal students who envision quitting school at one point or another during their academic careers, several choose to pursue their studies, despite the difficulties they encounter, in the hope of helping their community (1995, p. 241). Their uncertainty about the role of education also affects employability and career development for the Inuit who do not have all the skills required to enter an increasingly skilled labour market. For many clients, an academic career cut short or tainted by failure can impact their level of confidence in their abilities and their perception of their role in the labour market. Even if the formal education system remains closely associated with the non-Aboriginal way of life, the increasing importance of money as a motivation to work could affect academic perseverance.

Work and Career

In the Inuit culture, work and career are strongly influenced by the value placed on traditional activities and human relationships.

Work

Many Inuit see paid work as a way to meet an immediate need, not as a path toward personal and professional accomplishment (Duhaime, 1991; Offet-Gartner, 2003).

> *In terms of job, they are more or less looking for a relief, not a career. People up here think of jobs to do. If I need some money, I am not necessarily going to think «I am going to go for a career». Right now I need money, I don't care what the job is. Tell me what I should do, I need a cheque. I am not necessarily going to do it for a long time. It is not like down South where you study all your life to be good in a certain field. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

> *Even today, having a job isn't about personal or professional development. It's still seen as a way to survive and, so, it's not a priority. [...] they don't look for personal accomplishment through work. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

In a subsistence economy based on traditional activities, the direct link between work and securing resources partially explains this distinction. In a market economy the concept of a salary interrupts the connection between labour and its fruits, thus eliminating the attraction of immediate gratification that directly connect, for example, fishing and fish.

> *The world of work, for them, is an economic world. Before, their work was connected to the community's survival. So, the products of hunting, fishing, and sharing with the community, that was the salary. Everyone worked. Everyone had the right to eat. Everyone had access to resources. The resources were shared by all because they were acquired by all. Now, you sell your time, so that changes the perspective a lot. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

> *In the old system of hunting and fishing, everybody had a task. The value of work is changing now. They don't know how to transfer this new value of work—which is very hierarchical and doesn't necessarily meet their needs, because their needs are immediate—to our system of values. (Respondent, Montreal)*

Many Inuit see salaried work as a way to meet an immediate need, not as a path toward personal and professional accomplishment.

The transition from working on the land and providing for the community to paid work has been a difficult one for the Inuit people. Many have lost their sense of purpose and the satisfaction they received from working to ensure their community's survival.

According to those surveyed, the Inuit work to produce resources and ensure their self-sufficiency, rather than for status or prestige. They are therefore less likely to boast about their title or position to gain status or prestige (Douglas, 2009).

> *Another thing about the Inuit is their complete lack of a career plan or absence of pride regarding their position. They don't say: "Me, I was such and such today, I'm going to be VP tomorrow and, the day after tomorrow, even president." I've often seen Inuit have really good positions, leave it to do something else, come back in a completely different field. (Respondent, Montreal)*

Certainly, the work they do is a source of pride for the Inuk, but that pride comes from their contribution. For example, work done outside in the community, even with fixed hours, will often facilitate better integration and has better retention rates than office work for many individuals.

> *We use to work with our hands a lot. For people who hold a job that requires you to work with your hands and move around, it is easier for them to hold that type of position. I think maintenance work or people that work with their hands are able to stay at their job for longer than an office job. We still have difficulty in finding people that are able to hold on and keep an office job [...] because of the way we use to live, [the way] our grand-parents use to live, nomadic. We are still trying to adapt to the type of work that requires us to stay in the same job, stay in the same workplace and be immobile. It is an adaptation that has been difficult for Inuit, I believe. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Unlike in many Western societies, paid work is not –yet– a core feature of the Inuit's identity or values, nor a universal incentive. The disparity between the current structure of a labour market dominated by non-Aboriginals and the realities, needs, and ways of doing things in Inuit communities might partly explain the situation. According to some respondents, the high number of foreign workers in Nunavik can also contribute to Inuit's increased detachment from the labour market (KRG, 2011b). Although some employers in Nunavik and Inuit businesses located in the south of the province try to offer a more flexible work environment, Inuit employed by non-Aboriginal companies in Montreal must contend with strict and competitive work environments in an urban context.

Career

A career is more than the job you hold, it is an expression of an individuals' constantly evolving interests, abilities and personal and professional aspirations, that can be seen in many roles over the course of one's life (Gingras, Spain and Cocandeau-Bellanger, 2006; Super, 1980). In the Inuit culture, where a job is seen as a way of meeting family needs, the concept of a career is often abstract.

> *One person said to me: "We don't grow up saying what we are going to be. We know who we are. If you're a boy, you are a hunter, a fisher, you have all the things that you do. And the women have all the things that they do". (Respondent, Ottawa)*

Unlike traditional occupations, a job held in the salaried economy does not generally contribute to the construction of the Inuk's identity. Inuit individuals face a number of challenges in being able to relate to and function within a westernized labour market, including the lack of professional role models, available jobs, career development supports and services and little support from family to pursue professional roles. As one respondent points out, this lack of familiarity with the notion of a career and how the labour market functions can be difficult.

> *We, Inuit, are not used to apply for the jobs. If we see the job postings with the deadlines, they'll just look at it, because they don't know how to play the game, to take a step. I think the most important thing is that they need to learn how to look at their experiences, even if they don't have school or work experience, to consider their skills, their hunting skills, their volunteering skills, and learn how to put it on paper, to make a resume. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

In light of this, it is not unusual for a client to hesitate to apply for a job that requires a secondary school diploma or a set number of years of experience, due to modesty, lack of confidence, or the fear of being judged "pretentious" by the community.

The value of collective economic support within Inuit communities also alters their understanding of the notion of "career". Although mounting, the economic pressures, once divided between several individuals, are not always strong enough to awaken a sense of urgency or obligation about getting a job (Duhaime, 1991). On one hand, the Inuit can count on other family or clan members to fill the role of provider.

> *Most people who are unemployed probably don't understand the importance of having employment, because the cultural way that other parts of your family is supporting you, so you don't fully see the effects of poverty hitting you. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Each member within the family can take turns in a temporary, salaried job to meet the needs of the group. The effects of mutual support on the professional trajectories of urban Inuit are less present. Although strong Inuit community connections may exist in urban settings like Montreal, sharing the financial responsibility amongst family members is less likely to happen there.

On the other hand, although the Western concept of unemployment may consider an Inuk who is not earning a salary as unemployed, they are often contributing to the family's survival through traditional activities, which may be difficult to quantify.

> *I think there is a huge misconception of what unemployment means and because of that, all of the unemployment strategies and strategies to get people employed are totally off base. There definitely are people who are unemployed in the community, but there are also people who are unemployed who are deemed by the state to be unemployed, who are actually going out and providing for their family in different ways. So to be dealing with them as unemployed people is wrong. (Respondent, Montreal)*

Discounting these economic contributions made through subsistence activities, like hunting, paints an inaccurate picture of the employment and participation rates of Inuit populations. Many unemployed individuals have difficulty supporting their families through gathering, fishing, and hunting, because they are unable to afford the equipment necessary to pursue these activities (Chabot, 2003). In sum, career development can be misunderstood in a traditional society where paid work is not recognized as a path to self-realization; steady cash flow is not an immediate necessity, and long-term planning can be seen as presumptuous.

In light of these realities for Inuit people it is simply not enough to adapt the content and form of employability interventions. To accommodate these differences, some respondents have called for a more flexible understanding of work in the north.

> *That 9-to-5 concept is so foreign up here and is so hard to enforce. It creates such a negative in this workplace because we have to push that, getting here on time... We don't focus on "I need you to do items 1 through 10 to this satisfactory level and when you're done, you can go". It is easier said than done, but it would fit much better I would think in this kind of culture. It would be hard to balance it with us, but it is much more in tune with how they operate, it would make more sense. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

Inuit living and working in Montreal are unlikely to get much flexibility from non-Inuit employers, who are only vaguely aware of the cultural differences.

Whether through traditional activities or a professional occupation, the Inuit's goal of working is to contribute to the survival and well-being of the family and the community. If forced to choose between their values and paid work, the Inuit happily prioritize their family, relationship with the land and traditional activities (Statistics Canada, 2001). Since many Inuit do not relate to concepts of professional identity or status, these ancestral roles play an important role in contributing to their sense of identity and self-worth. The Inuit's perception of work and interest in formal education is informed by the labour market and evolves from one generation to the next.

Relationship to Money and Paid Work

Operating within a labour market that is based on foreign values, the Inuit aim to strike a balance between traditional activities and paid work. Although they have had to engage in paid work for several decades, the Inuit do not place much value in money or consumer goods. One respondent stated, "*We don't value money per se, it is just there to assist us*" (Respondent, Inukjuak).

Despite the relatively recent introduction of the money-based economy in Inuit communities, their relationship to money is evolving rapidly. To meet the needs of their families, most respondents believe that money is necessary. For example, in order to buy the necessary equipment to go and work on the land, many Inuit must work in a paying job.

> *They partied to the fact that it is good for their children to have good education now because everything depends on money, you have to pay your rent, you have to pay your gas, you have to pay your ski-doo, your supplies, so everything for is for money now. Before it was not the case, money was not a concern, we were living on the land and the Elders were our resource, to know how to live out on the land. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

In a society based traditionnaly on mutual support and the pooling of resources, for many Inuit, money and consumption as a motivation for working is a new idea.

The perceptions of these two key informants, the first older, the second younger, speak to the growing generational gap around the importance of money. Dorais also points to this generational disparity when he emphasizes that "[...] nearly all adolescents agree that it's important to have some. Young adults, however, are more divided; only half of young men and women claim that they attribute value to monetary gain" (2011, p. 252). The attraction to the Western consumer culture is gradually transforming the traditional Inuit society. Many young people are abandoning their ancestors ways of subsistence on the land and are embracing the market economy and accumulating goods.

However, the younger generation's growing appreciation for money has created some family and social tension.

> *Country food is still shared, but money isn't. The introduction of a market economy has changed those relationships between families. Money is not as readily shared as food is. (Respondent, Montreal)*

These changes are challenging some of the core values of traditional Inuit culture, like the notion of sharing. Citing one example from Nunavut, Searles explains how the concept of private property has created a separation between the Inuit and the Qallunaat.

> *One Inuit woman living in Iqaluit told me she was astounded when her brother made her pay for a husky dog she was going to add to her sled team, saying "Relatives should share and not make their relatives pay". In this case, the brother was acting in the Qallunaat way and not in the Inuit way. (2008, p. 248)*

In a society based traditionally on mutual support and the pooling of resources, the motivation to work solely for monetary gain is new for many Inuit.

> *People here, they don't care what kind of job they get, they really could not care less, if they get a pay cheque every two weeks, that is amazing [...] and that is causing a lot of turnover. People take jobs they hate! They need to understand the impact this will have on their mental health, even physical health. To them it is money. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

This transition to paid employment and its impacts are important to consider in the career development process, without, however, abandoning traditional activities. This will not be easy; striking a balance between commitment to community and personal consumption will require time and flexibility. In addition, Inuit living in an urban environment away from their community networks, can also be shocked by the salaries offered in the south. Due to the higher cost of living in Nunavik and many northern communities, many Inuit have become accustomed to salaries that reflect their cost of living. Regardless of the intervention context, the value of money plays a fundamental role in their professional choices and influences their understanding of a career. When individuals are motivated by extrinsic factors, like money, the job search becomes less of a process of thoughtful introspection.

In conclusion, it is important that professionals in the field adapt their interventions to the values and beliefs of the Inuit culture. Like education and work, certain career development principles, including future career planning and individualistic ideals, can easily be perceived as foreign and removed from the Inuit way of life. As a result, the client may appear uninvolved in the employability process and the employment counsellor may experience frustration with their ability to deliver services. It is essential for the career development process to focus on values important to the Inuit community, including the potential benefits of education and paid work for the entire community. In addition to supporting clients to find a role within the community and the labour market, the real challenge will be guiding them in their career development and helping them find a certain personal and cultural significance in it. The Inuit's discomfort with this new and changing labour market can in fact be reduced by supporting them to search for meaning in their career development that is grounded in their traditional values.

CHAPTER 6

Social Dynamics

Traditionally, the Inuit embody a collective spirit, where family and community are prioritized over individual needs. From the interviews conducted with key informants, four interconnected themes emerged: family relationships, generational differences, community relationships and the relationship between Inuit and non-Inuit.

Family Relationships

As discussed in the preceding chapter, the Inuit culture is grounded in family relationships. These relationships are based on mutual support and sharing, and form the basis for a vast social network. The principle of self-discipline, on the one hand, and, the evolution of day-to-day roles on the other, characterize family dynamics.

The Principle of Non-Interference

During the interviews, some respondents noted major differences between the way children are raised in Inuit society and the general disciplinary approach used by the Qallunaat.

> *I think it is the way you were brought up, being in a small, secluded town, compared to here where everything is so wide open and everything is there. In my experience, there is not a lot of discipline. We don't have curfew like non-Inuit. They have curfews, they have rules, they have chores. But in the Inuit culture it is not given because I guess the parents before that didn't give it. (Respondent, Montreal)*

Within the Inuit culture, parental responsibilities are shared between several members of the community. In a study conducted by Wihak and Merali, a non-Inuit counsellor describes this reality: "you know everybody and trust that the community will keep your children safe. Even if you don't know where the children are, you'll find them after three or four phone calls" (2007, p. 177). Combined with the limited use of discipline, this community approach to parenting can be incorrectly interpreted as irresponsible or careless. As Douglas mentions, however, "apparent signs of parental indifference were in fact reinforcements of the valued behaviours of self-discipline, self-sufficiency, and non-interference" (2009, p. 39). In other words, this perceived "inaction" on the part of parents takes place within a traditional perspective of non-interference and self-discipline. This perspective encourages parents to take an observer role rather than to intervene, in order to support their children in developing individual responsibility, which was discussed in chapter 4.

> *Inuit place a high regard on the right of individuals to lead their lives free from interference from others. This belief strongly affects the way Inuit interact with each other. Basically, this belief causes Inuit to often feel a certain degree of discomfort when exercising authority over other Inuit, even if the position they hold necessitates such authority. Inuit are also unlikely to welcome someone trying to dictate their actions to them or to speak for them without their consent. This can obviously affect how employers interact with Inuit employees. (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 38)*

Many non-Aboriginal counsellors may be accustomed to seeing parents encouraging, or even pressuring their children to pursue certain careers, and as a result the behaviour of Inuit parents can easily be interpreted as indifference. For example, an Inuit parent might allow their child to watch television all day, or refuse to force them to get up for school. This is not done through carelessness, but rather for respect of the young person's freedom of choice.

Based on the principle of non-interference, combined with a sense of mutual trust, the Inuit are more likely to tolerate self-centered or even disturbing behaviours of community members, as long as these behaviours do not threaten the group's survival (Douglas, 2009; Kingston, 2008; Wihak and Merali, 2003). In this regard, respondents stressed the unconditional connection between family members despite difficulties and errors committed. Although this parenting practice has been traditionally beneficial, it can sometimes have a number of negative consequences on children. In some cases, parents are struggling with personal problems and have limited skills to properly parent. These possible impacts are worsened by the greater access to the internet and the rise of the nuclear family. Regardless, this Inuit pedagogy continues to be embraced by many Elders and parents, and should be taken into account in the career development process.

The Family Structure

Traditionally, the Inuit culture attributes certain roles according to gender. However, due to the constant need to adapt roles to ensure their survival, the distribution of these activities is flexible (Morgan, 2008; Williamson, 2006).

> *In Nunavik and Nunavut, office and indoor work is dominated by women. The women are the sewers, the childrearers. Men are the protectors, the hunters, the providers, and its provision of food. And that role has shifted. I think that is why you have many young men who are very desperate: the transition is happening and they are lost in the transition. Partly because they don't have any models and partly because of their identity. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

In the 1950s and 1960s, Inuit communities were forced to become less nomadic and more sedentary, thereby depriving men of their traditional role as providers. Citing a young Inuk, Béïque points out that "for men, hunting is no longer enough. To meet the multiple demands of their families [...] and regain their pride, they have to participate in the new economy" (2010, p. 170). According to some authors, although women are adapting more readily to recent changes, they suffer indirect consequences in several ways (Kirmayer et al., 1993; Morgan, 2008). For example, problems like domestic violence have emerged from this imbalance in the relationships between men and women.

Colonization has also had serious impacts on the family and created a concerning disconnection between parents and children.

> *The connection between the parents and the children were cut back then [because of the residential school] and the little children that were taken away from their mother, they didn't learn how to become parents because they have never been with their parents when they were little kids. From then on, it has become a problem for mother-children relationships, from my point on view. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

> *The generation of my parents, I don't know what happened to them, but between them and our generation, there is a lot of differences. I don't know how to explain that. They neglected their children a lot, and the children who have been neglected don't know how to take care of their children. Not all of them are like that, but some of them. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Issues related to the scarcity of housing, addiction and psychological distress, often result in destructive behaviour and relational difficulties.

Thus, owing to their inability to find meaningful work, men seem to suffer much more stress linked to the changes in their culture while women, on the other hand, are more likely to suffer from abusive relationships that elicit feelings of powerlessness, futility, and vulnerability. (Kirmayer et al., 1993, p. 57)

In a culture that advocates for mutual support and sharing, these dysfunctions can take a difficult toll on family or community members. Nonetheless, according to several respondents, family values continue to remain intact.

These family dynamics play a significant role in an individual's development, self-esteem and, inevitably on their career development. In addition, gender relations and stereotypes, like generational differences, can also impact men and women's integration into the labour market.

Generational Differences

Based on family and community, the intergenerational dynamic in contemporary Inuit society is built around two primary themes: the traditional role of the Elders and the generation gap.

The Traditional Role of the Elders

The Elders, guardians of traditional knowledge, constitute "*a collective voice of reason*" (Respondent, Inukjuak). Elders play an integral role in building the identity of today's Inuit by preserving and teaching Inuit culture, through language, knowledge, and customs.

The Elders do a lot of storytelling; they talk a lot about what happened in the past. Today it's not the same anymore. When I hear them on the radio, they talk a lot about how they used to live. They want to make us understand how it used to be in the past. I have never lived the way they did, I don't understand how they did it, how they survived the harsh winters. I think they are the most important value that we have. (Respondent, Inukjuak)

They bridge a gap and I think it is an important link to be considered. The Elders grew up on the land; some of them were born in igloos. When we reach the time that they are no more, something will be lost there, because those values are still highly held. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)

In 2011 less than 3% of the Inuit population in Nunavik was aged 65 and older (Statistics Canada, 2014). According to respondents, however, the definition of an Elder is not simply a matter of age: the status of Elder emerges over time, through wisdom and actions.

Just because you are 65 doesn't make you an elder. To be considered an elder, there's peer recognition, the wisdom you demonstrate. That doesn't necessarily come with age. It requires age, but also wisdom, experience, having demonstrated an ability to help or to be a reference in the community. Cultural expertise, traditional expertise. (Respondent, Ottawa)

For thousands of years the Elders have traditionally been the bedrock of Inuit communities, despite their low demographic weight.

A Generation Gap

The rise of individualistic values amongst young people has placed some strain on their relationships with the community members of older generations. While paid activities have gained ground in Inuit communities, the Elders deplore the decline in traditional activities that directly contributed to the group's survival. Worse yet

is the inactivity among some community members who use communal resources, like the community freezer, without regard for taking a turn contributing to them.

> *Especially for the older Inuit, these are the people who should be wanting to go out and provide for the community. And that is their idea of what the role of these younger people should be, but younger people have different images of what the community is, their role in it. These youth that they are talking about are not working, they are not necessarily studying and going to school, they are not going out on the land. They are not positively contributing to the community, and yet they are benefiting from it. These older community members probably wouldn't complain as much if those youth had jobs, but I think they would be even happier if those youth were actively getting their own food and going out on the land. (Respondent, Montreal)*

Many Elders attribute young people's behaviour to the growing attraction to, and influence of the media and global culture. Other Elders believe that the Inuit and non-Inuit cultures are irreconcilable. According to them, the sharing of knowledge between generations is the only way to learn how to survive in a harsh climate (Laugrand and Oosten, 2011). However, young people who have been raised in an environment radically different from that of their ancestors respond to this in a much different way.

> *[The Elders] are the ones with the experience, they have lived full life, they have seen these transitions of different ways of life, and I think they see themselves as source of information, of knowledge, that should be sought out more. The younger generation I think see the Elders as being stuck in the past and as almost hindrances to living the type of life that is necessary now in the communities and that would be in the future. I hear a lot of youth complaining that the Elders should just move on or take on an advisory role and not necessarily be the leaders, that their time has passed, that it is a different reality now, and it is a tough situation. (Respondent, Montreal)*

In this sense, Dorais maintains that "the young people's view of the world often differs radically from that of the adult members of their family, particularly that of their grandparents" (2011, p. 247). In fact, for several years now, the role of Elders as advisers has changed with the emergence of technological advances and other aspects of modern life.

> *The Elders often talk about being replaced by the school system. The Elders use to be our sources of knowledge, our source of education, our source of mentoring us, how to live on the land and how to make good choice in life [...] and now with all that pressure for Inuit to get a good paying job, to get a good education, the Elders feel they are put on the side. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

A drop in linguistic skills has also created tensions and widened the generation gap, as young people experience difficulty communicating with their Elders who speak only Inuktitut (Korhonen, 2002). In addition, young people and Elders don't share the same cultural and social reference points, which further complicates communication and makes it difficult to reconcile changing values (Dorais, 2011; Jérôme, 2005; Minor, 1992).

When working with young Inuit clients it is important to consider the pressure placed on them to balance economic constraints with their sense of cultural belonging and desire to meet the expectations of Elders. In this context, it seems even more important to bolster the value of traditional activities and foster the participation of Elders in the employability process. This practice may contribute to the reestablishment of a balance between the old and new worlds. It would also allow Elders to better understand how professional roles can contribute to the community and in turn, young people could benefit from learning both traditional knowledge and strengthen their cultural identity and self-esteem. Renewed confidence and pride will result in a fresh motivation to discover and protect their ancient culture (Swanson, 2003).

Community Dynamic

Within the Inuit culture, the community's predominant role is displayed, among other things, through the relationship between closeness and isolation, inclusion and exclusion, and even the notion of leadership.

Closeness and Isolation

The meaning of community differs greatly between the north and the south. In Nunavik's 14 villages, most of the residents know each other and maintain social ties related to family or work. In this regard, northern communities resemble other small villages in more southern regions of the province. However, the isolation of Nunavik's villages limit the mobility of its inhabitants, and in turn curbs population renewal. While living under such closed circumstances reduces the risk of isolation, residents have limited access to privacy. On the contrary, Inuit living in an urban context can fall victim to loneliness.

> Young people and Elders don't share the same cultural and social reference points, which further complicates communication and makes it difficult to reconcile changing values.

> *Sometimes you feel lonely when living in Montreal, where there is nobody around. Well, there are people around, but they are not close to you. Over here, we are very close to each other. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

> *If you don't have a support system, it is easy to fall. (Respondent, Montreal)*

Despite the comments collected from key informants in both Montreal and Nunavik, the literature confirms that a network does exist among urban Inuit.

> *Nevertheless, despite the tensions that may exist given the different values of symbolic resources for community belonging and material well-being, urban Inuit are relatively unified as a group. This sense of unity is based largely on the similarity of their experiences in moving from small communities to urban centres for a better life and on their common awareness that many Inuit are racialised and marginalised and face socioeconomic barriers in mainstream Canadian society. (Patrick and Tomiak, 2008, p. 59)*

It appears that this fabricated network cannot replace the natural social fabric of Inuit communities. The scale of larger cities and the geographic dispersion of resources amplify this sense of isolation in an urban environment. As a result, counsellors working in an urban context must consider the stress of those who have relocated, especially if that move was involuntary. Counsellors must never assume that the client understands their new environment or how it functions. Time must be spent to help the client find cultural and social touchstones, and to identify available resources. For those clients who are particularly struggling with the transition, taking the first steps toward employment might take time. In the interim there are a number of things counsellors can encourage clients to do, like volunteer, to help them create ties to the community.

The Principles of Inclusion and Exclusion

Whether an individual is included or excluded from the Inuit community is impacted by a number of factors, including family affiliation, observed behaviours and biases. Mutual aid and loyalty can sometimes result in favouritism. For example, a person with managing authority may hire family who are unqualified, over those with the necessary qualifications. Linked to old grudges or unexpressed tensions, the quick categorization of some individuals based on affiliation, without regard for their real involvement in a conflict, can also harm the

socio-professional integration of some Inuit. This is the same with discrimination based on observed or perceived unapproved behaviours.

> *Social ostracism isolated the person from full participation within the social life of the camp. While not completely ignoring the person, people would not seek out the offending person's company or they would greatly limit their interaction with the person. (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 11)*

Lying, stealing, laziness and pretentiousness are among the many behaviours likely to draw social censure (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006). Furthermore, Inuit who relocate from one village to another for work are often seen as stealing jobs from members of their new community; an offence judged differently if a worker is from the south. The practice of isolating community members threatens the credibility of clients, limits their work opportunities, hampers professional mobility and may contribute to those members leaving the Inuit community for urban centres. In fact, these practices can often explain why it is impossible for some individuals to get an interview or find a job, especially within smaller companies. These factors must be taken into consideration in the employment counselling process.

The Inuit use these psychological or physical punitive measures as a way to denounce or put a stop to harmful behaviour (Searles, 2010). In extreme cases, these measures can lead to the permanent removal of an individual who is deemed hopeless or harmful to the group's survival (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006). For example, gossip is often used to regulate social behaviour.

> *Typically, gossip provided an important means for people to pass on information and for all members to learn about acceptable behaviour. [...] People whose behaviour was deemed inappropriate would be made the brunt of jokes and teased by the community, often in the context of gossiping. This joking ranged from gently poking fun at someone to quite crude and insulting jokes made at their expense. (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 10–11)*

In this way, the offender knows that others do not approve of their actions or attitudes, while not actually having to intervene and directly confront them (Korhonen, 2002). This behavior is therefore consistent with the principle of non-interference. However, rumours and gossip can create negative energy within the community, and aggravate an issue that may initially be superficial or trivial (Korhonen, 2006; Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006). With respect to the job-seeking process, it is important for employment counsellors to support ostracized individuals to regain their place within the community before moving forward to helping them find work. Counsellors may recommend opening the lines of communication with family, Elders and other members of the group to include them in the decision-making process in order to avoid furthering the client's isolation (Alberta Education, 2005).

Leadership in the Inuit Culture

The collectivist traditions of Inuit society also influence the definition and development of leadership. Unlike in Western societies, a professional title like that of a police officer or judge does not automatically confer a position of authority, trust, or respect. Leadership, like that recognized in Elders, is earned over time and gained through experience. Local leaders see themselves as spokespersons on behalf of the community, rather than decision-makers. Before making decisions they gather input from several community members, compare points of view, and identify a solution that aims to reconcile differences where possible (Wihak and Merali, 2003, p. 251). The Inuit's understanding and adherence to earned leadership may present some challenges for non-Inuit professionals, who must first gain respect and establish their credibility with clients in the employability field.

Finally, in order to respect the Inuit's collective interests, it is important that the services offered be firmly anchored in the community. The involvement of counsellors and participants within the community, the participation of community members, and the creation of strong ties with other Inuit associations are essential. This is turn will

enable counsellors to raise awareness of available services and take full advantage of community expertise and, as a result, offer programs adapted to local needs.

Inuit-Qallunaat Dynamic

The relationship between Inuit and non-Inuit has continuously evolved since the 18th century when the first settlers arrived in the Arctic. Although many aspects of this relationship lie outside the scope of this study, there are two factors that impact the employment process: the creation of the client-counsellor relationship and the impact of the collectivist model on practices.

The Client-Counsellor Relationship

There is a lot of pressure on non-Inuit professionals working in northern communities because, as outsiders, they represent both change and hope while, also being seen as the descendants of colonialists (Prattis and Chartrand, 1990; Simard, 1983). In addition, non-Aboriginal workers often fill skilled positions believed to be very well-paid by the locals, while the majority of Inuit workers hold precarious or entry-level positions. According to one respondent, some Inuit automatically assign certain professional roles to Qallunaat, perpetuating a long-standing pattern of inequality.

> *"All the big positions right now are White people, all the managers are White people, all teachers are White people, all the doctors are White people. That is their position, they know what they are doing, I will never take that". [The clients] think that is our place: we are Inuit, we are under them. And I think it scares them to try. [...] I have never seen an Inuk be the boss and coordinate, it is not their position. We have to show them that this is, that you have the right to take it and that you have the right to have more rights! This is your world and you should be providing the services and you should be coordinating them, because you understand it. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

As a result, some Inuit clients are more likely to question the professional skills of their peers based on their behaviour in the community, years of experience and cultural involvement. Similarly, some clients dealing with issues of exclusion prefer to consult non-Inuit fieldworkers because of their position as an outsider and their objectivity (Auclair and Sappa, 2012; Wihak and Merali, 2007).

The division of professional roles often leads to separation and at times tension between the two worlds, exacerbated by the high turnover rate among Qallunaat (Mueller, 2006).

> *It is very hard for an Inuk and a White person to connect. You have to be really trusted by the Inuk. It is a big issue here, trust issue. Because there is a lot of turnover: the White people come, get a job, get attached and then leave and they never come back. The Inuit don't want to deal with Qallunaat anymore, they are like: "Why should I bother, I am going to tell my story to you, you're going to leave, then I am going to tell my story to her, she is going to leave and I am never going to get concrete help in the end". (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

Although official statistics on the mobility of outside labour in Northern Quebec are limited, some estimate that "annually, more than one-third of teaching staff leave their jobs" (CSQ, 2013, p. 19). The high turnover of professionals from the south makes it difficult to establish the kind of trusting relationship needed in the career development process. In a society grounded through relationships, it seems essential for counsellors to focus on building the trust of clients, before providing any services (Alberta Education, 2005). This is even more true for non-Aboriginal counsellors working in a bicultural context.

> *Creating an emotional tie based on respect and authenticity, that's the first priority to consider. Respect is earned, not assumed from the outset. Being White in an Inuit world requires earning their respect. You earn respect by first showing it and by giving them a bigger role in the learning experience. This is a fundamental principle of adult education. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

In Inuit society, trust is earned, like leadership, over time and through actions, not because of a title, a uniform, or a diploma. From a Western management perspective based on the attainment of results, time spent creating this client-counsellor relationship can seem superfluous, particularly as the socio-political background and the constant staff turnover can slow down the process. However, as one respondent points out:

> *A massively important thing is to develop those relationships. And there is no other way of doing that apart from time. There is no way to get around that. But if you have that relationship, that respect, any intervention you do will be infinitely more successful. (Respondent, Montreal)*

As with any therapeutic relationship, methods used to develop trust will vary with every client. Many service providers agree with research that this relationship can best be built by sharing information about oneself or telling stories, rather than asking a series of questions (Korhonen, 2004b).

> *When I provide examples, they often come from my own life. Up until now, I have found that it's my way to connect with them, to put them at ease. Counselling in the south taught me not to speak about my own experiences. My trust relationships, it's when I talk a little about myself. Not too much, not in detail, but I make them feel that Whites also have problems. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Even if the efforts devoted to establishing trust postpone the "formal" employment process and, as a result, the client's integration into the labour market, it is essential not to rush or force the relationship. Once trust has been established, the relationship may evolve very quickly. In somes cases, clients may become very present and want to maintain an amicable relationship with their counsellor.

In inuit society, trust is earned, like leadership, over time and through actions, not because of a title, a uniform, or a diploma.

The Impact of the Collectivist Model on Practices

Given the size and isolation of the communities, career development professionals as well as professionals in other fields, are likely to encounter their clients during community activities and daily outings. The Inuit, who are accustomed to a collectivist society, generally handle these regular interactions quite well, by adhering to the "live and let live" philosophy regarding other people's problems. However, non-Inuit counsellors often have to adapt their practices.

> *The Inuit have a cultural tradition of visiting, seeking help or company from others at their residence [...]. In addition to altering their professional boundaries, the counselors made their personal boundaries more permeable to allow engagement in their clients' lives outside of counseling sessions in response to clients' cultural expectations. The Inuit culture is a relational culture in which personal relationships are valued more than personal space. (Wihak and Merali, 2007, p. 179)*

Repeated contact with clients in the community can cause the lines between the private and personal to become blurred and increases the risks of compassion fatigue, and professional burnout for counsellors ten-fold (Wihak and Merali, 2007). Non-Inuit professionals must immerse themselves in the Inuit culture and community in order to thoroughly understand their clients' point of view and be able to suggest a culturally acceptable intervention plan (cottone, 2001; Wihak and Merali, 2007). Although some authors and practitioners suggest that counsellors open their homes or offer their clients gifts in order to promote trust (Wihak and Merali, 2003, 2007), it is important for professionals to find their own balance and establish clear boundaries with their clients. For example, counsellors can set appropriate visiting hours or counselling locations, while at the same time maintaining a warm and friendly approach to the employment process.

In sum, counsellors are encouraged to use an approach that allows the client to see the impact that their career choice can have on their family and their community and to create an open dialogue with older generations about the Inuit's professional identity (Wihak and Merali, 2003). It is also important to point out that career development looks very different in a collectivist society where family and community members are involved in the decision-making process, rather than in an individualist society. Their counselling approach should also be informed by the Inuit's principal of non-interference. While always client-centered, the counsellors' implicit expectations or the way action plans state objectives might make Western employment counselling seem very, albeit tacitly, prescriptive. The history between the Inuit and Qallunaat increases the importance of adapting the career development process to the sociocultural context. Although establishing trust with some clients may require counsellors to adapt their professional ethics, they can also take advantage of their position as "outsiders" and highlight their commitment to the principle of confidentiality in order to create trust. Given the constant proximity and the changes in their working relationships with clients, it is important to provide constant clinical supervision for counsellors and offer them psychological support while working in small northern communities.

CHAPTER 7

Communication Styles

Communication in Inuit society has a long history in oral tradition and is characterized by the importance of non-verbal cues. It is based on the succinct transmission of factual, clear and direct information. When communicating with members of a different culture, it is important to consider the importance of the language, including verbal and non-verbal cues, their communication style and the way emotions are shared. Respondents also identified other communication techniques, including the limited use of direct questions, the role of silence, and the importance of humour.

The Importance of the Language

For thousands of years, the Inuit culture has been grounded in the Inuktitut language, which has shaped their thoughts, communication, and individual and collective identity.

> *To really understand the culture, the first step is to know the language. What I have learned from my years of working with the Inuit is that language isn't just a tool that they use to communicate. Language holds who they are as a people. It is not just about communicating from one person to another; it's about communicating in a very holistic way. It's a vehicle; it's a vessel [...]. It is partly because it is an oral tradition. Their history, their culture, who they are as people, their values are inseparable from their language. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

In a culture based on oral tradition, language provides the best way of expressing Inuit values, while also forming the basis of an entire system of knowledge, beliefs, and rules (Battiste, 2005; Bouchard, 2008; Klinga, 2012).

> *Inuit use [inuktitut] to mean how they speak; it also refers to the way in which they do things. A person can talk, hunt, walk, eat, sleep, raise children, dance, and even smile inuktitut. (Brody, 1987, p. 151, cited in Searles, 2008, p. 245)*

Despite the important role of the language for promoting and protecting the Inuit culture, some respondents noted a decrease in Inuktitut linguistic skills over the past few years, particularly in certain villages. The erosion in the use of the mother tongue by young Inuit, primarily due to the influence of technology and the global culture, has an impact on their cultural identity and their self-esteem. As mentioned above, the inability of young people to use and understand the language has impacted their ability to connect, communicate and learn from older generations. Although less important for social integration for the Inuk living in an urban setting, the Inuktitut language contributes to shaping their identity. Furthermore, without a solid grasp of the first language, in this case Inuktitut, learning a second or third is more difficult. If the use of the Inuktitut language continues decrease, many fear it will inhibit communication and thwart learning in many ways.

IN ADDITION TO FACILITATING COMMUNICATION AND REDUCING INTERCULTURAL FILTERS, USING INUKTITUT ALLOWS CLIENTS TO RELATE MORE EASILY TO FOREIGN CONCEPTS.

Although the importance of the Inuit language also has an impact on labour market integration, most communications, instruction, and training are not offered in Inuktitut. Using a second language, like English, can potentially lose the participants' interest, erode the meaning of concepts, and limit the assimilation of the information transmitted. As a result, sharing content and interacting in Inuktitut throughout the counselling process is an important priority.

> *It is so fun to give the workshops to students, from 9 am to 4 pm. [...] Especially in their own language, they love it. When you can explain them in Inuktitut, they love it! They freak out when I speak Inuktitut. They say: "Who are you? Are you an Inuk?" (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

Speaking in Inuktitut facilitates communication, reduces intercultural filters, and allows clients to relate more easily to foreign concepts. If it is impossible to have a team of Inuit service providers who all speak Inuktitut, it is imperative to include at least one Inuk so that workshops and coaching in Inuktitut can be offered as often as possible.

Oral and Non-Verbal Tradition

Although the Inuit place considerable importance on oral communication in transmission of traditions, values and culture, they are not outspoken people.

> *First and foremost, even if they are an oral people, I see them as non-verbal—they're not motor-mouths; first, let them come to us and also tell them that we're there for them. [...] And let them talk, because they have a history of story-telling; they have a life experience that we don't have with a reality that is totally different from ours. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

At first, this observation may seem contradictory; however, it is important to underscore that, above all, the oral tradition of the Inuit is part of a "way of life favourable for developing the ability to listen" (Therrien, 2002, p. 130). This oral tradition is essential to preserving their cultural heritage. As well, in this culture, body language plays an important role and compliments the verbal language. The Inuit communicate with the help of body movements, whether by a raised eyebrow or an inscrutable facial expression.

> *Your gestures, your body tone and movements. I could talk to somebody all the way over there not hearing a word. We know the language so well that we know how to communicate. (Respondent, Montreal)*

Like many cultures, looking someone directly in the eye when speaking with them signals a lack of respect or defiance. In Western culture, however, a lack of eye contact can be perceived as disinterest or excessive shyness. This can lead to problems in communication during job interviews or even interactions with a counsellor. Consequently, as Korhonen points out "attention to non-verbal behaviour is essential during throughout the counselling process, as clients may be uncomfortable or unwilling to communicate disagreement, discomfort, emotions, choices, etc. directly" (2002, p. 174). In order to be able to decode the gestures and facial expressions of Inuit clients, knowledge of the culture, contact with the community, and a sharp sense of observation prove essential.

Direct Communication

Traditionally, "through a desire to speak truthfully and prioritizing a careful choice of words, narration protects knowledge to the extent that someone who doesn't know what he's talking about keeps still (Therrien, 2002, p. 132). By carefully choosing one's words, the Inuit engage in frank and direct conversations that are devoid of "small talk" that is common in many Eurocentric cultures. These conversations become even more candid once trust has been established.

> *Once they trust you, they tell you very directly. You don't take offense to that, because they trust you enough to do it. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

According to this respondent, employers might perceive such explicit communication as tactless or rude:

> *Fairly often, employers want to exercise their authority and don't accept straight talk. (Respondent, Montreal)*

In a work context, interactions with non-Inuit clients or co-workers can be strained by these differing communication styles. In order to avoid potential workplace conflicts, the counsellor should support their client to develop effective cross-cultural communication techniques and demystify the dominant communication style by explaining conventional work environment exchanges. For example, the counsellor could "role-play" the employer-employee relationship during the employment integration process.

Expressing Emotion

Except in the context of the healing process, the Inuit rarely express emotions publicly (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2004).

> *Inuit they tend not to express their emotions very much, we are very much low emotional people [...] which I think cause some problems. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Not only do the Inuit generally express their emotions and fears less than other Canadians, they also express them differently. There are certain rules that pertain to the expression of emotion; it must take place at the right moment and not jeopardize activities or group cohesion. Thus, at a very young age, individuals must learn to control their emotions (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006). In this way, the Inuit have a heightened sense

of observation that prompts them to look for emotional cues in body language. The Inuit also avoid openly and publicly discussing their personal difficulties or problems with others.

> *From what I have observed, people don't talk about problems. We know they're there, but we may not say it all the time. It's delicate or talking about it might be seen as taboo. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

By not wanting to intervene, the Inuit maintain a certain distance from the problems of other community members, because revealing and discussing an individual's difficulties is seen as a punishment.

Direct Questioning

As part of their training, career development professionals are accustomed to asking various questions in order to learn about their client's background, interests, experiences, and ambitions. However, in a culture that values listening and non-interference, questions that are too direct can be inappropriate.

> *Asking questions is very difficult for them. It's nosy, moving into people's privacy. If they wanted to tell you that, they would tell you. But asking a lot of questions is rude; it's none of your business. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

> *We ask questions all the time, but asking too many is frowned upon. With the clientele , what's important is to establish trust. [...] We're used to things going quickly, we want to have very quick results, but it doesn't always work like that. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

Corroborated by the literature (Patrick and Tomiak, 2008; Korhonen, 2002; Minor, 1992), this cultural characteristic emerges as a challenge not only for non-Inuit professionals, who must learn to limit their questions, but also for local Inuit employment officers who are not comfortable with the idea of directly asking personal questions. Although asking a series of questions is common in the south, to Inuit counsellors it is an intrusive communication approach that flies in the face of their values. Instead, a narrative approach, like storytelling, is a good way to explore a clients' background and objectives without infringing on their privacy.

Similarly, Inuit clients can be uncomfortable with the idea of making a direct request or clearly asserting their needs.

> *Since direct requests are considered rude and aggressive, a guest [or client] may make their wishes known only by making indirect hints about what they would like. A direct request would be seen as placing the guest in the lesser social position and would insult the host for not having had the insight or consideration to perceive the wishes of his guest. It also risks placing the host in an awkward position if he is not able to fulfill the desire of his guest or did not feel comfortable in granting him his request. (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 36)*

Similarly, Inuit clients can be uncomfortable with the idea of making a direct request or clearly asserting their needs.

> *In the Inuit culture, in principle, we don't like to say "no". In principle, we never say "no." [...] If you ask them a question and they don't answer, nine times out of ten you can assume that the answer is "no." Instead of answering verbally, they ignore your question, even if they understood it very well. (Respondent, Montreal)*

In the Inuit community it can be seen as disrespectful to disagree or contradict someone, unless there is a bond of trust that exists between the two parties.

> *If we go to them and suggest something, they'll agree, but that doesn't mean that it's the best solution, which means that it'll change. You have to live with the reality. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Adopting a counselling approach that is client-directed will allow Inuit clients to make choices that are consistent with their traditional values.

Silences

Those who are familiar with hunting, like the Inuit, know that even the smallest noise can spook prey causing them to run away before the hunter has a chance to react. Silence is a skill that is essential to the survival of hunting communities and many Inuit games are based on this ability (Qitsualik, 1998).

> *They are very comfortable with silence. We are not comfortable with silence at all. In the work environment, silence is good, they prefer it. They find us disturbing. They communicate less than us and their communication is much more subtle. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

For many people, long periods of silence may feel awkward or even embarrassing. Blue, Darou and Ruano write that "some clients treat counsellors with the respect that they normally reserve for elders (i.e. silence, no eye contact). This can be disconcerting to a Eurocentric person using typical contemporary counseling models" (2002, p. 18). Accustomed to a back and forth style of communication, non-Inuit counsellors often experience silence as a sign that a conversation is faltering; the same can be said with regards to lack of eye contact. On the contrary, the Inuit see these practices as a sign of respect. For example, they might use silence to think how to best formulate an answer or, failing to find a satisfactory or sufficiently respectful answer, choose to abstain from commenting. In case of disagreement, fear of offending or provoking anger can also be communicated non-verbally through silence. As a result, "native silence, often perceived as a problem by non-natives, needs to be re-interpreted" (Darou, 1987, p, 39). Responding to this different communication style requires patience. Excessive rewording, drawing conclusions prematurely, and forcing discussion on the client must be avoided. Paying careful attention to the style of communication used between other Inuit members in the community will help the counsellor to better understand the meaning and role of silence.

Humour and Metaphor

Humour and the use of metaphors are commonly used in Inuit culture to avoid confrontation, reply to delicate questions, convey a difficult message or to hide criticism (Blue, Darou and Ruano, 2002). In fact, several respondents emphasized the Inuit's light character and love for laughter.

> *We are with people who kid around a lot, who make faces. Unstoppable laughing fits. There is a sense of humour that is extremely favourable to learning. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

In addition to reducing stress and discomfort, humour makes it possible to take a step back and offer some relief during a delicate situation (Briggs, 1991; Korhonen, 2002). Humour is also used to check a young Inuk's bad behaviour and therefore plays a role in the traditional ways of teaching young people discipline (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006). Many counsellors working with Inuit and, more generally, Aboriginal clients, report that they routinely turn to humorous strategies in order to draw attention to a topic, stimulate participation in a group, and break down the resistance of shy or reticent individuals (Swanson, 2003).

Given that communication forms the basis of any intervention, it is essential to thoroughly understand the preferred style of conversation and interaction in Inuit communities. In this regard, counsellors should pay particular attention to the filters and subtleties of intercultural communications.

> *Such norms in northern Inuit communities – including those related to speech style, facial expression, gestures, and body language – differed greatly from those in southern urban environments; as a result, miscommunication and misunderstandings could easily arise. (Patrick and Tomiak, 2008, p. 61)*

A lack of understanding about the cultural particularities of communication, such as the importance of non-verbal communication, the limited use of direct questions, or the role of silence, can seriously impede the transfer of information and the establishment of an open dialogue. To avoid any unnecessary misunderstanding or discomfort during the career development process it is important for counsellors to clearly specify the differences in communication methods, adapt one's own style of communication, and regularly verify that there is a mutual understanding.

> *Counsellors need to develop competences in hearing nonverbal communication and particularly in dealing with silence. The counsellor's job is really to hear the meaning beyond the words and in the absence of words. [...] The fluidity of the conversation seems to depend on the ability of the counselor to listen, and not on the client's ability to talk. (Blue, Darou and Ruano, 2002, p. 18)*

Given that the Inuit have a limited experience of counselling, compared to other clientele, including some First Nations communities, it is even more important to adapt communication methods. To that end, counsellors should be aware of their own reactions to the process and attempt to adjust their usual intervention techniques.

By explaining the usual expectations of non-Inuit employers, counsellors will be better equipped to give clients the essential tools for understanding communication differences and their impacts in the work environment, thereby reducing the risk of confusion, confrontation, or withdrawal. Employers, particularly in an urban environment, should also be aware of the Inuit's communication methods and of cultural diversity in general, in order to facilitate the recruitment and employment retention process.

Learning Methods

In addition to understanding the communication styles of the Inuit, employment counsellors must consider various teaching methods embedded within the culture. Inuit and Western pedagogical approaches are substantially different from one another. The teaching resources and techniques used to educate children in the family, community or school, to help people to find work or to complete on-the-job training vary greatly, but can be reconciled.

Collectivism

The pace of instruction in Inuit communities is impacted by the concept of holistic, gradual, life-long learning that is supported by the community at large (AINC, 2009; Bougie, Kelly-Scott and Arriagada, 2013). This also has implications for their interest in formal and structured education which has been imported from the south.

> *Our learning is like a dog team. There are many dogs pulling the sled. In our community, there are many people who are teaching the child. And it is in every environment: it's in the home, at the feast, in the land. Many people have responsibilities, of course the parents and the family. The White way is that you have many children with one person in a closed area, only one environment. And it doesn't make sense, why would you do it that way? How can one person teach many children indoors, with them sitting at their desk? (Respondent, Ottawa)*

Learning is a social process where parents, Elders, and other community members all participate in learning to further a child's development (Klinga, 2012; NLC, 2007). As Douglas points out, "adults usually outnumbered children in those days, one child had many teachers" (2009, p. 39). There are stark differences between the Western and Inuit styles of learning; Inuit cultures are accustomed to transferring knowledge onto small groups of learners through action, whereas Western teaching methods generally involve a single professor who lectures to a large group of students.

> *The one thing I couldn't understand is when we were a lot in a classroom; the teacher was just talking, talking and talking. I had to take notes and I couldn't keep up. How can you learn from that? It was too much from me, because I've never really learned that way, I just watched. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Within the traditional Inuit culture teaching in a classroom setting did not exist. On the contrary, traditional teaching took place daily, through activities and used various methods that were more or less rules-based. According to Klinga, "learning is connected to authentic, lived experiences and is tied to place. The place of learning is the physical world; it is on the land and in one's community" (2012, p. 13). Teaching in the Inuit culture is less formal, omnipresent and ongoing: each place, encounter, or activity naturally becomes a source of learning (NLC, 2007).

Observation and Experimentation

While the historical tradition of Inuit communication is strongly grounded in oral exchanges, learning is primarily based on observing others' behaviours and ways of doing things (Wihak and Merali, 2003). In fact, Therrien confirms that "the educational system reserved a special place for awakening the consciousness, for observation, for the faithful representation of that which had been seen and heard," (2002, p. 130) an impression corroborated by interviews conducted in the field .

> *When I was younger, I was obliged to go with my parents, so they could teach me, and I could watch and learn. About the names, what they do, the migration patterns of the animals, that kind of stuff. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

> *That whole thing of reading, then talking about it, then doing, which is what we do in school is the opposite. They observe, then they do and then they might talk about it. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

According to the key informants interviewed in this report, depending on the subject matter and the learning context, the discussion phase can occur before or after experimentation. The Inuit think very practically and can quickly move from the introspective and analytical stages to concentrate on action and the achievement of concrete results. If the desired outcomes are obtained, they refrain from constantly calling into question the methods they have used for thousands of years.

> *When I was on the land, when I had to ask them [the Inuit] to explain it, it was more "You see it, you learn it now, we are done here". I am sure it was the way it was with teaching their boys to hunt. The boy stood there, he was quiet, he watched and then he did it. That was it. Monkey see, monkey do. Because when you ask "why", who cares about why. This is how it is done, this is how we do it. We don't need to think about the why: we do it and it gets the results we want. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

Thus, the Inuit's reluctance to ask a lot of questions in social contexts also extends to the learning context.

> *In the South you are very much encouraged to ask questions. When you are not sure about something you ask and if you still don't understand you ask again and you ask again. So I think I am normal Inuk, I am shy, I don't really ask questions even though I don't understand. Maybe later on I will understand, I will learn a different way. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

While observing, the Inuk collects information visually and learns new techniques by imitating the behaviours they see. For example, by observing and manipulating them, young Inuit quickly learn how to handle traditional tools used for hunting, fishing, sewing, and cooking (Wihak and Merali, 2007).

> *In a Eurocentric southern culture, we don't want two year olds playing with knives, hammers, all of it, whereas in Inuit culture, they want you to begin to develop your knives skills when you are one or two. And I was thinking that is a very example of a quite different approach. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

The emphasis put on experiential learning in the Inuit culture has impacts on several levels, including the Inuk's impressive problem-solving skills, and the importance of role models in the career development process.

It is clear that the Inuit prefer to use practical, experiential learning models (NLC, 2007). Learning is spread out over time and proceeds in stages. Once a basic technique is mastered, the learner goes on to the next more difficult stage until the skill is fully developed. Nonetheless, some authors take issue with the notion of a step-by-step, progressive learning model mentioned by several respondents, arguing that the "the know-how is acquired in its entirety and not through a series a sequential steps" (Stairs, 1994, p. 67, translated by Da Silveira, 2009, p. 247).

Although the Inuit prefer to avoid long explanations or discussions in learning contexts, several service-providers insisted on the need to clearly explain the objectives for each new activity proposed within the career development process.

> *It requires taking the lead and laying the groundwork. [...] Explaining the why of how is also important. For example, if you ask for a document, you won't get it back. If you explain that it confirms attendance in a training session, however, you'll get the document. You have to more fully explain each request. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

The emphasis put on experiential learning in the Inuit culture has impacts on several levels, including the Inuk's impressive problem-solving skills, and the importance of role models in the career development process. However, because the Inuit are accustomed to learning in this way, they may express a half-hearted interest in reading text or listening to a teacher lecture about theory or abstract concepts.

Theory and Abstract Concepts

It is much more difficult to be able to understand abstract concepts in a second language. Since many Inuit's first language is Inuktitut, and their understanding of the world is through their lived experience within Inuit culture, there are a number of concepts that cannot be easily translated or understood in English or French.

> *I think that we have a tendency to use concepts that are not recognized by the Inuit. [...] Perseverance? What's perseverance? They don't know. They understand the concept, but they don't know the word. So why persevere? Where does that get us? So, I think that [depending] on the language, even if they speak English or French like us, these concepts are different. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

There are certain concepts, even if applied daily, that don't have a literal translation in the Inuit language and, as a result, are difficult to understand. Thus, learning situations that involve interactions with non-Aboriginal and Inuit clients in English or French must be adapted to ensure that the learnings are not lost in translation.

Furthermore, because the Inuit are more focused on practical learning, abstract concepts, like theory, do not necessarily have a place in the Inuit culture. For Inuit learners, theory is a foreign concept, so many have little interest in learning more about it. Thus, it is essential, for counsellors to tie theory to practice. By allowing students to put theory into practice, through role-play scenarios for example, they will be better able to see how what they have learned can impact their day-to-day work. Certain techniques that focus on self-awareness and encourage clients to talk about themselves are unfamiliar to many Inuit. These methods should be adjusted to ensure that they more closely reflect Inuit values and learning styles. The use of concrete examples, particularly those drawn from traditional activities, can facilitate a better understanding and application of abstract concepts like "initiative" or "creativity."

Problem-Solving

A community that depends on hunting, fishing and gathering is always at risk of unexpected events that may threaten its survival. As such, effective problem-solving skills and the ability to work collaboratively are essential (Wihak and Merali, 2003). The Inuit are resourceful, have an excellent visual memory and excel at problem-solving.

> *They kicked my butt at Scrabble, even if it was in English. My vocabulary was much larger, it is my language. But for them it was a puzzle, they were connecting the words: "If I connect this word and this word, I get triple words". It was amazing, I couldn't believe it. They are puzzle-solvers. They're going to sit there and they are going to figure it out. (Respondent, Kuujjuaq)*

Problem solving is a real asset in a professional environment. This transferrable skill should be highlighted in the employability process through concrete exercises that allow learners to solve problems by applying and making use of the theoretical notions presented. Problem-solving exercises like, charades or role-playing scenarios, will foster their cognitive learning, validate their strengths and give them motivation to learn. Although these activities may be performed individually, including team problem-solving activities during the career development process or on the job will reflect their collaborative spirit and create feelings of belonging.

The Importance of Models

Learning through observation and imitation requires the presence of models who demonstrate appropriate behaviours and attitudes. In this way, the young Inuk repricates the behaviour of an esteemed adult in a given situation.

> *I learn sewing when I was very little, because my mother used to sew, it is part of her culture. Because we live in the North, it gets cold, we wear parkas and mittens. She was a role model to me, we are Inuit, we sew, we need clothing. She was doing that all the time. I just did it, because it's our culture and I saw my mother do it. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

Learning through imitation allows for the social transfer of knowledge and values and contributes to and individuals' personal growth and socialization. Several respondents and researchers, however, noted the lack of positive role models in Inuit communities, which has had an impact on the development of young people's personal identity and level of motivation. As the influence of globalized media culture creeps further into Inuit

communities, Elders lose their respect and youth become less interested in ancestral models. Other Inuit models often remain invisible in a society that prizes modesty and discretion.

Without compromising cultural values, it is important for counsellors to involve as many Inuit role models as possible during the career development process (Korhonen, 2004b). For example, storytelling by community members or job-site visits that offer clients opportunities for direct observation and discussion with real employees about their day-to-day tasks, provide clients with a better understanding of the role. Counsellors can also be models for clients by sharing their own difficulties and successes, while respecting the limitations of their professional role.

Pedagogical Methods

In addition to the use of role models, there are a number of strategies used to foster learning amongst the Inuit, including: visual, creative, play-based, or narrative methods. Given their preferred learning styles, it is best to avoid long theoretical discussions and instead actively involve Inuit learners at every stage of the learning experience. If that is not possible, respondents highlighted the importance of incorporating visual elements, including pictures and tables, into training methods.

> *The Inuit are very visual. They learn visually. If you want to hold a session about theory, a lot of visual elements will be necessary. After several hours, they'll be restless. (Respondent, Montreal)*

Since training is often conducted in their second or third language, there is a greater risk for content to be lost in translation and using visual and graphic techniques becomes even more necessary (NLC, 2007). Thanks to technological advancements, the use of social media or other interactive audiovisual resources in the classroom, when used appropriately, keeps learners interested and engaged, while at the same time stimulating communication, information sharing, and collaboration. To foster active learning, service-providers can also use a varied range of creativity techniques, including traditional arts like drawing or sculpture. Considering the importance of art in the Inuit culture, creative teaching approaches make it easier for participants to express themselves and take ownership of content considered foreign. In this regard, several studies stress the importance of the artistic process in the training of Aboriginal learners, particularly in literacy contexts.

> *When Aboriginal cultural arts are included in a literacy practitioner's kit of teaching tools and a learner's portfolio of accomplishments, the learner and the practitioner are further enabled towards self-affirmation by participation in the fabric of education in Canadian society. (Antone, Gamlin and Provost-Turchetti, 2003, p. 36)*

Similarly, active and play-based pedagogical methods resonate in the Inuit culture where games play an important role (Laugrand, 2008). In the collectivist Inuit spirit, group activities, like role-playing or building games, are used to accelerate learning. According to Briggs, "play is not only an important form of exploration, the act of playing also demonstrates that one is a good person" (1991, p. 276). Depending on the client's needs, the inclusion of rest periods, through yoga and relaxation, and outdoor physical activities also make it possible to re-centre or work off surplus energy, while improving attention span and the capacity to concentrate. As a traditional practice, storytelling allows for the transfer of knowledge acquired through concrete experiences, while leaving the listener some latitude to choose what lesson to take away.

> *Storytelling, it's very important. [...] It connects them to their culture, because their culture comes out of these stories and the telling. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

Myths and legends recounted by the Elders inform and train the young Inuit about historical events, valued behaviours, and cultural markers. As such, they represent valuable teaching tools. Consequently, a narrative approach fosters closer ties with the community's Elders, sustaining or re-establishing the intergenerational bonds so essential to passing on knowledge.

Ultimately, given the lack of enthusiasm for didactic methods based on reading and writing, the rise of play-based and creative teaching practices in non-traditional learning contexts creates bridges with ancestral ways of teaching (Antone and Gamlin, 2002). The use of only Western techniques, on the contrary, may be met with resistance from Inuit learners fearful of acculturation. Thus, during an employability intervention, directly including traditional teaching techniques makes it possible to mitigate the cultural differences and the impression of foreignness while contributing to the preservation and revitalization of Inuit knowledge. Regardless of the techniques chosen, fostering client involvement and accountability, by adapting Western ways to the local culture and clearly explaining the objectives targeted by these new concepts and learning experiences without, however, diluting content or patronizing participants, remains the priority.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

Inuit communities have had a difficult time gaining a foothold in the labour market which has jeopardized their efforts to combat poverty and social exclusion. They have been confronted by a number of challenging social issues, including those arising from their colonialist history and the rapid introduction of the capitalist economy. Governments at all levels can and should make efforts to adapt and improve access to education and training for Inuit people to foster their contribution to Canada's economy and society. In the words of Terry Audla, an Inuit leader and president of the National Inuit organization Tapiriit Kanatami, such a commitment presents both a challenge and a unique opportunity.

> *It is a challenge in that public sector policies and private sector initiatives need to be fashioned so as to generate adequate employment and other economic opportunities for Inuit, particularly young Inuit joining the workforce for the first time. It is an opportunity in that successfully attracting and sustaining optimal Inuit participation in employment and other economic opportunities can contribute in tangible and important ways to both Inuit economic self-reliance and Canada's overall economic performance. (Audla, 2012)*

These changes are difficult but necessary. There is a need to adapt labour force participation requirements to allow for greater flexibility within the labour market, particularly in northern communities. In addition, to better support the Inuit to prepare for professional integration, services, including general, academic, and skills training programs, need to be adjusted.

We have identified five dimensions within this study—cultural identity and self-concept, values and beliefs, social dynamics, communication styles and learning methods, that make it possible to understand the traditional particularities within the Inuit culture that affect their socio-professional integration. Notions of survival, cultural authenticity, and community, as well as the Inuit's relationship with the land and time naturally colour their career development process. Although the focus on individual needs in the North has increased, community and collective thinking of the Inuk takes precedence in informing their decision-making and order of business. Communication is at the heart of the client-counsellor relationship, and has a direct impact on individual interventions and group activities. Employment counselors must understand and consider various cultural factors that can distort clients reactions, whether expressed or not, to the employment process. The career development process is often foreign and unfamiliar to Inuit people. To support the Inuk to move through this process, employment counsellors should integrate traditional learning methods, like storytelling, to inform their training and counseling strategies.

Given the differences between the Inuit and Eurocentric cultures, combined with the profound changes to the Inuit's social fabric and identity development process, broad-based services cannot adequately meet the career development needs of this community:

> *The major differences do not reside in the program's philosophy and psychology. The general principles—self-knowledge, attention, respect, authenticity, and "unconditional" acceptance (in quotes because, in practice, such acceptance is difficult to achieve), but surely the client-focused approach to intervention—are all recognized. [...] The differences show up in methodology, in the ways of learning and of expressing things, in the tools used. Finding a common ground of understanding in our communities takes a major effort because we have a lot of filters in our communications. Those filters are involuntary because we don't come from the same culture. (Respondent, Ottawa)*

Many researchers support the adoption of a culture-centered counselling approach that respects the clients' ways of seeing the world, values, and life experiences (Arthur and Collins, 2011; Leong, 2010; Korhonen, 2002, Sue and Sue, 1990). In addition to adapting intervention strategies, it is essential to anchor training content in the clients' reality by adapting cultural points of reference (Laugrand, 2008).

> *We have to adapt everything because the material is not necessarily meaningful. For learning experiences to be concrete, they have to make sense, if not they're meaningless. (Respondent, Inukjuak)*

In this sense, it seems that only specialized services provided by well-equipped professionals and organizations can help the Inuit move toward professional integration without sacrificing their vision and values. Professional integration service providers and organizations should place a premium on hiring Inuit staff and creating partnerships with Inuit community associations, as well as on raising employer awareness. They should also ensure that front-line resources, Inuit or non-Inuit, receive proper training and constant supervision, since they are the cornerstone of culture-infused counselling.

Non-Inuit counsellors must agree to learn before they counsel, fully understand the culture, and demonstrate openness and patience (Ogbu, 1992). They must also adapt their usual intervention techniques and their communication methods.

> *Counsellors need a deep understanding of their own values first before they can become aware of their biases, and then in turn understand the client's values. [...] To develop a counselling approach that is appropriate to the range of traditional and non-traditional cultures, the counsellor must be flexible, increase self-knowledge, be oneself, avoid theoretical counselling dogma, and, of course, listen, listen, listen. (Blue, Darou and Ruano, 2002, p. 19)*

By being aware of their knowledge of self, knowledge of their client's culture, their reactions, and their biases, it will be possible to collaboratively build a flexible approach adapted to the clients' reality and needs in a bicultural context.

These services should be created for and by the Inuit and continuously be adapted to reflect present and future changes in their cultural identity. They should also consider the transformations that occurred with the emergence of the market economy, recent technological innovations, and the growing presence of Qallunaat in Inuit territory. These changes also created profound intergenerational differences that compromised the transmission of ancestral knowledge, including a shift in their identity and the loss of traditional touchstones. Since these changes affect the cultural pride and self-esteem of younger generations, it is important that the services offered promote the traditional culture while keeping pace with social changes.

The first phase of this project provides the theoretical foundation for the development of a reference guide intended to optimize employability interventions designed for Inuit clients and contributes to the body of literature about Inuit culture. In fact, documenting strategies and effective practices for interacting with Inuit clients to support their workforce integration seems crucial given the nearly total absence of specific tools and resources for them in the career development sector. In addition to allowing non-Aboriginal counsellors to better understand Inuit clients and the obstacles they face in their transition to the labour force, this guide will contribute to optimizing intervention methods and increase the effectiveness of the work undertaken with these communities.

APPENDIX I

Glossary

Aboriginal	Original peoples of North America and their descendants. In Canada, this term refers to three groups of Aboriginal peoples: First Nations, Métis and Inuit.
Career development	On-going during which an individual gains awareness, explores and experiences the factors that influence his way of life and that encompass work, learning, and recreational activities.
Employability	All the skills that allow an individual to find and keep a job.
Employment services	Services whose central objective is short-term employment preparation.
Inuit	Collective noun meaning the Aboriginal population evolving in the Arctic regions of North America, Greenland, and Siberia.
Inuk	Singular of the term Inuit.
Nunavimmiut	In the Inuktitut language, the word for inhabitants of Nunavik.
Qallunaat	In the Inuktitut language, the word for non-Inuit.

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