On the rapids: A case study incorporating tribally centred epistemology into health promotion in Kahnawà:ke

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the culturally meaningful elements involved in an Onkwehón:we approach to holistic health and wellbeing, specifically with the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke. Evaluative literature of the Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project's health promotion initiatives highlighted the need to increase Kanien'kehá:ka cultural content, connection to land, spiritual aspects of wellbeing and intergenerational dynamics, and diverts the focus towards wellness, rather than diabetes prevention (Delormier et al., 2003; Khayyat Kholghi, et al., 2018; Tremblay et al., 2018). Thus, the exploration of how to incorporate culturally valuable elements into physical activity health resources for the community became a secondary study purpose. This study utilized an instrumental case study design, driven by three research propositions: (a) the influence of Kahnawà:ke's natural environment on culture; (b) culturally driven physical activity as a vehicle for cultural practice; (c) community voice is strengthened via co-design. Two data collection methods were used; a contextual description of the case study setting, and knowledge holder conversations. Through purposive sampling, the study recruited three knowledge holders from Kahnawà:ke for the research conversations. The analysis strategy drew on Stake's (1995) categorical aggregation and direct interpretation techniques, guided by the research propositions. The philosophical findings of the study present the importance of land, language and culture as primary; and identity, belonging and wellbeing as secondary. The case study setting findings depicts "on the rapids" as a translation of Kahnawà:ke, and the significant socio-political factors that serve to undermine and support the community's relationship with the river. The practical study findings propose three pragmatic recommendations: (a) tools to introduce cultural traditions; (b) a practical experience of cultural traditions; (c) a discussion model. This study positively contributes toward Indigenous health promotion and physical activity with insight into the expression of indigeneity, which is nuanced, multidimensional, ever evolving, and specific to place.

Résumé

Le but de cette étude était de mieux comprendre les éléments culturellement significatives impliquées dans une approche Onkwehón:we de la santé et du bien-être holistiques, en particulier avec la communauté Kanien'kehá:ka de Kahnawà:ke. La littérature évaluative des initiatives de promotion de la santé du Projet de prévention du diabète dans les écoles de Kahnawà:ke (PPDEK) a souligné la nécessité d'augmenter le contenu culturel Kanien'kehá:ka, de renforcer le lien avec le territoire, les aspects spirituels du bien-être et les dynamiques intergénérationnelles, et tourne l'attention vers le bien-être plutôt que la prévention du diabète (Delormier et al., 2003; Khayyat Kholghi, et al., 2018; Tremblay et al., 2018). Ainsi, l'exploration de la façon d'incorporer des éléments culturellement significatifs a sein des ressources de santé liées à l'activité physique pour la communauté est devenue un objectif secondaire de l'étude. Cette étude a utilisé un modèle d'étude de cas instrumental et fut guidée par trois propositions de recherche : (a) l'influence de l'environnement naturel de Kahnawà:ke sur la culture ; (b) l'activité physique axée sur la culture comme un avenue vers la pratique culturelle ; et (c) la voix de la communauté est renforcée via la co-conception. Deux méthodes de collecte de données furent utilisées ; une description contextuelle du cadre de l'étude de cas, et les conversations avec les détenteurs de connaissances. Grâce à un échantillonnage dirigé, l'étude a recruté trois détenteurs de connaissances de Kahnawà:ke pour les conversations de recherche. Guidée par les propositions de recherche, la stratégie d'analyse fut inspirée des techniques d'agrégation catégorielle et d'interprétation directe de Stake (1995). Les conclusions philosophiques de l'étude présentent l'importance du territoire, de la langue et de la culture comme étant primordiale ; et l'identité, l'appartenance et le bien-être comme étant secondaires. Les conclusions de l'étude de cas décrivent « sur les rapides » comme une traduction de Kahnawà:ke, et des facteurs sociopolitiques importants servant à déstabiliser ou à soutenir la relation de la communauté avec la rivière. Les résultats de l'étude proposent trois recommandations pragmatiques : (a) des outils pour introduire des traditions culturelles ; (b) une expérience pratique des traditions culturelles ; et (c) un modèle de discussion. Cette étude contribue positivement à la promotion de la santé et à l'activité physique chez les Autochtones grâce à un aperçu de l'expression de l'appartenance autochtone, qui est nuancée, multidimensionnelle, en constante évolution et spécifique au lieu.

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Acknowledgements

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Contribution of Authors

The preparation and the writing of this thesis was primarily completed by Hariata G. Tai Rakena. Supervision of the thesis was shared by several roles; primarily Dr. Lee Schaefer as the lead supervisor, and secondarily by the supervisory committee members which comprised Dr. Treena Wasonti:io Delormier and Dr. Justin Ihirangi Heke.

The supervisory committee was assembled to provide contributions by way of review of the proposed study design, which includes the Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology Chapters, through the colloquium process. As such Chapters 1 and 2 were written by Hariata G. Tai Rakena with advisory edits provided by Dr. Lee Schaefer. Chapter 3 was also written by Hariata G. Tai Rakena, with advisory edits provided by Dr. Lee Schaefer and advisory recommendations made by the supervisory committee. Hariata G. Tai Rakena solely conducted the study's data collection and initial analysis. Dr. Lee Schaefer supported Hariata G. Tai Rakena to interpret the study's data into results and discussion chapters. Chapters 4, 5, 6 and Conclusion were written by Hariata G. Tai Rakena with advisory edits provided by Dr. Lee Schaefer.

Upon initial submission of the thesis, it was reviewed by Kaylia Marquis and Kyle Delisle, on behalf of the Kanien'kehá:ka community study partners from Kahnawà:ke, and Dr. Tara-Leigh McHugh as an external academic reviewer. In preparation for the final thesis submission, the reviewers' recommendations were considered, and minor changes were made.

Thesis Conventions

Use of Indigenous Languages

This thesis is centred in Indigenous ways of knowing, with a particular focus on promoting the voice of the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke; a First Nations community situated adjacent to Montreal in Quebec, Canada. Therefore, the communication of their perspective involves culturally pertinent principles and values encoded within their Kanien'kéha language. Furthermore, as the researcher involved in this study, I identify as Māori with affiliations to the Waikato tribe of New Zealand. Accordingly, many of our cultural concepts are also shared, emanating from the Māori language. I have purposely chosen to include accents that are linguistically pertinent to the language involved, and not to italicize Māori and Kanien'kéha words in this thesis to give precedence to the Indigenous voices and perspectives in this study. Despite the bumping point this poses regarding formal academic writing conventions, I have drawn on Jackson (2011) and Timu's (2018) position that advocates for this approach. I acknowledge that this convention is not universally agreed upon (Jackson, 2011), and I stand by its use all the same.

Explanations of Terms

When a Māori or Kanien'kéha word is used for the first time, I offer an English definition of the word in parenthesis immediately after the word, unless an in-depth description of the term is provided in the text. In addition, a glossary of terms is provided at the beginning of the thesis for the reader's reference. These glossary definitions come from either my understanding of the language or from consultation with Kanien'kéha language speakers from Kahnawà:ke. As such, some of our descriptions of these terms may vary slightly from other definitions. Finally, footnotes are provided for phonetic descriptions of frequently used Māori and Kanien'kéha words as they are introduced in the thesis.

Glossary of Terms

Māori Terms	
Aotearoa	New Zealand
Atua Matua Māori Health Framework	Māori health model created by Dr. Ihirangi Heke
Awa	River
Hapū	Subtribe, pregnant
He whakamaramatanga	An explanation
Ihumātao	Māori settlement located in south Auckland, New Zealand
Iwi	Tribe, tribal
Kahawai	Native New Zealand fish
Kaitiaki	Cultural Guardian
Karakia	Incantation, ritual chant, prayer
Kōhanga reo	Māori language early childhood education
Kōwhaiwhai	Painted or weaved designs that embellish ancestral houses
Māori	Native, natural, normal, ordinary, Indigenous person from New Zealand
Marae	Area surrounding an ancestral meeting house
Mātauranga	Knowledge
Ma Tika	Māori health television series
Matua	Parent
Maunga	Mountain
Papatūānuku	Earth Mother
Pepeha	Personal tribal introduction
Pūrākau	Oral narrative, tribal story, legend
Ranginui	Sky Father
Reo Māori	Māori language
Tangaroa	Deity, god, guardian, god of the ocean
Tāwhiri-mātea	Deity, god, guardian of weather forms; such as storms, the winds, and the rains
Te Pae Māhutonga	Māori health promotion model based on the southern cross, created by Sir Mason Durie
Te reo Māori me ōna tikanga	The Māori language and associated cultural practice(s)
Te Wānanga o Raukawa	Māori University
Te Whare Tapa Whā	Māori health model based on an ancestral house with four components, created by Sir Mason Durie
Te Wheke	Māori health model based on an octopus, created by Dr. Rangimarie Rose Pere

Tikanga	Protocol, customs, lore
Toi Tangata	National Māori public health provider in nutrition and physical activity
Tūhoe	Māori tribe of the North Island
Tūrangawaewae	A place to stand
Tukutuku	Ornamental weaving or lattice that embellish the walls of ancestral houses
Waka ama	Outrigger canoe, paddling
Wānanga	Workshop, study, training
Whai	Native New Zealand stingray
Whakapapa	Genealogical map, network, processes, connections
Whakairo	Traditional Māori carvings that embellish structural support beams of ancestral houses
Whare tipuna	Traditional ancestral house

Kanien'kéha Terms	
Haudenosaunee	People of the longhouse, Iroquois people, Six Nations Confederacy
Iethi'nisténha	My mother
Iethi'nisténha tsi ohóntsá:te	Mother Earth, my mother the earth
Ionkwatákarï:te	We are healthy, our body is well
Iotokénhti	Holy, in a Christian sense
Kaianere'kó:wa	Great Law of Peace, Haudenosaunee Constitution
Kahnawà:ke	On the rapids, First Nations reserve near Montreal, Canada
Kahnawakehró:non	The people of Kahnawà:ke
Kanien'kéha	Mohawk language
Kanien'kehá:ka	People of the Flint, Mohawk people and culture
Ka'nikonrí:io	Righteousness, a good mind
Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkhwa School	Local immersion Kanien'kéha school in Kahnawà:ke
Ka'satsténhsera	Power
Kateri School	Local Kahnawà:ke school administered in English
Niawen'kó:wa	Thank you very much
Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen	Words Before All Else, Thanksgiving Address
Ohóntsa	Earth, ground
Onkwehón:we	Natural, native, Indigenous, a real person living in spirit
Onkwehonwe'néha	Original ways of being

Satahkarí:te	Being in balance
Skén:nen	Peace, peacefulness
Skennen'kó:wa	Great, big peace
Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten	Our culture, our ways

Concentration Related Terms	
Cowessess	First Nation located in Saskatchewan, Canada
Dene	First Nation located across Arctic regions of Canada
First Nations	A distinct grouping of Indigenous peoples who occupy Canada
Indian	A term used to describe the native peoples of North America
Indigenous	A term referring to all native peoples from a certain state. I choose to capitalize this word
Ktunaxa	First Nation located in British Columbia, Canada
Mohawk	English term for the Kanien'kehá:ka people
Na-Cho Nyak Dun	First Nation located in Yukon Territory, Canada
Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc	First Nation located in British Columbia, Canada
Turtle Island	The Indigenous term for the land that is now considered North America
Wet'suwet'en	First Nation located in British Columbia, Canada

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Mihi

Ko Taupiri rāua ko Pirongia ngā maunga	Taupiri and Pirongia are the mountains
Ko Waikato te awa	Waikato is the river
Ko Tainui te waka	Tainui is the canoe
Ko Waikato te iwi	Waikato is the tribe
Ko Ngāti Māhanga rāua ko Ngāti Hauā ngā hapū	Ngāti Māhanga and Ngāti Hauā are the subtribes
Ko Aramiro rāua ko Rukumoana ngā marae	Aramiro and Rukumoana are the marae
Ko Te Riri rāua ko Maggy Tai Rakena ōku mātua	Te Riri and Maggy Tai Rakena are my parents
Nō reira, ko Hariata Tai Rakena ahau	Therefore, I am Hariata Tai Rakena

He Whakamaramatanga

Ko tēnei te kanohi ora e whakatinanahia i ngā wawata ō ngā mātua tīpuna, hei para i te huarahi mō ngā uri whakaheke. Heoi, hei whakamōhio atu, ahakoa ngā hononga whakapapa e whakahua ake nei, ko ngā atua, ko ngā tuhanga ā Ranginui rāua ko Papatūānuku te orokohanganga o ēnei āhuatanga. Ka riro iho mai ngā mōhiotanga, ngā māramatanga, meake nei, ngā mātauranga mai i te whakawhanaungatanga o te ira tangata ki te taiao, kia noho ai hei tikanga ā muri ake nei.

Proverb

It is commonplace to consider our actions that engage with and enrich our environment to be characteristic of genealogical legacy, legacy that is human-centred. In reality, it is actually the lands, the waters and the skies that unwaveringly guide our actions. Our natural environment has a profound impact on the way we think, how we interpret experiences, and thus, our daily actions which become our ways of knowing.

1.2 Background

I have started this thesis with my pepeha,[1] which is a personal recount of whakapapa,[2] or genealogy (Royal, 2007). Reciting whakapapa is customary practice at formal gatherings in a

[1] Pepeha: Personal tribal introduction. Phonetic spelling: pe-pe-hah.
[2] Whakapapa: Genealogical map, network, processes, connections. Phonetic spelling: fah-kah-pah-pah.

Māori[3] Indigenous context as a way to share knowledge and identify ourselves (Walker, 2017). This practice starts with the most prominent landmarks, such as mountains and waterways (Walker, 2017). From there, the practice continues to introduce the human connections to such places by beginning broadly with a founding ancestor or canoe that led the tribe's migration from their polynesian homelands to a distinct region in New Zealand (Royal, 2007). Next, further divisions are made into tribal and sub-tribal groupings of people, before introducing the extended family, the parents, and finally, the individual (Walker, 2017). This process allows for converging lines of connection to be identified between people who may have previously been strangers to one another. In a Māori worldview, a person is a physical representation of a long line of sucessful relationships and processes that occurred to propagate whakapapa (Walker, 2017). Beyond the relationship fostering purpose, the practice of reciting one's pepeha also connects to a deeper philosophical demonstration of the Māori worldview. Whereby, an interconnected network of knowledge and understanding draws on interpretations of the environment (Royal, 2007). This sentiment is expressed within the explanatory text in reo Māori (language), He Whakamaramatanga, which is imbued with cultural allusion and reference. Despite the profound depth provided in the Māori explanation, its meaning is lost in translation. It is so culturally specific that it goes beyond a universal understanding in English. Therefore, the English proverb was created to attempt to provide an equivalent sentiment to communicate to a broader audience.

1.2.1 Growing up in Aotearoa

As discussed in my pepeha, my tribal affiliations connect to the Waikato tribe which spans the heartland, in the central North Island of Aotearoa[4] (New Zealand). However, I grew up in Christchurch, in the South Island of New Zealand. I was fortunate to grow up in full immersion kōhanga reo (Māori language early childhood education), and bi-lingual primary schooling (English, Māori), which grounded my identity and an understanding of a Māori worldview. This allowed me to simultaneously straddle two worldviews, that of my paternal lineage, which is Māori, and of my maternal lineage, which is also from New Zealand but of English descent. I say fortunate because this opportunity was not afforded to my parents, nor my grandparents. For instance, although my paternal grandparents were fluently able to speak reo Māori and understood

[3] Māori: Native, natural, normal, ordinary, Indigenous person from New Zealand. Phonetic spelling: MAH-oh-ree.
[4] Aotearoa: New Zealand. Phonetic spelling: AH-o-teh-ah-ro-ah.

the culturally associated underpinnings of Waikato specific customs, the opportunity to go to school in their first language was not offered when they attended school.

My formative years in the education system supported me to develop and express myself in all aspects of my culturally centred responsibilities, along with my academic and extra-curricular interests. This experience supported me to develop my (bi-)culturally rooted identity and establish my own sense of tūrangawaewae, which can be understood as a place to stand (Royal, 2007). Unfortunately, this way of life was disrupted at secondary school. At that time, full immersion Māori medium schooling was limited, and bilingual schooling was not possible, thus I transitioned to an English language secondary school. This experience was my first individual introduction to institutional racism. My mother had to campaign for me to continue to learn reo Māori at an academically challenging level, which was three years ahead of my classmates. As I continued to succeed beyond the standards of the national secondary school reo Māori curriculum, my mother eventually had to campaign for me to continue to pursue my studies at university. Eventually, I was permitted to attend courses part-time, while completing high school from the age of 15. However, each step was met with resistance. Resistance for what was celebrated as a cultural entitlement and supported, in principle. However, in practice this class subject was resisted because it was not considered a universal requirement like mathematics or geography—according to non-Māori worldviews.

My bi-cultural upbringing has had a profound impact on my academic and professional pursuits. My bachelor's degree majored in reo Māori and Māori Indigenous studies. I continued to pursue this interest into graduate studies while also beginning a new pathway, turning my focus toward sport and exercise science (Kinesiology). Although I initially had no clear direction to combine these seemingly contrasting fields of study, the value of this foundation started to become evident during a student internship at Toi Tangata, the national Māori public health provider in nutrition and physical activity.

1.2.2 Professional Context – Toi Tangata

After my initial introduction to the New Zealand public health sector as an intern at Toi Tangata, I progressively worked myself into a permanent role in the training and development specialist's team. This team had an array of backgrounds in te reo Māori me ōna tikanga (the Māori language and associated cultural practices) through to nutrition and dietetics, physical activity,

exercise science and sport management. This field proved to be an ideal setting to utilize my combined academic background and capitalized on my strengths in a fulfilling way.

Toi Tangata is primarily funded through the New Zealand Ministry of Health to deliver professional workforce development training, develop health promotion resources, and advise government policy. Collectively, the organization seeks to create strength-based health approaches to the contemporary public health problems facing the New Zealand public, through a Māori worldview and engagement with mātauranga[5] Māori (knowledge).

To provide an understanding of what these initiatives looked like, I will describe training and development examples that were a part of my role responsibilities. One of the resource development projects that I engaged with includes Ma Tika, a contemporary Māori television series that offered a Māori perspective on holistic health. My specific role was to write and present the cooking segment of the show in reo Māori, utilizing food groups, recipes and health promotion messages that were targeted towards the Māori demographic. Another example includes developing content and then providing the delivery of a tertiary level Māori Health certificate, in collaboration with Te Wānanga o Raukawa, a Māori Indigenous tertiary institute.

Examples of training projects were more dynamic in nature, as they often sought to engage with specific iwi (tribal) health providers and regional health boards, to deliver professional development that was relevant to that particular region or community's needs. In saying that, much of the professional development was reciprocal in nature, as many grass-roots organizations were running sector leading programs. Therefore, at times Toi Tangata's role was to facilitate capacity building; allowing representatives from other regions and providers to learn from their leadership.

An example of this was a series of wānanga (workshops) that progressively moved around several districts in the North Island of New Zealand. Each wānanga was locally hosted with varying degrees of support from Toi Tangata, according to the host's capacity. Although each of these wānanga were unique, they could each be described as a type of endurance sport event, with various forms of road cycling, mountain biking, running or hiking, swimming, surfing, kayaking, and a traditional Polynesian form of paddling called waka ama. These wānanga were designed by local knowledge holders and elders to engage with the oral narratives, knowledge, and geographical areas of tribal significance.

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[5] Mātauranga: Knowledge. Phonetic spelling: MAH-toe-rah-ngah.

As my time progressed in the organization, a framework that progressively weaved its way through many of the Toi Tangata projects was the Atua Matua Māori Health Framework (AMMHF), created by Dr. Ihirangi Heke (Heke, n.d.). The framework and its context will be discussed with more detail in the literature review. This framework guided many of the wānanga described above, and the approach that Toi Tangata utilized to create resources. An example of the resource creation process that I contributed to the development of was a set of nature inspired swimming styles and strokes. Originally this process stemmed from an overrepresentation of Māori in drowning related statistics (Water Safety New Zealand, 2016). Therefore, Toi Tangata sought to engage with the broader Māori public health sector to address this issue. On one occasion the expertise of Dr. Heke was utilized to facilitate a session with several public health practitioners. The session was held at a beach and began with a discussion around whakapapa and mātauranga related to the ocean. From there, the participants engaged with the water space; swimming and treading water before being led to create movements that emulated water creatures. We had representations of dolphins, eels, kahawai (native fish), and whai (native stingray) emerge, among others, and these four animals became the swimming styles of focus for this project as it progressed. The organic orientation around these animals motivated deeper exploration into culturally pertinent stories around them, to gain insight into the traditional understandings and interpretations of their characteristics. At a later stage, we even took the strokes to a swimming laboratory to analyse their biomechanics.

Despite the powerful tool for engagement with mātauranga Māori that AMMHF provided, a limitation of the framework was identified. Much of the Māori public health sector struggled to go on and apply principles of AMMHF in their own practice without guidance. Therefore, a large amount of the momentum that was fostered at wānanga would be suspended until the next opportunity to engage with a Toi Tangata led event. This was counterproductive as it created a dependency on a national organization which thwarted regional capacity building and distracted from iwi-centric initiatives. Consequently, Toi Tangata sought to create resources that would enable the regions, and their respective communities to independently engage with the process, in a practical way. This is when the creation of a video series with three kaitiaki (cultural guardians) was proposed. The intention of the video series was to demonstrate an applied process of the AMMHF through four successive steps:

1. Share the whakapapa and pūrākau (oral narratives) that describe these kaitiaki.

2. Discuss the intent of the mātauranga Māori embedded within whakapapa and pūrākau.
3. Interpret the metaphor within whakapapa and pūrākau.
4. Demonstrate this understanding through physical activity applications.

These kaitiaki were selected from varying domains to include the land, skies, and waterways. The whai was chosen as the water domain representative. Involvement in this project creating the whai video, along with many other enriching experiences in my role at Toi Tangata will be drawn upon at various stages in this master's research project.

1.2.3 Relocating to Turtle Island

After relocating from Aotearoa to Turtle Island, specifically to Montreal, Canada, I sought to find a meaningful way to utilize my combined academic and professional experience in my new surroundings. Due to the specific nature of the work I engaged with at Toi Tangata, it proved difficult to find a transferable application of these skills in Canada. After a year of networking, I was finally introduced to the Kahnawà:ke[6] Schools Diabetes Prevention Project (KSDPP), a local First Nations community health organization. Eventually, I established a part-time role with this grassroots organization, which allowed me to observe their operations within the context of their Kanien'kehá:ka[7] (Mohawk) community. Through the course of this role, I was introduced to their research partners at various Quebec and Ontario based universities, leading to an introduction with my current supervisor at McGill University.

Although graduate research was not my originally intended objective, when discussing Toi Tangata's resource and training development practice from New Zealand, I learned how unique this approach I had come to accept as general practice was, and thus, a gap in the international Indigenous public health sector was identified. Very few of Toi Tangata's projects were a part of formal academic research. Therefore, once taken away from the culturally specific context, I struggled to describe why these projects were so beneficial to the communities involved, and subsequently the greater Māori public health sector in New Zealand. I learned how this approach was not common practice among Indigenous communities globally, which provided an avenue that I was compelled to pursue in Kahnawà:ke. Subsequently, I enrolled in a graduate program at McGill University while continuing to foster rapport with KSDPP and the broader community of

[6] Kahnawà:ke: On the rapids. First Nations reserve near Montreal, Canada. Phonetic spelling: GAH-nah-wah-ge.
[7] Kanien'kehá:ka: People of the Flint. Mohawk people and culture. Phonetic spelling: GAH-nee-en-GE-ha-ga.

Kahnawà:ke. Before presenting my formal research proposal, I spent over two years engaged with Kahnawakehró:non[8] (Kanien'kehá:ka community members from Kahnawà:ke); attending monthly organizational meetings for KSDPP's Community Advisory Board (CAB) and the Research Team (RT), along with other events and workshops, in addition to my role specific responsibilities. This timeline represents how a significant commitment is required to foster relationships with Indigenous communities, and that this process supersedes the formal requirements of a postgraduate degree program.

It is to be expected in research that involves marginalized communities that tensions will arise. Despite my personal resonance with my Māori Indigenous identity and my experience in the Māori Indigenous public health sector, in this research setting I am not from Kahnawà:ke and this was a major factor that obstructed my ability to readily identify with Kahnawakehró:non from Turtle Island. As such, I aimed to find common ground with community members as Onkwehón:we[9] people. The term Onkwehón:we is from the Kanien'kéha[10] language and it can be interpreted as Indigenous, as it refers to a natural, native, or real person (Hovey et al., 2014). Therefore, I used personal reflexive field notes to help me remain cognizant that tensions may arise as I situated myself within this setting. The purpose of this consideration was to allow me to utilize my experience in a meaningful way as a community outsider, while also pursuing a project that benefits the community themselves.

1.3 Research Purpose

This master's research project aims to gain a better understanding of the culturally meaningful elements involved in an Onkwehón:we approach to holistic health and wellbeing. Building upon this understanding, it explores how Onkwehón:we ways of knowing can be incorporated into valuable physical activity health resources for the community of Kahnawà:ke. In order to understand their influence on the primary research purpose, three research propositions were explored. These propositions include:

1. The influence of Kahnawà:ke's natural environment on the Kanien'kehá:ka culture.
2. Culturally driven physical activity can be used as a vehicle to engage in cultural practice.
3. Community voice can be strengthened through a co-design research process.

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[8] Kahnawakehró:non: The people of Kahnawà:ke. Phonetic spelling: GAH-nah-wah-ge-ɾo-non.
[9] Onkwehón:we: Natural, native, Indigenous. A real person living in spirit. Phonetic spelling: ONK-we-hon-we.
[10] Kanien'kéha: Mohawk language. Phonetic spelling: GAH-nee-en-GE-ha.

1.4 Thesis Structure

1.4.1 Literature Review

Chapter 2 is a review of literature that discusses the academic background and support for this research project. The literature review starts broadly by discussing an international network of Indigenous peoples which gather around an epistemological understanding of how Indigenous knowledge systems are constructed and their relevance within the global public health setting. The next section of this chapter examines the incorporation of Māori knowledge in the New Zealand health sector through the analysis of four Māori health models. Then, the bulk of the second chapter is an extensive dive into the Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project, an Indigenous health organization. This focuses on literature surrounding the organization's strengths, while also examining various limitations and suggested strategies to address these issues, which gives way to the rationale of this project.

1.4.2 Methodology

Chapter 3 provides structure to the research process that was involved in this study. It starts by providing the study purpose. Then, the paradigmatic commitments that have been adopted for this study, including both practical and philosophical considerations are offered. Next, a description of case study methodology and research propositions are described. A major part of this chapter discusses the study participants and the practical data collection methods represented in two phases: a contextual description, and knowledge holder conversations. Finally, the processes which follow the collection of data are discussed, including data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.4.3 Findings

The findings of this study are separated into three chapters as they address differing purposes; starting with philosophical concepts, a contextualization of socio-political factors pertinent to the case study setting in Kahnawà:ke, and a set of practical recommendations.

1.4.4 Indigeneity – Onkwehonwe'néha – Māoritanga

Chapter 4 presents the primary themes that emanated from the knowledge holder conversations, which uplift the importance of land, language, and culture from Indigenous perspectives. A significant amount of detail surrounds these philosophical themes as their relationship and influence permeate throughout the findings chapters. Then, the secondary themes

are introduced as they pertain to indigeneity. These include identity, a sense of belonging, and wellbeing, which centres on the spiritual component.

1.4.5 An Economic, Military and Political Powerhouse

Chapter 5 entails explanations and interpretations that are pertinent to the case-study setting; the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke. By stepping out of the operational level of the organization, this chapter offers valuable insight into the study's socio-political setting. The chapter describes the contextual features that influence Kanien'kehá:ka identity, and the implications of Kahnawà:ke's translated meaning of "on the rapids." The St. Lawrence Seaway is contextualized, along with other pervasive effects of colonization, including residential schools. Next, the thesis pivots toward community cultural strongholds and focuses on with the rites of passage, decolonization, and indigenizing practices. Finally, significant community teachings and traditions are depicted with the Kaianere'kó:wa, the clan system, and the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen.

1.4.6 Health Resources & Initiatives

Chapter 6 offers practical applications of the study, and intends to inform the development of health promotion resources and initiatives. This chapter presents three recommendations which facilitate the knowledge translation process with the community, and uphold the study's commitment to community-based participatory research. The first recommendation is a resource that introduces culturally pertinent traditions, through videos and books. Justifications for the creation of these resources along with necessary apprehensions to consider are offered. Next, the resources are placed within an applied setting, a practical workshop that promotes in-depth discussion and the opportunity for hands-on experience. Four factors that facilitate the practical experience are identified, and canoe paddling is utilized to demonstrate this recommendation's application. The last recommendation is a discussion model that offers a perspective of a system of cultural knowledge, with significant elements, and interconnected relationships. This model serves as a tool to stimulate meaningful conversation among Kahnawakehró:non.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Global Indigeneity

It is estimated that Indigenous people represent over 370 million people and are dispersed across 90 countries globally (United Nations Development Programme, 2019). Despite the shared experience of many Indigenous groups with colonization, the stronghold that binds the network of Indigenous peoples the world over is their innate understanding and connection with the lands, waters, skies, and fauna associated with the territories they occupy (Durie, 2004; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

According to Little Bear (2000), an Indigenous worldview—at least from the Indigenous nations of the plains of North America—considers all things in creation to be animate, to possess spirit, and to be in constant cyclical motion. He emphasises the importance of the interconnected relationships between entities and their processes. Furthermore, by observing the holistic cycles of the natural environment and everything within it, we are provided with an understanding of the unique patterns that are specific to time and place (weather patterns, ocean tides, animal migrations) (Little Bear, 2000). This sentiment is supported by Hawaiian scholars who discuss how environmental knowledge informs and is interpreted through cultural values (trust and social connection) and practices (genealogical chants) that are distinct to that location (Kame'eleihiwa, 1992; Kana'iaupuni & Malone, 2006).

Returning to the thread of Indigenous North American philosophy, a shift north-eastward offers a paralleled tradition. This refers to the collective First Nations that rest under the Haudenosaunee[11] (Iroquois) Confederacy mantle. The Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen[12] is a traditional Haudenosaunee practice that can be interpreted as the, "Words Before All Else" (King, 2007). This tradition acknowledges the influence that the natural environment contributes to the continuation of life and abundant health (King, 2007). This acknowledgement encapsulates everything from the animate and more tangible environmental features from the earth and plants that are used for shelter and sustenance; to the esoteric and intangible such as the creator, spiritual relatives and ancestors; and everything in between such as the winds, the sun, and the moon (King, 2007). The

[11] Haudenosaunee: People of the longhouse. Iroquois people, Six Nations Confederacy. Phonetic spelling: HO-dih-nuh-SHO-nee.
[12] Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen: Words Before All Else, Thanksgiving Address. Phonetic spelling: O-hen-do GU-ree-wah-DAIR-kwah.

Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is recited in a ritualistic manner to herald the beginning and end of events such as formal ceremonies, but also in informal settings to acknowledge everyday cycles like sunrise and sunset (Hovey et al., 2014). This unique cultural practice demonstrates how the Haudenosaunee worldview values a relational way of being, beyond interpersonal relationships (Hovey et al., 2014). This meaning is not unique to the Haudenosaunee community, but rather representative of a broader Indigenous worldview (Wilson, 2008). In summary, although there may be relative language and ideology characteristics with surrounding groups, each Indigenous community, tribe, and nation has its own unique way of knowing that reflects the environment in which the people involved reside.

In 1991, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) produced a report which examined the relationship between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, and the federal government of Canada (Doerr, 2015). The RCAP consulted with over 2,000 people in communities across Canada. This brief from Chief Harold Turner Swampy, of the Cree Tribal Council, depicts how the cultural principles of his First Nation guide their community's relationship with others and the environment:

> The Creator gave us life, inherent rights and laws which governed our relationship with nations and all peoples in the spirit of coexistence…. Our responsibilities to Mother Earth are the foundation of our spirituality, culture and traditions.... Our ancestors did not sign a real estate deal, as you cannot give away something you do not own. (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, p. 428)

This example demonstrates a key distinction between an Indigenous and a non-Indigenous worldview. According to Duran and Duran (1995), the Indigenous worldview places the individual as a part of the greater network of creation, and therefore, exploitation of natural resources is non-existent. In contrast, Durie (2004) argues how, irrelevant of the exact European origin, the colonizer assumed the right to a dominating position in their occupation of new territories across Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States. Along with this occupation came the deliberate objective to deconstruct native people's relationships with their way of life, including the natural environment, culture and language, and eventually health and wellbeing (Durie, 2004).

This intersection of contrasting worldviews is also observed between Indigenous and non-Indigenous approaches to health promotion. Non-Indigenous health promotion research primarily introduces a coupling of negative health statistics to a specific population group as a rationale.

This approach starts the conversation from the position of something lacking or missing. It emphasises a balance that is disturbed, rather than a system that is whole. This is a deficit approach which completely contradicts Indigenous concepts of holistic health and wellbeing. The next section will introduce a significant series of events which document the formal acknowledgement of and support for the incorporation of Indigenous ways of knowing into global public health policy and implementation strategy.

At the World Health Organization's (WHO) World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland in 1977, a commitment was made to the organization's primary objective through the "Health for All" strategy (World Health Organization [WHO], 1985). To provide more detail, this strategy refers to pursuing the realization of a global level of health. Moreover, this realization would see all people, across all nations being enabled to fully engage with and contribute to their social community and environment by the year 2000 (Mahler, 1988). Over a decade later in 1991, at the WHO's Third International Conference on Health Promotion in Sundsvall, Sweden, a call to action that stressed the importance of supportive environments for health was presented (WHO, 1991). In this call to action, one of the two required principles for 'Health for All' implementation proposals included Indigenous ways of knowing (WHO, 1991). Focus was drawn to the significant influential and interconnected relationship that Indigenous people have with their environment both culturally and spiritually (WHO, 1991). In addition, the WHO (1991) made reference to Indigenous people's foresight for future generations through sustainable development and everyday practices. This required principle was summarized with its acknowledgement of how Indigenous ways of knowing can provide valuable understanding that would be beneficial for the rest of the world (WHO, 1991).

2.2 Māori Health Models

Interestingly, Indigenous groups were engaging in strategic gatherings to discuss cultural revitalization, education, and health prior to the WHO's call to action. In New Zealand, Indigenous Māori were concerned with the mainstream health system and sought to communicate health models that could better suit their worldview (Durie, 1994a). An outcome of significance from a gathering held in 1982 was Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā unified theory of health (Durie, 1994a). The model depicts four interrelated components of emotional, spiritual, social, and physical wellbeing demonstrated through the four walls of the traditional Māori meeting house (Durie, 1994a). Upon reflection, this theory became the bastion of Māori health models and a

catalyst for the inclusion of holistic concepts in the New Zealand health system. A point of greater significance, however, was the facilitating effect that this model had on further developments. Advances that are worthy of mention include Te Wheke (Pere, 1991), Te Pae Māhutonga (Durie, 1999), and more recently the Atua Matua Māori Health Framework (Heke, n.d.). The strength of these models collectively is that they all harness the wealth of cultural metaphor and symbolism to express an Indigenous worldview (McNeill, 2009). Despite their divergent approaches to inform differing sectors such as primary healthcare (Rochford, 2004), public health strategy (Durie, 1999), and so on, they have additionally gone on to provide meaningful understanding that transcends their originally intended sectors. This binding feature further demonstrates how Indigenous philosophies that are embedded in traditional language, culture, and environmentally guided knowledge serve a valuable purpose for not only the Indigenous groups involved, but to the greater non-Indigenous public as well. Therefore, by proxy, considerations of Indigenous ways of knowing can serve to inform policy development and implementation.

To articulate the extension that each model provided, let us start with Rangimarie Rose Pere's Te Wheke (Pere, 1991). Pere sought to provide a greater cultural context situated around Māori philosophical principles by producing a uniquely Māori model (McNeill, 2009). In fact, her model is more specifically from a Tūhoe (Māori tribe) perspective, and it depicts a Māori worldview of family health, which is more appropriate in the socio-cultural context (Pere, 1991). Te Wheke is based upon a kaitiaki which is the octopus, with eight interconnected tenets represented through the tentacles that support the face and body of the being (Pere, 1991). This model extended the reach of Durie's model as it transcended a universal model of holistic health from a Māori perspective, and focused on values that primarily cater to a Māori population (McNeill, 2009).

Almost a decade later, Durie (1999) provided Te Pae Māhutonga, a supplementary model to serve a different purpose, to inform health promotion strategy. This term, Te Pae Māhutonga, is the name of a prominent constellation in the Southern Hemisphere that is more widely known as the Southern Cross (Durie, 1999). Durie discusses how this model draws upon the guidance that Polynesian voyagers obtained through following the star constellation in the navigation of the south Pacific Ocean. This model was generated as a metaphor for the guiding principles and associated responsibilities that the Ministry of Health uses to guide health promotion in New Zealand (Durie, 1999).

Finally, Heke's (n.d.) Atua Matua Māori Health Framework (AMMHF) takes a detail ladened approach to communicate the value and depth of understanding that can be gained through the applied investigation coupled with the interpretation of traditional Māori knowledge. More specifically, he discusses how traditional tribal knowledge is regionally distinct, and therefore, serves to benefit each region differently (Heke, n.d.). His model is expressed through the stratification of hierarchy and relativity as whakapapa, a term that can be referred to as a genealogical map or a web of connections in this context (Heke et al., 2019). A prominent feature of this model is its focus on understanding the natural environment, and that through this process, holistic health is fostered as a secondary outcome. This unconventional perspective serves to challenge Western models of health promotion strategy which is generally centred on individuals. An example of this model could be illustrated with the individual situated within a sphere of multiple inter-related factors, rather than at the top of a pyramid with the same factors assembled in hierarchical stratifications.

Each of the Māori models mentioned have extended the understanding of a Māori worldview within a space that had previously been bereft of significant contribution from non-Western health paradigms in New Zealand. For example, Te Whare Tapa Whā, Te Wheke and Te Pae Māhutonga are all referenced on the New Zealand Ministry of Health website, and an entire section is dedicated towards Māori health as a major population category (Ministry of Health, 2018). The leadership that New Zealand Māori have taken upon themselves to direct their own ways of knowing within the health system, and the corresponding acknowledgement that the New Zealand government has demonstrated towards these initiatives, is a valuable example that can benefit the global public health sector.

2.3 The Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project

In a similar vein, First Nations communities in Canada have also initiated Indigenous led campaigns to take control of the state of health within their communities. One community in particular, the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke, is a part of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy, located 20 kilometres south of Montreal in Quebec. This community established their own health organization in 1994, called the Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project. This sort of initiative was not particularly novel in Kahnawà:ke, community-based and community operated, education and health promotion had been in place since the 1960s (Kirmayer et al., 2012). However, the elders of the community specifically requested that action

be taken to directly address the concerning prevalence of type two diabetes in their community (Khayyat Kholghi et al., 2018). Therefore, KSDPP was established to deliver school and community programs that educate and promote healthy lifestyles through a focus on nutrition and physical activity (Macaulay et al., 1997). In addition, the organization assembled the KSDPP Community Advisory Board (CAB) to act as the self-determining conduit between the community and health related research that accompanied the initiatives.

KSDPP has a history of health promotion delivery in Kahnawà:ke for almost three decades and continues to deliver evidence-based initiatives in conjunction with tertiary research institutes and CAB today. As such, the organization has been perceived as a national leader in diabetes prevention and health promotion among Indigenous communities (Salmon, 2004). Due to this leadership, the organization has also received considerable academic interest. Researchers have paid particular interest to how the organizational initiatives function, and what has contributed to their efficacy in order to understand how these principles could be applied in a broader setting (Murdoch-Flowers, et al., 2017; Tremblay et al., 2018). Major findings from these articles highlight KSDPP's significant influence being due to its roots in cultural values and practice (Tremblay et al., 2018). Tremblay et al. (2018) highlight KSDPP's grounding in a Haudenosaunee understanding of holistic health, which encompasses emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. This concept is also discussed by Murdoch-Flowers et al. (2017), where the term Ionkwatákarï:te is presented as the Kanien'kéha term for "we are healthy." Another principle that is demonstrated in the forefront of KSDPP's approach is "Seven Generations Thinking." This Kanien'kehá:ka value emphasizes the importance of the current and future generations of children experiencing thriving wellness, and this is evident through the activities delivered in the community's schools (Macaulay et al., 2006).

Hovey et al. (2014) discuss an insightful understanding of the Kanien'kehá:ka worldview in their exploration of Indigenous perspectives of health and wellbeing, in a social-relational context. In their findings they go into detail about the concept of being Onkwehón:we, which can be interpreted as a natural, native, or real person living in spirit. This term is discussed as it is deeply intertwined with holistic wellbeing and a sense of identity, from a Haudenosaunee perspective. From here, Hovey and colleagues (2014) they include recounts from research participants who speak to the diminished levels of spiritual wellbeing in Kahnawà:ke. In particular, the Creator or the Great Spirit and a connection to a personal inner spirit is mentioned as a

conceptual repository for empowerment and inner peace. It continues with how these community members consider a lack of cultural understanding and the support required to pursue what it actually means to be Onkwehón:we as an issue that requires attention. To reinforce this point, they consider a focus on spiritual wellbeing as an essential component that supersedes all other wellness components. Hovey et al. (2014) challenge the health practitioner to incorporate this worldview into health promotion approaches with Indigenous communities. Their study strongly supports the community's introspective understanding of health and wellbeing that functions in relationship with their cultural worldview; the pursuit, the attainment and sustainability of being Onkwehón:we.

Other researchers have sought to evaluate KSDPP's initiative delivery. In 2018, the Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre Health Education Program for Diabetes Prevention was reviewed (Khayyat Kholghi, et al., 2018). One of the major findings of this review was a recommendation for an increase in specifically Kanien'kehá:ka cultural content in the program. Additionally, this report accentuates the community's desire to increase content situated around spiritual wellness, and their connection with the environment. In summary, this constructive criticism highlighted the community's desire to focus on the associated characteristics of Kanien'kehá:ka identity.

A similar reflection was expressed by participants and noted by Tremblay et al. (2018) in their study of the organization across certain time periods. In an era that spans approximately the last decade, KSDPP became such an established organization in the community, that as one participant was quoted "[KSDPP] has become a part of the social fabric of the community." This heralds a junction in KSDPP's perceived status in the community, as this acknowledged presence paradoxically created push back. As such, the health promotion messaging started to be interpreted as a form of policing (Tremblay et al., 2018). It could be suggested that this period indicated when transformation in KSDPP's content and delivery was required. The participants from Tremblay et al.'s (2018) study spoke to this, among other issues, and sought to provide recommendations that could facilitate KSDPP's successful transformation. One recommendation was to divert the focus of the organization towards wellness more generally, rather than diabetes prevention (Tremblay et al., 2018). Let us now take a moment to circle back to the sentiments discussed earlier in this literature review. The focus on diabetes prevention, rather than holistic health and wellbeing promotion is a deficit approach. It is therefore not an Indigenous approach, and certainly not representative of Kanien'kehá:ka values. In fact, health promotion that is detached from values

and meaning pertinent to an Indigenous community, but instead focused on promoting ‘health’ as a concept is not Indigenous at all.

Further suggestions include the discussion that the focus on children through the schools was an ineffective method to generate real change, as the broader family setting is not directly involved in this format (Tremblay et al., 2018). Ironically, this understanding had already been documented by Delormier et al. (2003), where they discuss health promotion that targets multiple generations as being more effective. This does not refer to programs targeted towards various generations in a siloed fashion though. Rather, it is an intergenerational approach, whereby groups are encouraged to share the experience together. As discussed by Delormier et al. (2003) the strength of this type of approach is that it addresses the diverse influences on behaviour and the broader socio-cultural environment.

Two final points worth mentioning are the nature of KSDPP’s initiative content development and the scope of the content dissemination (Tremblay et al., 2018). The former speaks to the reflection that much of the content was personality driven (Tremblay et al., 2018). In other words, the content was so interconnected with the personal characteristics of the staff members involved at the time, that it constrained the sustainability of the initiatives in the community. Consequently, in turbulent periods of funding which brought high staff turnover, effective content development and delivery was suspended (Tremblay et al., 2018). The latter refers to suggested recommendations that KSDPP broadens their vision, regarding local, national, and international implementation (Tremblay et al., 2018). It is important to mention that this opinion was discussed beyond academic publications, and more importantly, shared between KSDPP stakeholders (Tremblay et al., 2018). This point gives relevance to my own presence in the organizational research team, as an Indigenous Māori public health researcher from New Zealand. It could be assumed that the strength of the research project proposed is due to my professional experience in Indigenous health promotion initiatives in New Zealand. Rather, it is actually because of my experience and understanding of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga. For my own cultural grounding provides a facilitating dynamic for Kahnawakehró:non to engage with their own specific cultural knowledge. Interestingly, Delormier et al. (2003) reference another Māori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (1999) literature regarding knowledge development in Indigenous communities. Smith (1999) argues that the priority for Indigenous communities should be concerned with developing knowledge that primarily benefits the community involved in order to share this with other

communities. This brings the current research objective full circle within the context of the greater international Indigenous public health network.

One last discussion in the review of recent KSDPP related literature involves two major tenets of KSDPP's initiative: physical activity and nutrition. There is extensive research that is situated around food security and sovereignty in the community of Kahnawà:ke as a means to support a Kanien'kehá:ka specific form of health promotion (Delormier et al., 2018; Delormier & Marquis, 2019). One of the strengths of Delormier et al.'s (2018) article is their discussion of cultural knowledge that has been passed down through oral traditions. One story in particular, the creation story, describes the significance of corn, beans and squash and is used to demonstrate the in-depth understanding imbued within Kanien'kehá:ka cultural knowledge (Delormier et al., 2018). This story represents the sophisticated nature of the traditional Kanien'kehá:ka food system, which traditionally incorporated intergenerational and gendered roles with responsibilities that were governed by cosmological underpinnings. One of the overarching themes discussed in Delormier et al.'s (2018) article is the call for cultural revitalization to be drawn on as a method for health promotion content development. This theme resonates with Heke's (n.d.) AMMHF, as health becomes the secondary outcome of engagement with environmental and cultural knowledge. By comparison, the strong front that is provided by this nutritionally orientated research reveals a large imbalance with KSDPP's physical activity related research. In fact, less than a handful of articles were retrieved in a recent academic search from a seven-year period (2015 to 2021) that had any relevance to physical activity (Macridis et al., 2016; Macridis et al., 2019; Wasyliw, 2018; Wasyliw & Schaefer, 2020). Moreover, of the searchable articles found, they stemmed from just two study projects. One study by Wasyliw (2018) sought to develop an understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing pertinent to the community of Kahnawà:ke, to inform physical health education teacher education programming–a slightly removed focus from the health promotion mandate of KSDPP. However, Wasyliw's future directions section discussed intentions to co-compose a program with the community–including a physical activity component–which holds promise for KSDPP's future use. The second study explored the impact of a school travel planning initiative by investigating the possible barriers and facilitators to the establishment of an active travel to school program held at two Kahnawà:ke based primary schools (Macridis et al., 2016). Despite the benefits of the initiative to support an increase in overall physical activity

levels of the children at these schools, it could be argued that the actual activity itself fails to attenuate the recommendations discussed earlier.

In conclusion, the literature discussed in this review provides the rationale for a study that develops a physical activity health resource that incorporates an Indigenous way of knowing specific to the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke. As such, this study aims to gain a better understanding of the culturally meaningful elements involved in an Onkwehón:we approach to health and well-being, and to explore the incorporation of these elements into health resource development. To understand their influence on the study's purpose, the Kanien'kéha language, Kanien'kehá:ka values, and associated practices specific to Kahnawà:ke are studied. Additionally, the impact of Kahnawà:ke's geographical location and natural environment on the cultural values and practice are taken into account. As an additional influence on the study's purpose, this project documents how community voice shapes the co-design process of health resource development. The practical application of the resource intends to promote physical activity as a vehicle for holistic health and wellbeing. Finally, the intended output is that the knowledge gathered in this study informs the development of a resource that contributes to the Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project's health promotion programming and initiatives.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

This chapter begins by introducing the research project's purpose. Following that, the paradigm adopted for this research project is described, along with its associated conventions that can be progressively studied through three causative tenets: ontology, epistemology, and methodology. From there, further detail is provided discussing specific methodological considerations that influence the study in two forms, which take on practice and principle. In a practical sense, conversational methods are described. Then, critical theory, community-based participatory research, and Haudenosaunee consensus-based decision making are summarized to discuss their influence as guiding principles. The application of case study design is discussed next, along with three research propositions that drive the focus of the study and adhere to a case study design. Next, the project's two data collection methods: the contextual description, and knowledge holder conversation phases are covered with a description of the study's knowledge holder participants. Subsequently, the project's analysis strategy is outlined. Trustworthiness and ethical considerations are then described to conclude the major parts of this chapter. Last is an explanatory statement describing the renegotiation of the study as the project and the pandemic practically unfolded, since the study was originally proposed to be implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

3.1 Research Purpose

This study aims to gain a better understanding of the culturally meaningful elements of an Onkwehón:we approach to holistic health and wellbeing, according to the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke. Building upon this understanding, the study explores how to incorporate such elements into valuable physical activity health resources for the community.

3.2 Research Paradigms

A paradigm in a philosophical sense, is considered a way of thinking and knowing (Kuhn, 1962). With regard to education research, a paradigm can be considered as a worldview (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). In a basic sense, as Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) so succinctly put, "it is the lens through which a researcher looks at the world" (p. 26). Research paradigms can be progressively studied through three causative tenets: ontology, epistemology, and methodology. In the following section these tenets are introduced to identify their application in this study.

3.2.1 Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Indigenous ways of knowing are distinct from a Western understanding of knowledge. According to Little Bear (2000) and Henderson (2000), an Indigenous worldview is dynamic, cyclical, and ever evolving. Every nation, tribe, and community are distinct from another, yet the unifying component that provides the foundation of such ways of knowing is their philosophical underpinnings and interpretation of their natural environment (Little Bear, 2000).

Given the unique nature of Indigenous knowledge, this research project utilizes an Indigenous way of knowing that is specific to the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke. This First Nations community is situated 20-kilometers south of Montreal in Quebec, Canada, and their worldview is rooted in Haudenosaunee philosophy (Macaulay, et al., 1997). For the purpose of this research project, the term Onkwehón:we way of knowing is utilized. This term can be interpreted as a natural, native, or real person living in spirit from the Kanien'kéha language (Hovey et al., 2014). This term was introduced to me by an elder at a gathering in Kahnawà:ke. The elder shared how this is the term they identify with and prefer to use when they discuss themselves. He went on to share how the term Kanien'kehá:ka, meaning "People of the Flint", was a descriptive name created by other native communities to represent their community, rather than coming from within.

To complement this adopted paradigm, the ontological assumptions of this study also need to draw on a specific understanding from the community of Kahnawà:ke. The following three points are considered necessary ontological considerations in this paradigm; (a) the cultural worldview which includes the language and philosophical principles that are integrated with the environment; (b) the dynamic and ever-changing nature of these understandings; (c) and that the sum of all parts is much more powerful than any singular component (Cajete, 2000; Henderson, 2000; Little Bear, 2000). Therefore, this study has sought to incorporate the Kanien'kéha language, Kanien'kehá:ka values, and associated customs into all components of the research.

The epistemological assumptions that Battiste (1998) introduced as tribal epistemology can be demonstrated through the crux of Indigenous knowledge generation. That is to say, systems of Indigenous knowledge develop out of the observation of and with the interaction between social and environmental settings (Battiste, 1998). For example, knowledge originates from an understanding of weather patterns, interpreting oral traditions, and conceptualizing spiritual presence within ceremony (Cajete, 2000; Cardinal, 2001; Henderson, 2000; Kawagley, 2001).

Therefore, it was important that the knowledge generation and communication traditions incorporated in this study related to a form of knowledge creation already utilized in Kahnawà:ke.

Finally, let us discuss methodological frameworks. According to Ellen (1984) and Crotty (1998), methodology is a theoretically informed strategy and design of research which aids the selection of appropriate study methods that produce the desired form of data. According to Cardinal (2001), the methodologies best suited to Indigenous research are drawn from the traditional practices upheld by that very community. The following section discusses a methodology that aligns with an Onkwehón:we way of knowing.

3.3 Methodological Considerations

3.3.1 Conversational Methods

Using conversations in research aligns with broader Indigenous cultural practice, where knowledge was primarily passed down intergenerationally through oral tradition (Kovach, 2010). Furthermore, as Wilson (2001) explained, the sharing of stories through conversation is in line with the relational dynamic of Indigenous ways of knowing. Bishop (1999) talks to the nature of this storytelling in research; he describes it as a collaborative approach between the researcher and the participant(s), where the relationship is strengthened through the course of sharing stories. Kovach (2010) acknowledges the similarities between conversational methods utilized in Western qualitative research interviews and Indigenous research conversations. As a way to distinguish the difference between the two, Kovach introduced seven components that are considered imperative in Indigenous research; (a) discusses the adoption of an Indigenous paradigm and a tribally specific epistemology; (b) is relational; (c) is having a purpose, which is generally tied to a broader social construct; (d) having an aligned protocol; (e) is that the nature of the conversations are casual and undefined; (f) is that the conversations are an actual collaborative discussion, rather than a one-sided retelling; and finally, (g) is that the process is reflexive (Kovach, 2010). The difficulty of utilizing conversational methods in research with Indigenous communities is that the undefined nature of conversations can be a challenging initiation for novice researchers. For example, understanding when the conversation that may contribute to data collection begins and ends can be unclear. This is especially so for researchers who consider themselves as outsiders to the tribally specific epistemology adopted for the community research partners.

3.3.2 Critical Theory

It would be seemingly intuitive to incorporate some form of critical theory into research that involves a Māori Indigenous researcher from New Zealand, engaged with a First Nations community in Canada. For instance, Getty (2010) discusses post-colonial theory as an "initial theoretical choice" (p. 7) for research with Indigenous groups. Additionally, Schwandt (1997) adds to the literature through his description of the strength of critical theory traditions in social sciences. Schwandt argues that the strength comes through its ability to affect change by making people aware of contradicting belief systems that guide their behavior. Furthermore, considering the esteem of Māori academic researchers within the greater Indigenous network of critical theory, specifically situated in decolonizing methodologies (Smith, 1999), it would be presumed that this theory was at least considered. My position as the researcher in this study supports Grande (2000) and Smith's (2012) argument that the effects of colonization continue. Therefore, I have remained dedicated to supporting the self-determination of the Kanien'kehá:ka community engaged in this study, as recommended by Grande (2000) and Smith (2012). In part, this was realized by adopting their Onkwehón:we way of knowing, accompanied by the associated ontological and epistemological implications relative to the worldview of Kahnawakehró:non for the study design.

Grande (2000) and Smith (2012) call for contributions to decolonization by scholars within the Indigenous research space through intentional confrontation of the socio-political context created by colonization. Therefore, I prepared to respond to the impacts of colonization with discussion around sovereignty, decolonization, and cultural revitalization during the research conversations, and with relevant literature in the findings of this thesis. The position I took differs from some researchers who utilize critical theory, as I was not inclined to begin from an epistemological standpoint that wraps colonization around the experiences of the research participants. Rather, I began with an ontological commitment to experience, while keeping the colonial impacts in mind. In other words, by focusing research conversations on tenets of cultural strength, I supported the study participants to identify critical colonial factors that served to undermine these tenets for themselves. During our conversations, I could then follow the participant's lead as they went into depth.

3.3.3 Community-Based Participatory Research

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a research methodology that requires a genuine working relationship forged between community stakeholders and researchers, where

an equal standing is constant throughout the research process (Israel et al., 1998). This type of approach has been identified as valuable in research with Indigenous communities, along with other marginalized groups, as it situates the locus of control within the community (Smith, 2012); thus, providing further support to the community's self-determination, as previously discussed in the critical theory considerations. Rather than a practical process such as conversational methods, CBPR is a continuous process and principle that was upheld throughout this research project.

This gives way to an introduction of KSDPP's utilization of CBPR, which supports the aspirations of the community to promote healthy lifestyles, dating back to their establishment in response to requests made by community elders (Khayyat Kholghi et al., 2018). In practice, KSDPP utilizes a CBPR approach within their three organizational divisions: the Community Advisory Board (CAB), the intervention team, and the Research Team (RT) (Murdoch-Flowers et al., 2017). For example, researchers are required to adhere to community commitments that are clearly specified in the KSDPP Code of Research Ethics (CoRE) (KSDPP, 1997). KSDPP's CoRE was constructed to ensure the safety and collective objectives of the community are upheld by all research partners undertaking projects in Kahnawà:ke. The CoRE enables the community to uphold their own cultural responsibilities, values, and practices, such as Haudenosaunee Consensus-Based Decision Making–which is detailed next.

3.3.4 Haudenosaunee Consensus-Based Decision Making

The Haudenosaunee consensus-based decision making process is a traditional protocol that guides how the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke comes to consensus around topics (Horn-Miller, 2013). Horn-Miller describes the process as a longhouse protocol whereby, the collective is divided into smaller groups, that are usually representative of their clan system arrangements. Each division discusses their opinion on a matter and then chooses a representative to communicate that position to the other clans. From there, the other clans have an opportunity to contemplate their position on the subject more generally, and when it is their time to speak, they can respond and contribute to the discussion. Horn-Miller discusses how the meaning behind the process is that community governance reflects the will and welfare of the people. Accordingly, the goal of the process is to discern the best collective decision (Horn-Miller, 2013). This cultural practice, among others, is incorporated at monthly KSDPP RT and CAB meetings when matters require discussion and deliberation. This practice has influenced the course of this study and, most importantly, the self-determination of the community aspirations at these meetings.

Haudenosaunee consensus-based decision making, and community-based participatory research are methodological considerations that support one another within the case study setting. In fact, they have both been utilized across health promotion research and organizational operations in the community of Kahnawà:ke for some time. They serve to strengthen community voice by adhering to culturally specific forms of knowledge creation, relationality, and governance. Consequently, fortifying the community's self-determination. In due course, all of the methodological considerations in principle and in practice influenced the selection of case study methodology for this thesis. Although case study comes from a Western paradigm, the strength I recognized with the methodology was its ability to harness the paradigmatic commitments I intended for the study, situated in an Indigenous paradigm.

3.4 Case Study

A case study methodology was adopted for this project as it demonstrates a deliberate selection of the phenomenon to be studied. (Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Yin, 2003). The strength of a case study is that it allows researchers to understand the complexity of a phenomenon within its natural contextual setting (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). To provide more detail, this research utilizes an instrumental case study design as it facilitates the exploration and application of a theory (Stake, 1995). The instrumental case study does not revolve around the case itself; the case is of secondary interest (Stake, 1995). Rather, it facilitates the researcher to better understand the phenomenon of interest by providing an in-depth exploration of the setting, including the events that are commonplace within the process, and the context in which it is situated (Stake, 1995) —much like the Indigenous approach to holistic health.

To expand on the type of case study design in this project, a single holistic case study with a triangulation of the following data collection methods was utilized; one major data collection phase—i.e., knowledge holder conversations—that is supported by a contextual description phase. This feature is where the case study methodology really swings its weight, as it allows for the research project to benefit from the use of multiple methods (Evers & van Staa, 2010; Yin, 2009). Yin (2003) discussed the value here as providing "converging lines of inquiry", where conclusions that arise within the project are strengthened by coming from several types of information (p. 98).

Similar to other methodologies, the case study design is not without faults. A major criticism is that the specificity of a case may create difficulties when attempting to produce generalizations (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This gives rise to the use of propositions as they guide the

inquiry of the project (Yin, 1994). Therefore, it is not the population group that the case can speak to, but rather the propositions (Yin, 1994). Additionally, considering the contextual nature of this research project, exploring propositions which support the overarching research purpose become the major objectives, not the production of generalizations.

Another criticism discussed by Yin (2003), is that despite the richness offered within a case study design, the associated analysis techniques are arduous and underdeveloped. Although analysis is discussed in more depth in section 3.6, Evers and van Staa (2010) offer some helpful insight to mollify this challenge—which was continuously revisited throughout the analysis process. They encourage the researcher to strike a balance between creatively engaging with the data and strategically adhering to procedure (Evers & van Staa, 2010).

A final point of criticism is a bias towards verification of the novel phenomenon of interest, and therefore, the researcher may only collect evidence that supports the objective (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 1999). This form of bias was considered in the construction of the data collection methods for this study and consequently motivated the incorporation of the triangulation of methods. I acknowledge that case study is not without drawbacks as a methodology; however, it is the preferred methodology due to the attention to context offered in the building of a case, and the flexibility it allows for regarding methods of data collection and analysis.

3.4.1 Research Propositions

Case study propositions are developed from a combination of literature and researcher experience in the case setting, and they serve to support the overarching research purpose with statements that represent a distinct focus (Baxter & Jack, 2008). To understand their influence on a culturally meaningful approach to holistic health, the following propositions were adopted:

1. There is a significant influence of Kahnawà:ke's geographical location and natural environment on the Kanien'kéha language, Kanien'kehá:ka values, teachings and traditions.
2. Culturally driven physical activity can be used as a vehicle to engage in cultural practice.
3. Community voice can be strengthened through a co-design research process.

This research project is in partnership with the Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project and Kahnawakehró:non, local community members. As such, the knowledge shared in this project aims to inform the development of health promotion strategy and materials, contributing to the organization's operations within the community.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

3.5.1 Contextual Description Phase

As case studies focus attention on context, this phase of the thesis constructs a rich description of the contextual factors that influence the study, which include: the socio-political context in the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke, KSDPP as an organization, my experience as a Māori Indigenous health promotion practitioner, and the process of building relationships and my position in the community. The purpose of this phase is to provide insight into both sides of the research relationship, that of the community and my perspective as the researcher. It seeks to provide background information about the community that orients the reader with the setting of the study. Additionally, this method reveals the subtle changes that occur through the development and nurturing of a research relationship in CBPR with Indigenous communities. Furthermore, this phase attempts to communicate the dynamics of my emic position within broader Indigenous structures, and my simultaneous etic position within the community of focus. This contextual description phase predominately takes form in the literature review and the findings chapters of the thesis. In the literature review, it contributes toward the justification of the study. In the findings chapters, it offers descriptions of significant contextual information referenced in the knowledge holder conversations. As an additional overlay, reflexive anecdotes from significant junctions throughout the research process have been included to situate myself and foster transparency throughout my journey of meaningful engagement in Kahnawà:ke.

3.5.2 Study Participants

The KSDPP CAB facilitated recruitment in this phase through purposive sampling. I requested up to five knowledge holders from Kahnawà:ke, including a balance of genders and at least one elder and one educator, as key informants. The term educator was used as it denotes a knowledge holder who is engaged with youth, and that this may not necessarily be within a formal professional educative setting, but rather in a cultural role. In the end, three knowledge holders were recruited as key informant participants in the study.

Kanen'tó:kon[13] Hemlock, referred to as Kanen'tó:kon, is from the Bear Clan. He is a fluent Kanien'kéha speaker who previously worked in the community as a school teacher. He leads the rites of passage for male youth from Kahnawà:ke. He is actively involved with language

[13] Kanen'tó:kon: Knowledge holder study participant. Phonetic spelling: GAH-nah-DO-gon.

revitalization in the community and currently engaged with doctoral research in this field. Amelia Tekwatonti[14] McGregor, referred to as Tekwatonti, is from the Bear Clan. Although she does not consider herself an elder, she is perceived this way within her community. She provides cultural guidance and counsel on several community governance boards and research projects in the education and health sectors. Roy Joseph McGregor, referred to as Joe, is from the Wolf Clan. Joe serves as faith keeper in the community, which involves significant cultural and spiritual responsibilities. He also co-hosts a local Kahnawà:ke based radio show promoting Kanien'kéha language.

3.5.3 Knowledge Holder Conversation Phase

The knowledge holder conversation phase inquires into the local cultural knowledge situated around the major traditions and teachings pertinent to the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke with three knowledge holders. Two unstructured conversations were held with each key informant. Each of the first conversations began with the introduction of a vignette in the form of a video. The video is one of a three-part series of culturally relevant physical activity health resources that I contributed to developing, in partnership with a Māori Indigenous community in New Zealand. The vignette was used to inquire into similar cultural knowledge from Kahnawà:ke, to gain an understanding of the values and principles involved. The conversations were recorded and then later transcribed verbatim.

After the initial analysis of the first knowledge holder conversations, I constructed an account of the conversations by way of a brainstorm model with my interpretations of the conversations to be given back to the knowledge holders for review. This initial layer of analysis informed the subsequent conversation guides that I constructed for each knowledge holder. Then, I met with the knowledge holders a second time to gain further insight into the knowledge shared, and to ensure that they were comfortable with my interpretations. Next, we parsed out the model, we discussed questions linked to the propositions that were not covered in the first conversation, and co-constructed health resource and initiative recommendations. The second round of conversations were also recorded and later transcribed verbatim.

[14] Tekwatonti: Knowledge holder study participant. Phonetic spelling: DEG-wah-DOON-dee.

3.6 Data Analysis

Analysis of the data collected in the study was a progressive and on-going process throughout the course of the research project, yet it formally oriented around the knowledge holder conversations. The study utilized Yin's (2009) preferred case study analysis strategy, which concentrates on the research propositions, as they played a major role in guiding the project. From there, Stake's (1995) categorical aggregation and direct interpretation techniques were used to analyze and interpret the conversations. Categorical aggregation facilitates the focus on the exploration of multiple themes (e.g., cultural identity, language revitalization) in the data, with the intent of gaining an understanding of their meaning within the case (Creswell, 1998). In contrast, direct interpretation facilitates focus on distinct features or occurrences (e.g., an emotional pause in conversation) from the data to interpret their meaning (Creswell, 1998). As a supportive overlay to the strategy and techniques, interpretations have also relied upon a combination of my experience in the international Indigenous public health field, and reference to the literature—including evaluations of KSDPP's initiatives. In reality, despite these guiding analysis methods, the process mostly transpired abductively (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). That is, analysis oscillated between an inductive approach focusing on meaning grounded in the data, and a deductive approach drawing on theoretical understanding to convey meaning (Ryba et al., 2012). Ultimately, analysis of the entire project has comprised a combination of the knowledge holder conversations and the contextual description, in conjunction with my reflexive notes from throughout the study.

3.7 Trustworthiness

In addition to reflexive field notes as mentioned above, I have engaged two critical friends to reinforce the study's trustworthiness. These critical friends were recruited to be a part of the research committee to supervise this study. In addition to my academic supervisor overseeing this study, the two additional committee members were specifically chosen for their experience in the research phenomenon of interest. One is a Waikato (Māori) Indigenous physical activity health practitioner and researcher from New Zealand. The other is a Kanien'kehá:ka Indigenous dietetic health practitioner and researcher from Kahnawà:ke. Sparkes and Smith (2014), discuss the value of a critical friend as a soundboard to not only challenge the interpretations and conclusions that formulate throughout the study, but to also evaluate the researcher's level of reflexivity and the project's alignment with the study's paradigmatic assertions. Despite its value, a significant consideration is the positions of the critical friends in comparison to mine as a graduate level

researcher. As a novice researcher, it is likely that bias was present, as I sought to gain the approval of these people who essentially held a governing position in the study (Smith & McGannon, 2017).

Beyond the academically bound requirements, the KSDPP RT and CAB played a similar advisory role in this study. In accordance with the paradigmatic assertions mentioned earlier, the regular sharing of updates and inviting of guidance at monthly KSDPP RT and CAB meetings allowed me to uphold my commitment to working in partnership with the community involved. This partnership brings forth further conversation around rigor in qualitative research. Negotiating what rigorous work looked like, while simultaneously adhering to the paradigmatic commitments of this Indigenous centred study was complex. It is clear the methodological considerations involved—with CBPR and the practice of consensus-based decision making routinely upheld by KSDPP—serve to support rigor from a community standpoint; however, it does not necessarily withstand within a Western academic forum. This alone reinforces the utility of case study methodology, as the project's propositions and the triangulation of data collection and analysis methods were able to straddle elements that uphold trustworthiness in a Western sense and what represents valuable research according to the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke's tribally centred epistemology.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This study satisfied the description of minimal risk research (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2014, p. 23) as the participants' involvement in the research had no higher probability of harm than activities in their everyday life. The procedures utilized in the knowledge holder conversations covered cultural knowledge and practice that the participants were involved with on a regular basis. Considering the project's purpose, this was an acceptable level of risk.

As a research project in partnership with KSDPP, this study also adhered to the organization's Code of Research Ethics (KSDPP, 1997). This adherence to the code meant that I contributed to RT on a regular basis, through commitments such as engagement in monthly meetings, and contributions to other research projects, among other responsibilities. The RT oversees the relationship between researchers and CAB; however, despite RT's influential impact, CAB ultimately regulates all researcher involvement with community members from Kahnawà:ke. Therefore, this research project required ethical approval by the KSDPP CAB in addition to the formal institutional IRB approval. Moreover, the ethical commitments were not static once they were established for study approval. Rather, relational ethics continued throughout the project by

fostering rapport with KSDPP's stakeholders, Kahnawà:ke community organizations and individual members, as well as continuous learning and respect for their Onkwehón:we ways of knowing. CAB also takes responsibility for fostering the relationship between researchers and the wider community through the appointment of an ombudsperson. The ombudsperson's role is to have a comprehensive understanding of the study for the single purpose of providing support to community members involved with the study, should that need ever arise (KSDPP, 1997).

As a final point of discussion relating to ethics, the nature of the confidentiality considerations for the knowledge holders who participated in the research conversations differ from what is generally expected in academic research. As stipulated in the study's consent forms and in conversation before to any data was recorded, the participants were offered complete confidentiality by means of a pseudonym to represent their participation in the study and any identifiable organizations they may have referenced, however, it should be noted that all participants wished to be named in the thesis.

3.9 COVID-19 Related Implications

The COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns caused major disruptions to this study. The first major interference delayed the knowledge holder data collection phase, as this study's proposal had been approved in March 2020—in line with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns. The initial delay to this phase prolonged the start of the first round of research conversations, and subsequently created further delays for the second round of conversations as well. Ultimately this meant that the conversation phase, which had previously planned to take up to eight weeks, took over seven months with its completion in October 2020.

Further disruptions to the study were due to the fact that two of the knowledge holders are elders over seventy years of age and, therefore, considered a vulnerable population. Facilitating their participation was an involved process which relied upon their family members and KSDPP's ombudsperson. We took extra precautions to ensure the elders' safety and comfort in participating in the study as the pandemic unfolded. Unfortunately, the challenges brought forth by the pandemic led to the attrition of one of the elders in the second wave of conversations, as they had to be conducted online via video call.

The third pandemic related disruption to the study led to the removal of the third proposed data collection phase. This phase was supposed to be a physical activity session and subsequent talking circle with community youth and their families, the study's elders, and educator. This was

initially pushed back to the fall because the preceding research conversation phase had been delayed so substantially, but the resumption of in-person delivery at Kahnawà:ke's community schools was significantly disrupted, as they opted to switch their delivery to an online forum early on. Consequently, this phase was no longer feasible to carry out and was removed from the study.

Thesis Findings: Two-Parts Discussion, One-Part Results

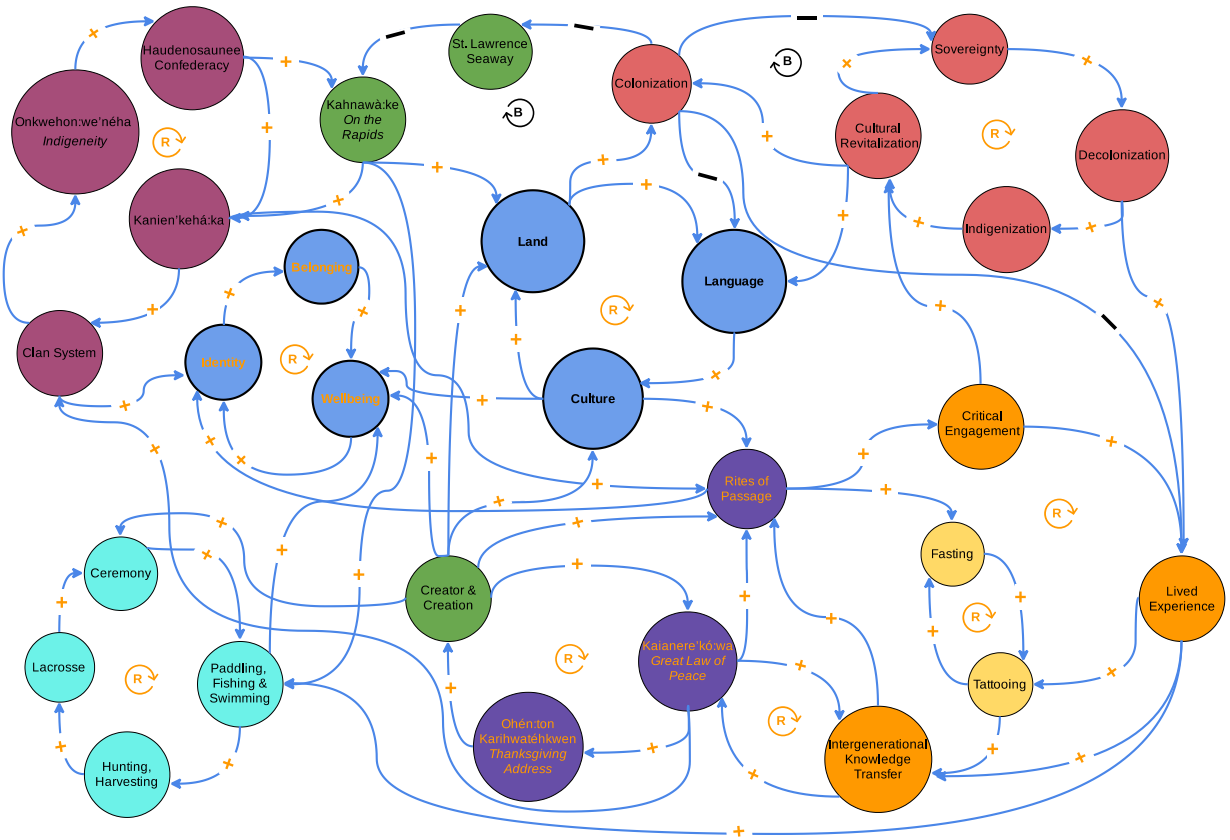
The findings of this study are seperated into the following three distinct chapters:

1. Indigeneity – Onkwehonwe'néha – Māoritanga.
2. Kahnawà:ke: An Economic, Military, and Political Powerhouse.
3. Health Resources & Initiatives.

The first two findings chapters resemble in-depth discussion sections; with clear links drawn between the study's data and relevant works not included in the literature review, along with an interweaving of my interpretations. Chapter 4 offers the major philosophical concepts of the study, through primary and secondary findings. Chapter 5 revolves around the case study setting, discussing the socio-political landscape of Kahnawà:ke. Chapter 6 takes after a results section; with a stronger voice given to data as co-constructed knowledge, addressing the practical purpose of the study, before re-linking to the study's justifications and research propositions.

Figure 1

Discussion Model



Discussion Model Explanation

This proposed model is offered to stimulate conversation of culturally significant elements among Kahnawakehró:non. It gives reference to their complex and interconnected relationships; demonstrating how linear descriptions of these dynamics are unrealistic, as there is no clear beginning or end. Rather, this model attempts to offer a perspective of a relational web as discussed by Kovach (2009), whereby, it offers insight into the way each element acts in relationship within a lattice of multiple components. The model is provided here to aid the reader's journey through the research findings as certain concepts drop in and out of the discussion several times. This model is a product of the research conversations and contributes to the study's three practical recommendations. Further detail about its origin and how to interpret it is offered in Chapter 6.

Chapter 4: Indigeneity – Onkwehonwe'néha – Māoritanga

This chapter takes up the major themes that were discussed in the knowledge holder conversations around the importance of land, language and culture. The discussion of the primary findings describes the knowledge holders' perspectives of the interconnected nature of—and the relationships between—these components. From there, the secondary themes are introduced as they pertain to indigeneity. These themes are Indigenous understandings of identity, a sense of belonging, and wellbeing, with emphasis placed on the spiritual component.

Chapter 4 is presented as the first findings chapter for reasons that have multiple layers. The first and perhaps most significant layer is the offering of major concepts that created rich discussion with the study's knowledge holders, as I interpreted them. The reason they were highlighted before the case study setting and the practical chapters is the insight they offer into an intricate and culturally pertinent Indigenous world view, which serves as a platform of understanding for the proceeding chapters. Where possible, examples have been utilized to demonstrate the practical applications of such culturally rooted traditions and ideologies.

The second layer of findings seek to serve a broader network of Indigenous focused audiences, such as Indigenous communities searching for understanding of comparative examples to the challenges they face, both internally and externally. Additionally, non-Indigenous researchers and practitioners who strive to better understand the communities they engage with could benefit from the findings. This chapter intends to assist the communication of complex Indigenous concepts to governing bodies such as policy makers and funding evaluators where equivalent terms are non-existent in a non-Indigenous setting. Furthermore, it contextualizes the importance Indigenous people put on culturally pertinent elements (i.e., native languages) in health promotion strategy and programming, as they can often be considered as irrelevant to funders evaluating physical activity program proposals.

The final layer influencing this chapter is a portrayal of the profound value and insight that can be derived from meaningful cultural exchange among differing Indigenous groups. The promotion of exchange allows for cultural nuances to be appreciated and for strengths to be highlighted, where current practice often draws comparison between Indigenous and non-Indigenous models and thus yields a focus on shortcomings.

4.1 Indigeneity

"…Onkwehón:we refers to all Indigenous people, because the literal translation to that word is that it's the real people or the original people" (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020). Expression of indigeneity in my experience refers to being Māori, or native and in relationship with a specific place, and this perspective is where common ground was found with all of the knowledge holders in this study. In fact, they each offered further detail around their understanding of the Kanien'kéha term, Onkwehón:we, to extend the conversation. They described how being Onkwehón:we refers to the natural world people, to the real people, to the original people of a certain place. To them, the term depicts a group of people having a connection to the land and the culture associated with that place. Therefore, the Kanien'kehá:ka First Nation of Kahnawà:ke in Canada are Onkwehón:we, just as the Ngāti Māhanga sub-tribe of Aramiro in the Waikato region of New Zealand are Onkwehón:we. Although each term is not an exact English translation for indigeneity, the Kanien'kéha and Māori titles of this section, Onkwehonwe'néha and Māoritanga, refer to an Onkwehón:we way of life, which will be detailed in this chapter.

The major arc of the collection of conversations with each knowledge holder continually revisited the importance of land, language and culture (i.e., a tribally centred epistemology). These three anchors allowed us to discuss the land's influence on language, which articulates a verbal expression of cultural understanding that, in turn, guides a person's interaction with the land. Thus, as Kanen'tó:kon explained, the relationship between these anchors are holistically interconnected:

> …cultural knowledge can mean a whole lot of things, but cultural knowledge is directly connected to land and place. The culture is the land. The culture is the place that we're living in, right? And so, when we're looking at the land, I've heard people say that our language is a language of the land. So, a lot of things that we do, there's a connection back to the land. And that could be philosophical, it could be a cultural teaching. For us, that's what we say, "it's a language of the land. It's interconnected to the land." Then, how we speak about the land, that shapes our thinking. It shapes our identity. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

Kanen'tó:kon reinforces the ubiquitous and interweaving nature of these fundamental components of indigeneity. Although a discussion around one can never be entirely divorced from the other two terms, as outlined in the model, the next section progressively focuses on one area at a time; from land, to language, and then finally on to culture to explore the depth they each represent.

4.1.1 Land

An Indigenous perspective of the land's importance transcends beyond a repository of sustenance and shelter, it depicts an active and engaged relationship between people and the natural environment. In this perspective, people are consciously synchronized with their ecosystem, they strive to harmonize with creation at every level, which is both practical and in spirit (Cajete, 1994; Cooper et al., 2019). This relationship informs cultural understandings particular to place, such as the geographical features and seasonal cycles of a region:

> So, that knowledge they had, it was deeply connected in terms of place, of the land base, of the knowledge. Like, even knowing when the animals were migrating and when certain medicines would be out. So, all of these interconnected things–it was all in the language. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

Later, Kanen'tó:kon reinforced this point with a story about early contact between Kanien'kehá:ka and Europeans settlers; whereby, upon request for geographical directions, the Europeans were astounded by the accuracy and detail in the directions offered by the Kanien'kehá:ka–all without reference to notes or topographical maps.

A system of knowledge is encoded in land and in language, so when an external influence disrupts the vital connection with land, other parts of the interconnected web start to unravel:

> …when you disconnect yourself from the land, it also disconnects from the knowledge of what's on the land. You know, the land is a living thing, right? And so, when you're looking at it from that way, the language to describe these things from our perspective was a really key and important factor to having that connection intact. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

The disturbance depicted in the quote demonstrates the harmonized relationship between the environment's ecosystem and its inhabitants; this relationship is more complex than simply access to resources; it underpins the philosophical understandings of a way of life.

It is within the importance placed on this relationship with the land that a stark contrast is drawn between the cultural world view of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples:

> …if we begin to take that European approach, or a Westerner approach, or an economic approach, thinking of it in those terms, then the way we look and talk about the land changes. Even in the language, like in our language, when we say the earth, we could just merely say Ohóntsa, and leave out the part that says, Iethi'nisténha, which calls it our

> mother. If we take that notion out—that it's our mother—then it starts to change the language, it starts to change the thinking, it starts to change the way we view the land. So, that cultural knowledge is really important, why we say the things we say about places, about the land. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

This reinforces how language is a vital tool for communicating cultural understanding, but if the cultural context is removed, the meaning behind the language used shifts. Interestingly, this passage suggests that when land is considered a commodity, the potential value of that land actually diminishes. It criticises a preoccupation with deriving profit from the land.

A final thread regarding a relationship with land, from an Indigenous perspective, discusses the importance of facilitating this relationship for younger generations:

> …it's always really important, to actually go to the places being talked about. Whether it's historic, whether it's a cultural story, to be at that place, that helps shape and form the experience and it also gives the learner that real connection. It gives them more of that connection to not just that place, but their place in that place. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

Creating a personal connection to land enables people to understand the contextual setting that influenced the oral narratives and traditions pertinent to a certain place. It also fosters a connection between younger generations and former generations who shared the same piece of land, generations and even centuries apart.

4.1.2 Language

The significance of language is inseparably tied to the cultural continuity of Indigenous communities, as oral narratives traditionally represented the means to pass on cultural teachings and traditions (Cooper et al., 2019). According to Auger (2016), cultural continuity is a significant determinant toward the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples, and intergenerational knowledge transfer is the major mechanism for its maintenance and transmission. According to Tekwatonti, the Kanien'kéha language is fundamental in their Kanien'kehá:ka sense of identity, "Our language identifies us, it's the root of who we are, it tells us how we conduct ourselves with each other" (Tekwatonti, personal communication, June 15, 2020). My conversations with Tekwatonti often returned to discuss her love for her Kanien'kéha language. She shared several terms with me to demonstrate the beautiful sentiment that is carried through the language. For example, the term skennen'kó:wa can be understood as the great peace in a translation removed

from its cultural setting, but to her, it refers to "always traveling with peace, in your heart but also in your mind" (Tekwatonti, personal communication, June 15, 2020). She made frequent reference to the state of the Kanien'kéha language in Kahnawà:ke today, and felt sorrow due to the number of community members who do not know or appreciate the poetic eloquence conveyed within the language. Joe also resonated with the sorrow felt towards a lost language that is so pivotal in depicting their cultural worldview.

Kanen'tó:kon provided further contextual insight to the current state of the language revitalization movement in Kahnawà:ke. He spoke of how his parents' generation recognized the significance of their language, and how they supported his siblings to be brought up in a bilingual (i.e., Kanien'kéha and English) and culturally grounded setting which was steeped in longhouse protocols. He offered a powerful reflection on the generational shift that occurred as he grew up; although previous generations were aware that something was missing, they were not able to understand or foresee what it was because they did not have the language ability to identify it. The language revitalization movement showed the community that language learning is not the destination, but rather the key portal into a cultural worldview.

> …they started to see it more and more that language isn't just the means of speaking words to one another, it's your way of thinking, it's your way of viewing the world. And so, if we lost our language, we would have lost our way that our ancestors viewed the world and how key and important that was for the continuation of who we are as Kanien'kehá:ka. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

The trials of language revitalization efforts reinforce the idiom that "hindsight is 20/20," as a recent review of Kanien'kéha language revitalization initiatives identified several limitations to the services provided in their language programs despite the overall positive shift toward language acquisition (Gomashie, 2019). Ultimately, illuminative insights strengthened the bond between language and culture, as successful students in the language programs drew connections between the linguistic content they were learning and its application in cultural traditions, such as ceremony and the carrying out of traditions (Gomashie, 2019; Richards & Kanatawakhon-Maracle, 2002).

4.1.3 Culture

Culture was deliberately chosen as the title of this theme as it encapsulates a universal understanding that a broad audience can relate. Furthermore, this term follows the nomenclature shared in the research conversations with knowledge holders. Other terms that were also used

when discussing relative topics include a cultural worldview, cultural knowledge, and teachings and traditions. In a broader sense, however, other common terms such as ways of knowing, and knowledge systems may have been better suited to articulate the intended meaning of certain discussion points. Therefore, when making reference to research conversations, I employ the terms the knowledge holders used as much as possible. This consideration adheres to the primary intended audience of this research; Kahnawakehró:non, which includes the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke at large, in addition to KSDPP.

In a research sense, however, this chapter more readily reflects Kovach's (2009) discussion of an Indigenous epistemology that is tribally centred. Specifically, this is an Indigenous epistemology uniquely pertinent to the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke. Therefore, reference to culture in this chapter incorporates Kovach's depiction of tribally centred Indigenous knowledge that is deeply entrenched within their unique philosophical underpinnings, as "tribal knowledge is pragmatic and ceremonial, physical and metaphysical. Indigenous cultures have sophisticated and complex cultural practices to access that which comes from both the ordinary and the extraordinary" (Kovach, 2009, p.56).

Joe shared his belief that every culture, Indigenous or non-Indigenous, has their own understanding of cosmology that was passed on through stories and goes on to inform their worldview. He argued that because each creation story differs, each story deserves respect in its own right, and that a community must first respect themselves and their own cosmological understanding in order to respect others. In recent times, the collective peoples of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy have integrated the Kaianere'kó:wa[15] (Great Law of Peace) as a foundation of their culture, as discussed by Tekwatonti:

> …we are given the Great Law, that's what roots us. We have certain stories in our culture that have been passed along. We identify ourselves in those ways, based on the stories that we know and we've been told. (Tekwatonti, personal communication, June 15, 2020)

I resonate with this thread as I reflect upon the whakairo (carvings), the kōwhaiwhai (painted designs) and tukutuku panels (ornamental weaving) that embellish our whare tipuna (traditional ancestral houses) in Aotearoa. Each of these art forms carry designs and themes that convey meaning. That is, culturally pertinent meaning is embedded within these art forms which facilitate

[15] Kaianere'kó:wa: Great Law of Peace, Haudenosaunee Constitution. Phonetic spelling: GAH-ye-ah-ne-ɾe-GO-wah.

story telling. The art forms serve as illustrations for the recounting of tribally significant stories, stories that pertain to specific regions and the feats that founding ancestors had to overcome in to establish each settlement. In both settings, we see stories represent a significant mechanism to propagate Indigenous historical and cultural narratives. Further detail which outlines the origin and primary principles of the Kaianere'kó:wa is picked up again in Chapter 5, which revolves around the case study setting in Kahnawà:ke.

Kanen'tó:kon shared how the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke have always had a cultural worldview, and that this governs their relationships in all forms, from interpersonal relationships, to their relationship with the physical environment. This notion mirrors Kovach's depiction of Indigenous epistemologies, as they "live within a relational web, and all aspects of them must be understood from that vantage point" (Kovach, 2009, p. 57). Unfortunately, colonization played a strong role in disrupting the continuity of this fundamental aspect of their culture:

> …the cultural world view, the means with which our people have always viewed the world, going back since time immemorial. How that shaped our ancestors and how they engaged with each other, engaged with the natural world, passed on skills to the next generation, but because of colonization, that had a lot of impacts on that ability, right? To pass that on. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

Colonization has undermined Indigenous cultures profoundly, as it sought to fragment components that are inextricably connected (e.g., language and ceremony) into individually siloed components devoid of relationship. Ironically, Indigenous knowledge systems are starting to be referenced to address contemporary issues, such as climate change as Kanen'tó:kon introduces below:

> …it's interesting when we look at the bigger picture, because Western civilization has brought us to the tipping point that we are right now; with the environment, you know, where we're in this state of like, people don't know what the next fifty years are gonna look like. And you're hearing from scientists, you're hearing from "learned" people, who are saying that a lot of these answers are lying with Indigenous peoples, Indigenous knowledge. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

This recent shift that actively seeks to employ Indigenous knowledge systems can positively support cultural revitalization movements and instigate a decolonizing process, but it can also become an appropriation of Indigenous knowledge. As such, while the shift is generally positive, the exploration of Indigenous knowledge can bring forth tensions among Indigenous groups:

> …that's part of our culture, that's part of our history. When people think about traditions and when they think about culture, a lot of times, their mind goes back to those ancient times, those old stories. Those are important, those are critical and those things help shape our world view and our belief system in so many ways, but we also have to look at how these ones within our most recent history carry that forward and brought that alive. Because when we think about that, one of the things that even amongst Indigenous peoples through colonization, we start to think of traditions as something as being in the past. Something that "we used to do. Well, that was nice when they used to do that." Today, it's trying to prevent ourselves from taking a Western approach and slapping feathers on it. You know, having a cookie cutter type of thing happen. Where, "okay, well this cultural thing fits into this Western context or let's do a land acknowledgement and that'll help, that'll fix things." (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

Noteworthy points of tension highlighted here by Kanen'tó:kon include the flourishing nature of culture, for it is not fixed or stagnant, it continues to evolve. Thus, recent history influences culture and is as relevant as the long held historical underpinnings from the past. Another significant tension highlighted above is how culture should not merely sit as an ornamental embellishment. Culture is a way of life, a worldview that informs language and a rationale for cultural practice. As such, decolonizing practices oblige Indigenous peoples to continually reflect on and critically engage with the intent of the cultural knowledge they maintain.

In sum, now more than ever, I feel certain that a definitive definition of indigeneity cannot and should not exist. I have gained a sense of solace learning of the similarities between the perspective of the Kanien'kehá:ka knowledge holders and my own conceptualizations as Māori. Land, language and culture function in partnership, as a foundation that upholds indigeneity. While each component is vitally important and in reciprocal relationship with the other two, culture (i.e., tribally centred epistemology) has surfaced as a major binding actor in this concept, in my interpretation. As depicted in Figure 2, it appears as though combinations of these components culminate as culture, they strengthen culture and in turn, culture responds to each component.

Figure 2

Indigeneity: Bonded by Land, Language and Culture

During my conceptualization of the importance of land, language and culture, and their influence on indigeneity, identity presented as an additional factor that continually dropped in and out of knowledge holder conversations. Identity challenges the model depicted in Figure 2 because depictions of a strong sense of cultural grounding, and a robust sense of identity were described in a similar way. For instance, as a closing statement regarding her understanding of cultural knowledge, Tekwatonti shared:

> That intuition is there. That instinct is there. And where we get it from, we don't know. We don't question it. We don't analyse it. We just know it's there. Just like you know, yourself, where you come from, in your culture and your knowledge. You know there's certain things that are there and nobody's going to change it for you. (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020)

Therein lies an example of how, on multiple occasions, I had to take time and deeply reflect on the meaning within the key threads in Tekwatonti's conversations. Yet, with identity I found that the further I sought to analyse and interpret the words shared, the further the lines of meaning in this subject started to blur. With a resolute determination to do this complex concept justice, I sought understanding from related literature. From the outset, I discovered Indigenous identity politics to be forcefully contentious (Weaver, 2001). In fact, Weaver offers wise counsel to those of us who are on the brink of diving deep into the subject matter, "the topic of Indigenous identity opens a

Pandora's box of possibilities and to try to address them all would mean doing justice to none" (Weaver, 2001, p. 240). As such, I turned to engage with New Zealand situated, and Māori oriented identity scholarship as I felt positioned to only express a perspective from my own cultural point of view. This resulted–in an indirect way–in an exploration that greatly supported me to reflect on the Kanien'kehá:ka expressions of identity shared by the knowledge holders.

4.2 Influencing Indigeneity

4.2.1 Identity

Identity is a social phenomenon that is formed and continues to be reformed by many factors, including but not limited to culture, education, race and ethnicity, gender, location, religion and politics (Frederickson, 1995; Harris et al., 1995; Moeke-Pickering, 1996; Peroff, 1997). Much like indigeneity, identity is multifaceted, and as Harris et al. (1995, as cited in Moeke-Pickering, 1996) discuss, it manifests in a way that informs an individual's sense of self, the nature of their social interactions, as well as the interplay between and among social systems on a larger scale.

With regard to Māori identity in particular, Moeke-Pickering (1996) offers a comprehensive review of literature that focuses on the subject matter. Within her review, two major tenets were presented as fundamental to the concept: tribal structures and descent, and cultural practices. Tribal structures and descent refers to one's direct link (i.e., parent, grandparent, great grandparent) to a Māori ancestor whom was connected to a specific tribal region (Moeke-Pickering, 1996). In other words, whakapapa provides a major rationale for understanding tribal identity and situating one's position; both ecologically and through the stratification of kinship groups. Likewise, the prominence of tribal lands within this conceptualization of Māori identity cannot be overlooked. As a collective, Māori tribes maintained an intimate connection with the major geographical features within their territories; mountains, rivers, and lakes (Moeke-Pickering, 1996; Walker, 1989). To further interweave these inseparable components, let me redirect your attention to my pepeha, which is shared in the introduction of this thesis. The order of precedence provides a significant insight into just how interwoven the natural environment is with tribal identity; for, the acknowledgement of geographical features supersede the convergence of human strata from my founding canoe to my major tribal affiliations, and my immediate family.

When asked what it means to be Kanien'kehá:ka, Kanen'tó:kon echoed several of the same arguments around identity in our conversations. He shared how being from Kahnawà:ke, or

belonging to either the bear, wolf or turtle clan were examples of a multitude of factors that influence their identity. One major theme he shared was the responsibility involved with honouring a legacy passed down by their ancestors, and the potential that a strong sense of identity provides for future generations:

> …it's knowing that we were born into a really proud history that we had had. Looking back on all the generations that came before us and the things that they had done, we're the inheritors of that knowledge, we're the inheritors of that experience. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

Kanen'tó:kon compels the Kanien'kehá:ka to harness their identity as a stronghold that straddles the past and the future. To me, this is a call to acknowledge the legacies inherited from their ancestors and to extend their cultural practices to the future. Cultural practices, in this setting, resemble the tribally centred Indigenous epistemologies mentioned earlier; they encompass traditions, protocols and customs, language, a worldview, and a relationship with the natural environment (Broughton, 1993; Rangihau, 1977). Moeke-Pickering (1996) provides a succinct description, as she depicts cultural practices as, "based on a shared system of understanding that a group deems to be important and meaningful to them" (Moeke-Pickering, 1996, p. 3).

With a shift in focus toward instilling cultural practices within younger generations, Parata (1990) and Karetu (1990) offer useful considerations; they advocate for an encultured upbringing where youth are able to observe fundamental traditions and values that are characteristic of a tribally specific rite of passage. Kanen'tó:kon extends this discussion with several features that support a Kanien'kehá:ka sense of identity, that slightly differ from the Māori oriented literature:

> …for me it's not just having our youth be culturally grounded, it's having them really be politically grounded and knowing what it is to be Kanien'kehá:ka. That language and culture isn't just an ornamental thing that we use to be Indian or to be Mohawk, at certain times. It's part of who we are in our everyday. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

This passage is profound as it describes how, in addition to the application of deep culturally centred values and practices, identity is formulated in everyday settings such as taking a deep breath in the forest or the fostering of relationships. Thus, identity is not an externally attached component of our sense of self, it is holistically ingrained within all of our being.

Respected Kanien’kehá:ka scholar from Kahnawà:ke, Kehente Horn-Miller, captures her depiction of her own identity in the introduction of her master’s thesis, which revolved around political movements that strengthened the community’s sense of a unified identity:

> What makes me Kanien’kehá:ka is based in my understanding of and relationship to the natural world. As there are no books to tell me what a Kanien’kehá:ka is, only oral tradition and guidance from my elders, I have had to spend many years nurturing what I inherited from my ancestors. No one can tell me how to think or how to view the world. Only proper nurturing and strategic guidance have been my allies in this personal quest for understanding. Therefore many of the conclusions are based in the philosophy and teachings of my people. (Horn-Miller, 2003, p. 2)

The extensive foundation that sustains identity depicted here is not without forewarning, however, as being Indigenous comes with the constant confrontation of tension. Kanen'tó:kon alludes to political fortitude, in particular, as a prerequisite to fully being Kanien’kehá:ka, for that also entails the support of political movements for the community’s collective betterment:

> …it helps shape those political movements that we’re going to continue to make and the pushes and need be. They have to understand that it’s the more Kanien’kehá:ka, the more Haudenosaunee they want to be, the more of a struggle they’re gonna have. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

Regretfully, I recognize the dissonance Kanen'tó:kon presents as I reflect on my Māori identity in Aotearoa and more broadly as an Indigenous person internationally. In spite of that, I am able to appease this burden when I reflect on recent tribally centred political movements which gained support from the Indigenous network on national and international scales. As an additional overlay, Indigenous researchers have discussed this dissonance; encompassed in the Hawaiian term kuleana, which depicts the dual responsibility and privilege to take action which comes with learning cultural knowledge (Cooper et al., 2019).

Before the impact of COVID-19 was sweeping the globe in the early months of 2020, different Indigenous groups across Canada stood in solidarity with the Wet’suwet’en Nation from British Columbia who were protesting the Coastal GasLink pipeline (Morin, 2020). The protestors’ demonstrations which disrupted the nation’s transportation sector were most acutely felt in an economic sense as blockades were set up over railways, at ports and in the streets of major cities (Morin, 2020). In an interview with Al Jazeera, Sophia Sidarous-an Indigenous organizer who

occupied the Canadian Minister of Justice and Attorney General's office in solidarity-described why there was widespread support of the movement, "What you do to one Indigenous person or one Indigenous nation affects all Indigenous peoples across Canada, across Turtle Island [North America] and across the world" (Kestler-Damours, 2020). This sentiment rings true when I look further afield, as I recall the global Indigenous support for the protests at Mauna Kea on the "Big Island" of Hawai'i in 2019, and for the Standing Rock Sioux from North Dakota, opposing the Dakota Access pipeline in 2016 (Fraser, 2019; Levin, 2016; Murray, 2019). Finally, when I turn homeward to Aotearoa I am reminded of Ihumātao, where a collective of community representatives sought to protect a landsite of traditional cultural and historical significance from a designated housing development project (Haunui-Thompson, et al., 2019). This protest garnered nationwide attention and support from Māori and non-Māori alike, as well as international support (Haimona-Riki, 2019; Haunui-Thompson, et al., 2019).

Conspicuously, each of these political movements cite the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [UNDRIP], 2007, September 13); calling into question the nature of consultation and consent with the Indigenous community involved, reference to Article 10:

> Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the Indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return. (United Nations, 2007, September 13, p. 11)

Another striking detail is that at the time of adoption, the declaration was supported by 144 states, 11 states abstained, and four states voted against; those countries were Australia, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. Although these four countries have reversed their position since the declaration's initial adoption, the original refute speaks to a shared experience for the Indigenous populations among these countries (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2007). When I drill down to what assists the soothing of the burden associated with these political movements, it is related to a sense of belonging and shared understanding within the group involved internally, and externally, among the international Indigenous network.

4.2.2 Belonging

A sense of belonging is a fundamental human need from a psychology perspective; that is, after physiological and safety requirements are met in Maslow's hierarchy of human needs,

belonging is third in the order of five universally significant characteristics for individuals (Maslow, 1970). From an Indigenous perspective that pertains to North America, belonging is fostered through deep spiritual connections, both as a metaphysical construct and as a social construct (Hill, 2006). For each individual is considered to be an integrated member of their social environment (i.e., family, tribe, nation) and in relationship with all of creation in the universe (Hill, 2006; Lowe, 2002). Kanen'tó:kon spoke to the social construct of belonging, as identity is predicated upon the identification of our place in our family tree:

> I remember one of our Oneida elders said, "When you look at your family tree, you're right here, and then you have your parents and then grandparents and then great grandparents." And he kind of drew it out to show that being part of this tree all culminated into us today. He said, "Look back on all of those ancestors just in your family alone. And everything that they did in their lives to reach you today." And he said, "And so it's reaching back on their experiences, their knowledge." (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

Māori scholars (Barlow, 1991; Durie, 1994b) also discuss the facilitating role that identified genealogical ties and their associated whakapapa connections have in promoting a sense of belonging. In a tangible sense, whakapapa, genealogy, a family tree, are all conceivable examples of dynamics that maintain belonging, and in actual fact, these dynamics transcend an Indigenous perspective. Conceptualizing the metaphysical construct of belonging, however, presents challenges within a non-Indigenous forum as it refers to the intangible.

On the surface, Tekwatonti readily likened her sense of belonging to the natural environment and her sense of spirituality and connection with the Creator to a scene in the famed Disney film: The Lion King. In the film, Mufasa (the father) explains the circle of life to Simba (his son) as a holistic connection between all things; living and passed, which encompasses the earth, the waters, and the skies. From there, Tekwatonti delved deeper into formal Kanien'kehá:ka funeral proceedings, where they consider this fundamental life cycle ceremony as a process of being wrapped in the blanket of Mother Earth:

> It goes really deep where you know where you belong because you're gonna be going back under that blanket one day. You know when your spirit is gone and there's no life in you anymore, you're gonna be nice and warm; under your mother's blanket. (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020)

Tekwatonti shared how the Kanien'kehá:ka believe that humans come from the spirit world to have a physical experience, in order to then use this experience to return back to the spirit world again at the end of our physical lives. Along this journey in the physical world, they also believe that everybody is born with a stick that bares a select number of notches, and that once we get to our final notch we go "home":

> Because that's what we're all doing; we're going home. This is just a physical experience here but really, home is over there. That's why when you know that in your heart and in your being, you're happy when you're going home because that's the real world there. This is just the experience that we're having (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020).

As a final stage of the end of life process, the Kanien'kehá:ka believe that you arrive at a point when all of the ancestors come to greet you and usher you back "home." Within these examples we see that metaphysical forms of belonging are bound with cultural traditions, along with a culturally situated worldview and spiritual connection. This also demonstrates how a spiritual component of self significantly contributes to a balanced sense of holistic health and wellbeing.

4.2.3 Wellbeing

Wellbeing, from an Indigenous perspective, encompasses multiple dimensions that interact with their socioecological setting (Kirmayer et al., 2011; McBeath, 2020; Richmond et al., 2007). Wellbeing is holistic in nature and is best depicted as an action or process; the striving toward a balance of multiple interacting dimensions (Gracey & King, 2009; Liu et al., 2008; McBeath, 2020). Although terms such as health and wellbeing are often used interchangeably (McBeath, 2020), they do not provide the same meaning across multiple Indigenous communities; each tribally centred epistemology is their own. What can be gathered across communities is that wellbeing acts at multiple levels; within the individual, among familial and broader communal structures, and their natural environment (Crivelli et al., 2013; Gracey & King, 2009). A significant factor that requires reinforcement is the depiction of how Indigenous conceptualizations of wellbeing are not centred within an individual, but rather the embodiment of the entire socio-ecological system that individuals are in relationship with (McBeath, 2020).

Indigenous conceptualizations of wellbeing consist of multiple factors that include, but are not limited to, a physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, and social self (Cooper et al., 2019; King et al., 2009). Although some of these factors are consistent in a non-Indigenous setting, the social

and spiritual factors present specifically Indigenous perspectives. These two factors incorporate an unseen connection to the spiritual world including ancestors, as well as the intangible elements that exist among interactions with our families, our communities and creation (Gracey & King, 2009; Liu et al., 2008).

Factors that support the wellbeing of Indigenous communities vary according to time and place. Contemporarily, McBeath's (2020) exploration of wellbeing conceptualizations from the perspective of three different Indigenous communities across Canada provided valuable insight. Her findings highlighted distinct aspirations and methodologies toward wellbeing, yet common threads were also present. For instance, each community discussed traditional knowledge, language and ceremony revitalization as positive contributing factors toward wellbeing (McBeath, 2020), consistent with the significance placed on language and culture by the knowledge holders in this study. With regard to a relationship between land and wellbeing, the communities in McBeath's study focused heavily on how their respective territories were the means to engage with traditional food systems (McBeath, 2020). The knowledge holders in this present study shared slight variations to this perspective; firstly, the natural environment needs to be in a thriving state, as wellbeing derives from the land:

> …when we look at the health and the wellbeing of our people, it's having that healthy land base to be raised on; a healthy river, a healthy place to garden, a healthy place to hunt. Places where even the natural world is in a healthy state so that when we go in, we don't have to worry. [For example], does it have toxic waste in the water or things like that. That has a big impact on the overall health and wellbeing of the people. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

Kanen'tó:kon explains that although processes that support wellbeing eventually include culturally pertinent practices in Kahnawà:ke, the human-oriented practices are secondary to the environment-oriented focus.

> Sa-tah-ka-rí-te – meaning; your body is holistically well because your mind is in a good place, your physical body is in a good place, and you're emotionally well, in that you've got no hang-ups, you've got no fears. (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020)

Tekwatonti shared this Kanien'kéha term, satahkarí:te, when discussion of health and wellbeing started. Satahkarí:te is about being in balance, and that if one area of your wellbeing is off, your

body or mind will eventually communicate this to you. As such, she continues that a dis-ease in your body means that your body is not in balance and that eventually disease materializes. True to form, this concept of living in balance is also a major theme that has been incorporated in KSDPP's health promotion programming and activities in Kahnawà:ke since its formative years (Delormier et al., 2003). Tekwatonti shared how she purposely seeks Kanien'kéha terms that pertain to health rather than English terms, as their existence demonstrate to her that the concepts have been practiced by her people for generations.

The etymological focus on Kanien'kéha words which bear Kanien'kehá:ka concepts for health and wellbeing was also noted in Murdoch-Flowers et al.'s (2017) research on KSDPP's health promotion content. They drew particular attention to the approach of the content design lead, who was also a traditional knowledge holder, healer, and community member from Kahnawà:ke. The foundation of her content was based on Ionkwatákarï:te, a Haudenosaunee principle which in its most basic form can be interpreted as "we are healthy" (Murdoch-Flowers et al., 2017). However, Ionkwatákarï:te represents more than a health term, it is a philosophy that incorporates, "the interconnection of the physical body with spirit and life essence as crucial for enabling people to feel powerful, to know their worth and to care for themselves" (Murdoch-Flowers et al., 2017, p. 3). Other Kanien'kehá:ka wellbeing principles Tekwatonti shared include an understanding of their cultural history, such as their creation story of the Onkwehón:we people from Turtle Island and the story of the Great Law of Peace. These teachings redirect attention away from the ego and toward an understanding of how people are to interact with each other. The Kanien'kehá:ka perspective believes that problems arise when the self-centred ego drives behaviour, as it seeks to put self above nature, above others, and the natural order of the ecosystem.

Kanien'kehá:ka wellbeing practices include the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, a fasting practice, and the meditative engagement involved with understanding these practices intimately. For the pursuit of health and wellbeing or being healthy is about healing ourselves, according to Tekwatonti, "Just the word alone, health, if you take the word health [and ask yourself], "Are you healthy?" Part of that word is heal. So, you're healing yourself. And if you heal yourself, then you're healthy" (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020). Tekwatonti has cultivated her philosophical understanding and approach to self-healing since childhood. The major catalyst she recalled which marked the beginning of her self-identified wellbeing journey was when she was unable to immediately identify why her wellbeing was off balance, which then

led her to seek advice and ask questions. At one point she came to the realization that she had made choices that led her to be out of balance; thus, she could also make choices or undo choices that led her there, “I learned it from my own cultural knowledge, if you will, and I also learned it from my life experiences; that I can write it, but I can also change the way it's written” (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020). Next, she incorporated a regular introspective practice, a relationship with self through contemplation and meditation. She would ask herself these kinds of self-reflective questions:

> "Okay, what is it that I'm missing? What is the hurt that's there that I can't get rid of? How do I let that go? How do I work with this? How do I let it go? Where would I put it if I let it go, and what do I replace it with? Do I replace it with another anger or a person that I could get angry at, so that I don't hold on to it? Where does it go?” (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020)

She discussed this way of self-regulating as a lifelong journey; that we’re constantly learning about ourselves and that, at times, she also offered her personal struggles to the Creator when she perceived it to be a problem that she could not process or possess herself. Ultimately, Tekwatonti considers her lifelong personal wellbeing approach in the physical world as an investment that can be carried into the spiritual world, or to life after death:

> This is the physical experience that we're having in order to understand ourselves a little bit more so that when we go onto spirit world, we're a little bit cleaner, if you will, we've let go of a lot of things (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020).

From a Kanien'kehá:ka perspective, and more broadly a Haudenosaunee perspective, spiritual health is a vital component to wellbeing (Murdoch-Flowers et al., 2017). In previous literature, Murdoch-Flowers and colleagues praised KSDPP’s program content for its inclusion of traditional spiritual aspects and beliefs, as it positively contributed to the participants’ perceived spiritual wellbeing. In my experience, what constitutes an example of physical or social wellbeing is easier to describe in comparison to spiritual wellbeing promoting practices. Therefore, this study sought to understand what is involved with a Kanien'kehá:ka perspective of wellbeing, including the spiritual component.

During my conversations with Kanen'tó:kon, he discussed spirituality as an integrated part of everyday activities, that a spiritual component is inherent within all teachings and traditions. He offered an example of a common misconception of spirituality from his professional setting as a

language revitalization leader. He disagreed with literature which suggests that the journey Indigenous people take when learning their language as a second language learner is a deeply spiritual practice. From his perspective, the language learning journey enables engagement with a spiritual component that should have been passed down along with cultural traditions and teachings, but not that the process in itself is sacred:

> …when we think back of the old-timers, they were speaking the language—it's who they were. There wasn't this, "the language is a sacred, spiritual thing," it's just what they were doing. They were speaking the language. They were living it, right? And so, this term "sacred" I think came along because of the disconnect that happened through boarding schools, residential schools, oppression. And so, to re-engage with your language became a "sacred" act for a lot of people because they were finding themselves back to something that was taken, that reconnected them to cultural knowledge. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

He continued by discussing how he asked his elders about the Kanien'kéha terms associated with spiritual aspects of health. His grandmother shared how the Kanien'kéha word, iotokénhti, meaning sacred, is actually a new concept that did not exist before colonization. She taught him that the word they use is more like "holy" in the Christian sense and it was not a traditional concept. Another conversation Kanen'tó:kon had with his uncle came from an exchange the uncle had had with his uncle, discussing the Kanien'kéha term for spirituality. The uncle offered tsi niionkwarihò:ten as an equivalent to the English term, although it translated to our ways, our culture, or the things that we do as Kanien'kehá:ka.

Next, Kanen'tó:kon and I moved into a reflexive conversation about what these terms and concepts mean to us in our contexts today as Onkwehón:we people, and individually, for him as Kanien'kehá:ka or for me as Māori. With the understanding that spiritual components are inherently involved within our traditional cultural practices, we discussed how to actually engage in a *real* or *authentic* experience. He identified the challenge in understanding how to carry out the act of being thankful without over emphasising the spiritual aspect, or becoming "too hokey" in his words. It drilled down to bringing it back to an awareness of our experiences as people, and our engagement with the Creator and creation. Our experiences should reflect the guidance offered within our cultural teachings and traditions. For instance, the ceremonial component of the autumn harvest should celebrate the hard work involved with planting and harvesting food throughout the

summer in order to sustain the community in the wintertime. As such, the harvest ceremony is void without the act of harvesting, and equally, harvesting practices are inconceivable without the ceremony that offers thanks.

The representation of spirituality as a coupling of acknowledgement and action within our traditions and ceremonies was discussed in application. We exchanged our comparative examples of the Māori karakia[16] (incantation, ritual chant, prayer) and the Kanien'kehá:ka Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen (Words Before All Else). For Māori, karakia are recited as an acknowledgement of our actions. They are recited retrospectively for the past, in real time as something happens, and in preparation for the future. We offer thanks to deities that represent particular domains of the natural environment. Kanen'tó:kon connected the offering of gratitude in the karakia to the intention of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen:

> … when you're looking at that Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, you'll even hear that people won't call it a prayer. When you're thinking in English, people will say, "Oh, your prayer." And I'm like, "Well, we're not praying. It's just reminding ourselves of being thankful, we're not asking for anything, really. It's just showing our gratitude and thanks." (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

At this point Kanen'tó:kon reiterated the missing link if the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is recited but the act is not actually carried out. Equally, as Māori, when we go fishing or gather seafood for example, we recite karakia as an offer of thanks to Tangaroa (the deity of the ocean). Within karakia, we acknowledge our responsibilities to follow tikanga[17] (protocol), and that our actions have consequences. For instance, tikanga support the ecological system to function, and actions that are out of sync with tikanga can undermine the sustainability of this system. Tikanga informs our actions beyond the act of fishing, it informs environmental conservation and ethical practice with sea life. To close this chapter, I draw on tikanga, which is described by Panelli and Tipa (2007) as a cultural practice rooted in both responsibility and opportunity—in other words, kuleana—which enriches wellbeing. This gives way to an exploration of the profound tikanga specific to Kahnawà:ke, which first necessitates a substantial depiction of the contextual setting that surrounds their principles and implications.

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[16] Karakia: Incantation, ritual chant, prayer. Phonetic spelling: KAH-ɾah-kee-ah.
[17] Tikanga: Protocol, customs, lore. Phonetic spelling: Tee-kah-ngah.

Chapter 5: An Economic, Military and Political Powerhouse

This chapter provides a rich description of the significant socio-political factors that influence the case study setting; amid the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke. Much of what has driven this chapter derives from an attention to the study's three propositions. A combination of knowledge holder accounts, historical accounts from literature, and my experiences contribute to this description in a way that offers insight to the reader who is not acquainted with this community. This chapter discusses factors that influence their sense of identity, which revolves around their connection to the river, as Kahnawà:ke translates to "on the rapids." Consequently, the effects of colonization, including the St. Lawrence Seaway and the residential school system, are contextualized. Next, decolonizing and indigenizing movements are discussed, giving way to cultural strongholds. Namely, the rites of passage, the Kaianere'kó:wa, the clan system, and the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen.

5.1 Kanien'kehá:ka Identity

> …when I think back on our history and I see what we were, the Mohawks [Kanien'kehá:ka], the Six Nations Confederacy, we were an economic, military, and political powerhouse in this part of the world. And we can be that again, but there's a lot of work to be done to do that again. It's not to say that we don't have that, but in comparison to what our ancestors had, we're not anywhere close. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

Understanding who we are contemporarily and who we were traditionally is in constant flux for Indigenous peoples living among colonial settlers, especially for minority groups in territories which were once solely ours to inhabit. The perspective of the outsiders eventually permeates our own sense of identity, no matter if they are systemically imposed upon us or not.

When I was first introduced to the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke, I recognized a strong sense of communal pride that almost felt confronting as they asserted their understanding of who they were. Within this self-assured assertion of identity, I also recognized familiar messy parts and uncomfortable tensions from their recounts of their recent political history. I was hosted on a tour of local cultural spaces such as the language center and an immersion school, along with other community hubs like the business center and KSDPP's office. I had been living in Canada for almost a year at this stage before this opportunity to meet the First Nations community came about. This certainly was not my first experience meeting Indigenous

people outside of Aotearoa, it wasn't even my first engagement with life on a reservation in North America, but it was the first time I had been hosted by a community member and welcomed into several spaces with no formal event, no real expectations, and no real objectives to fulfil–it was an introduction, the start of a relationship.

My first memory goes back to that visit to the cultural center in Kahnawà:ke, where I learned about the creation story of Turtle Island and the perils of recent political campaigns; to protect their lands and to promote their language revitalization initiatives–movements known all too well by Māori. Throughout the partnership I have held with Kahnawakehró:non for almost four years, I continue to learn more about who they are, and I greatly appreciate the space we have created for cultural exchange. Although discussion around Indigenous identity was already covered in the previous chapter, this section seeks to describe specific characteristics of the Kanien'kehá:ka from Kahnawà:ke.

Tekwatonti taught me how the Kanien'kehá:ka were masters of crafting flints which were used to make arrowheads, and that this helped them to earn their name. Unsurprisingly, Kanen'tó:kon centred this connection to being people of the flint with place:

> Kanien'kehá:ka means people of flint, and so, when we start to break that down, it's talking about the land that we come from. It's talking about the place that our ancestors have been for generations. So, these things are all encompassed in who we are today. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020).

This singular characteristic does not even start to cover who they are and what it means to be Kanien'kehá:ka from Kahnawà:ke. On multiple occasions, Tekwatonti expressed how being Kanien'kehá:ka is about being steadfast in standing up for themselves and their culture. Several examples of their community movements were discussed throughout the conversations I had with all of the knowledge holders; generations of iron workers, proud warrior culture, language revitalization and immersion schooling, and upholding longhouse traditions are all examples of their efforts to assert their sovereignty. Each community movement contributes to describe an aspect of their community characteristics, as they are all interconnected faces of the same dice.

5.2 Kahnawà:ke: On the Rapids

Being Kanien'kehá:ka from Kahnawà:ke carries specific implications, as this community represents differing characteristics from neighboring Kanien'kehá:ka communities, such as Kanehsatà:ke; a Kanien'kehá:ka community which also borders the Island of Montreal, less than

70 kilometres from Kahnawà:ke. Although the Kanien'kehá:ka consider New York state in the United States as their original homeland, their most recent migrations from the last several hundred centuries (Delormier et al., 2018) mainly stemmed from Kahnawà:ke's settlement:

> …there's nine Mohawk [Kanien'kehá:ka] communities and each one is distinct. Even though we're all of the same nation, we're all distinct communities that make up the overall Mohawk [Kanien'kehá:ka] nation. Within each one of our communities, they have their own histories. When I think about Kahnawà:ke, most of those communities came from here, we're the oldest Mohawk [Kanien'kehá:ka] community that a lot of these communities broke off from. So, we're kind of like the mother community to a lot of the Mohawk [Kanien'kehá:ka] communities, not all of them, but a lot of them. When I think of our community here, we were at the heart of so much history that shaped the world. And when you look more into history, there were so many treaties, there were so many gatherings and there were so many meetings that happened here. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

Understanding why they played such a significant role in a practical sense is largely due to their geographic location; positioned next to the Lachine Rapids on the St. Lawrence river, a major thoroughfare from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes of North America:

> We're called Kahnawà:ke, that's the name of our community and the name translates to "on the rapids" it's not "by the rapids", it's "on the rapids" because our community was right on the St. Lawrence river. Not only was it an important part to our whole way of being because it was right on the river, but we take a big step back and we see the importance of that river to the overall environment and ecology and the importance that it serves to the Atlantic Ocean being one of the main arteries, it's a huge part of this world. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

We see that Kahnawà:ke's position allowed the community to not only practically connect with the rest of the world, but to also remain metaphorically engaged with the world on a grander scale. The river served to mobilize this community and with this significant vantage point they developed roles and responsibilities accordingly. For instance, Kanen'tó:kon shared how a major traditional role for the men was to leave the community and that this travel generally comprised three main purposes; warfare, diplomacy, and trading or hunting. It is clear that not only was the river

accessible from the community settlement, but their community members were literally spending a large part of their lives on the river:

> …we were river people. We were always on the river with the paddling and trading, travelling from community to community and having that connection to the river wasn't merely just being able to be on the river, but knowing that it had its [own] life force. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

Paddling, swimming and fishing were significant responsibilities and pastimes for the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke and unfortunately, colonization disrupted this interactive relationship with the river through the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway.

5.2.1 St. Lawrence Seaway

The St. Lawrence Seaway is a series of canals and locks that provide a channel for vessels to ship cargo from the Atlantic Ocean through to Lake Superior (Phillips, 2000), North America's furthermost Great Lake. On Kahnawà:ke's northern boundary, the Seaway obstructs the community's direct connection to the Lachine Rapids that their name derives from (Deer, 2017). As Phillips (2000) states, "The St. Lawrence Seaway was a serious affront to Kahnawà:ke's identity." (p. 2), because without its riverfront, Kahnawà:ke was "on the rapids" no more (Jocks, 1994; Phillips 2000). To make matters worse, over 1,300 acres were appropriated from Kahnawà:ke's territory to construct this section of the Seaway (Holmes & Associates, 1999). Constructed between 1954 and 1959, the Seaway was funded by both the United States and Canada's federal governments (Phillips, 2000). Deer (2017) argues that the positioning of the Seaway was an example of environmental racism since the construction of major national infrastructure projects are disproportionately imposed upon the places where racialized communities reside. She argues how such initiatives are often "conflated with natural progression of the modern nation-state in achieving the goal of "development." (p.14), but that in reality, they fall upon these racialized communities because these populations are not as valuable as the racially dominant society (Checker, 2005; Deer, 2017). This factor is contextually relevant as the Seaway was originally designated for the southern boundary of Montreal Island, on the opposite side of the river from Kahnawà:ke (Holmes & Associates, 1999). Rightly so, the construction of the Seaway through Kahnawà:ke's territory was perceived as the first act to undermine the community's identity and culture; thus, heralding the moment distrust in the Canadian government's commitment to fair treatment began (Phillips, 2000; Simpson, 1996).

Today, the St. Lawrence Seaway continues to affect the community of Kahnawà:ke at multiple levels, as "it severed Kahnawà:ke's relationship with the rapids, both physically and spiritually" (Deer, 2017, p. 21). The intimate relationship the community had with the river impacted their lives on a daily basis. Kanen'tó:kon explained how traditional means of ensuring food security through hunting and fishing is no longer feasible in Kahnawà:ke today, "if people, if families want to hunt to feed their families, we have to leave our community now in order to do that." (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020). Although he could think of one family who continues to fish on the river to feed their own family, he also emphasized how they are only one of hundreds. This sobering reality allows him to not only recognize how significantly the Seaway undermines their traditional way of life, but to also empathize with the torment felt by elders of the community who witnessed the desecration of their territory:

> When you hear the stories from the elders; when that Seaway cut us off and it moved all our people away from the river, you hear the elders say that it's like "they tore our heart out when they cut us off from our river." (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

In his cultural role as a knowledge holder and in previous professional settings as a school teacher, Kanen'tó:kon is cognizant of the fact that generations of youth who were brought up in the last half century in Kahnawà:ke have never known first-hand of the deep connection their ancestors had with the river, but that it is a vital conduit to their cultural development:

> …to be able to reconnect our youth, not just bringing them there to swim and fish and things like that, but to actually have them understand why that river was important to our ancestors, why that river was important culturally, historically and what it also did in thinking like the research that you're doing, how it affected the overall health and wellbeing of our people at that time, to be able to freely do that. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020).

Forging a relationship with the river despite its physical obstruction because of the cultural anchor it represents is a demonstration of decolonization in practice. This brings about a broader conversation of colonization in a contemporary setting, as the on-going effects endure in Canada, New Zealand and other countries today (Ahuriri-Driscoll et al., 2021; McBeath, 2020).

5.3 Colonization

Working with KSDPP professionally in 2018 allowed me to start to unravel the organization's socio-political web in the context of the community, and of the community in relation to the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. As I got further into the weeds, the intricacies were regularly confusing and nuanced, but it did not always seem appropriate for me to inquire into why these intricacies were the way they were. Oftentimes, learning about their struggles with the provincial and federal governments of Quebec and Canada humbly strengthened my gratitude for being Māori from Aotearoa. As such, when I progressed into my graduate research alongside the community, it was daunting to think about finding the *right* way to approach colonization. In the end, I made two decisions; to follow their lead as much as possible and to continue to uphold a strengths-based approach.

Throughout the design of my research methodology and portrayal of my analysis, I have consistently tried to adhere to their lead, to allow their perspective to guide my study. Sharing three strategies that have enabled me to follow their lead may serve as useful guidelines for other researchers seeking to engage with Indigenous communities they are not a part of:

1. Fostering relationship. It cannot be understated how powerful it was for me to maintain a relationship with the community by regularly attending meetings and events in Kahnawà:ke. Not only was my physical presence at KSDPP's RT and CAB meetings sustained monthly, but I also engaged with other organizational and community related forums. Whether it seemed related to my research or not, it was all important. Eventually my inclusion became active participation, but it still took time for my perspective to be appreciated. The implicit nature of this transformation cannot be overly stressed, meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities takes dedicated time and sustained effort in service for an extended amount of time.
2. Inductively Responding. During the research conversations I essentially started with a blank page so as to support the knowledge holders to determine what was significant for them. This approach felt like the most appropriate way to allow sensitive subjects such as colonization to arise. Yet this method did not come from a textbook, this came from my own knowledge base; a mixture of Māori values and the newfound understanding I had created through relationship with Kahnawakehró:non.
3. Doing my homework. In my review of literature, I read every article KSDPP and

their research partners had published in the last decade, along with major literature their work referenced since the organization's inception.

In 2003 Kahente Horn-Miller, contextualized the contemporary reality of colonization by asserting its continued imposition:

> Indigenous people continue to be victims of colonialism. They took the best of what we had – democracy, land, and resources, and then imprisoned us. The ongoing effects are seen in the fact that we are still living on reservations, carrying official identification cards given to us by the Canadian Government, we are not allowed to have our own forms of governance in our communities, and because of this, we are not economically self-sufficient. (Horn-Miller, 2003, p. 20)

This example of the on-going effects of colonization merely represents one of a whole host of grievances yet to be resolved. Criticism of the Canadian federal government's actions could argue that insufficient effort was expended to address the effects of such damaging legislation as the Indian Act, until the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report in 2015 (*Indian Act*, 1985; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a).

Both Joe and Kanen'tó:kon discussed examples of their community failing to identify the insidious and systematic actions of the federal government to impose their colonial prerogative. For example, Joe shared how on multiple occasions, their ancestors were not aware when they were being taken advantage of, "So, they can give us a lollipop and a lotta times it works…they get what they want and we lose what we don't want, but we didn't know it" (Joe, personal communication, June 18, 2020). The "lollipop" Joe refers to describes a diversion which was often applied through coercive and even fraudulent actions to fulfil the Canadian government's greater intentions; to disenfranchise Indigenous populations through deliberate cultural genocide and the displacement or expropriation of land and resources (Deer, 2017; McBeath, 2020; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a; Wasyliw, 2018). Regarding the administration of the Indian Act through residential schools, Kanen'tó:kon spoke of their effect in Kahnawà:ke:

> …when we look at the residential schools and the boarding schools, people focus on how they separated us from our language, our culture, our families, and so forth, but when we look at it, one of the main things that they did was separate us from our land. So, they took us from our land base, they took us from our knowledge holders to disconnect us from that knowledge system and that land base so that when we returned, that connection wouldn't

> be there and we wouldn't fight as hard for it, right? So, when we think about that, when we look at the overall goal of the colonist; to take control of the land and the resources, how you do that is to disconnect the inhabitants from that connection to the land, in the hopes that the next generation won't fight as hard for it. And, I mean, we laugh because it worked to do what they wanted, right? (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020).

The residential school system has had a lasting effect on the community of Kahnawà:ke, and this legacy continues to be relevant for all Indigenous peoples; First Nations, Métis and Inuit, across Canada today in 2021.

5.3.1 Residential Schools

Recently, pertinent events have brought the maltreatment of Indigenous children to the forefront of Canadian politics and drawn a particularly negative light on the country's Indigenous relations internationally. On the 27th of May 2021, the remains of 215 children were discovered on the grounds of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, on the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation's territory in British Columbia, Canada (Dickson & Watson, 2021). In the first reports of the discovery, some of the most disturbing details shared by chief Rosanne Casimir for the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc stated, "To our knowledge, these missing children are undocumented deaths" (Dickson & Watson, 2021). Additionally, Murray Sinclair, the former Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, warned that these undocumented deaths are not an isolated incident, and that the discovery of more sites should be expected (Blum, 2021). Sure enough, this situation continues to reveal more remains being unearthed each week. As of the start of July 2021, as many as 751 have been discovered from the Cowessess First Nation of Saskatchewan, and 182 from the Ktunaxa First Nation of British Colombia (Migdal, 2021). These disturbing events have instigated public outcry across Canada, where the federal government and the Catholic Church have been called upon to address their role in the establishment and perpetuation of residential schools across Canada (Dickson, 2021). Since the Kamloops discovery, royal assent has been passed to establish a national day of commemoration which will be marked by a statutory holiday for truth and reconciliation on the 30th of September 2021 (Bryden, 2021).

Determined to regain educational governance and address the effects of the residential school system, the community of Kahnawà:ke have exercised autonomy over their own educational settings for over four decades now. Today, educational programming for Kahnawakehró:non is controlled by the community, under the mantle of the Kahnawà:ke

Education Center (KEC) (Kahnawà:ke Education Center, 2018). KEC was first created in 1980 to develop educational resources and curriculum that was delivered in the community's schools, until it assumed sole responsibility of the community's educational system when the administration was transferred to the Kahnawà:ke Combined Schools Committee (KCSC) in 1988 (Kahnawà:ke Education Center, 2018). KEC manages three of the community schools, Kateri School, Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstáhkhwa School, and Kahnawà:ke Survival School, which follow curricula built upon their own tribally centred epistemology (Kahnawà:ke Education Center, 2018; Moreau, 2010). Both elementary schools, "Kateri" and "Karonhianónhnha" as they are locally referenced, share the same curriculum, except Karonhianónhnha is administered in immersion Kanien'kéha, and Kateri is administered in English (Moreau, 2010). "Survival School", the community's secondary school is administered in English, but both Kanien'kéha and French languages are required courses (Moreau, 2010). The KEC represents a significant exercise of the community's self-determination, as they actively support their community members in primary, secondary and tertiary educational programs across the Greater Montreal Area, as well as tertiary students throughout Canada and in the United States (Kahnawà:ke Education Center, 2018).

5.4 Rites of Passage

Outside of formal educational settings, Kanen'tó:kon has had a fundamental role in leading a rites of passage for the male youth of the community, which coordinates with an equivalent female group. Along with other elders and knowledge holders, he established the rites of passage as a safe space for youth to meaningfully connect with their cultural teachings and traditions. This process generally engages youth from the ages of 13 to 18 for a period of approximately four years. Their lessons include intellectual, cultural, spiritual, social, physical, and emotional components. I do not deem it culturally appropriate to go into rich detail about what the rites of passage journey entails. Instead, I will offer a few examples of features of the process; time in solitude, critical engagement with traditional knowledge, proficiency with local flora for nutritional, medicinal and craft purposes, and a fasting practice. Ultimately, the rites of passage process aims to equip these youth with a strong understanding of what it means to be a centred Kanien'kehá:ka person today, along with the practices involved with maintaining the balance of their holistic wellbeing.

During his transition to adulthood, Kanen'tó:kon recognized that something was missing in his sense of Kanien'kehá:ka grounding, but he did not know what it was. He believed it had something to do with not knowing how to think in a Kanien'kehá:ka way, as Kanien'kéha was his

second language after all. This comes with the fact that his parents made a concerted effort for Kanen'tó:kon and his siblings to be brought up within the longhouse traditions and with a strong command of their Kanien’kéha language; an upbringing that was not afforded to his parents and, therefore, a foundation they could not identify as incomplete. Eventually, Kanen'tó:kon learned how a rites of passage process had traditionally been conducted for generations, and that even though it still continued in pockets in Kahnawà:ke, the process had been virtually discontinued through the course of colonization. Hence, the journey to understand what a rites of passage process was and how it could be reinstated began. Kanen'tó:kon described how it started by:

> … connecting it back to the way we had done it culturally and how we bring it to today. Making it relevant and making it real again-not just trying to play Indian. You know? To make it a real thing. There’s a lot of reasons as to why. Whether it was the cultural grounding that was given to the youth at that critical point in their lives as they’re transitioning from being children to young adults. Whether it was giving them the physical grounding, meaning, getting them physically ready to become these young men. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

Preparing the rites of passage program and supporting the youth through their journey has led Kanen'tó:kon to consider who they are and what it means to be Kanien’kehá:ka; a process of taking their current cultural scenario to the next step, as the previous generation did not have the linguistic and cultural proficiency to do it.

5.5 Decolonization & Indigenization

Since first contact, the Kanien’kehá:ka have developed strategies in response to the colonial power they have encountered because otherwise, the consequences were dire; neither assimilation nor annihilation could ensure the continuation and prosperity of their people:

> I don't know if I covered this in our last conversation, that notion of adapting and resisting and how our ancestors were continuously doing that. They were always adapting and they were always resisting, but knowing when to adapt, [and] when to resist-because if you adapt too much, you become assimilated, if you resist too much, you can be wiped out. So, it's that idea that they were really pragmatic in thinking how to adapt and how to resist these different things that were coming our way. And sometimes it worked, sometimes it didn't. But these are things to think back on; where we are today and how we're the carriers of that. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

Despite the development of adapting and resisting strategies to respond to colonization, their decolonizing practices did not always serve to insulate Kahnawà:ke, and as previously discussed with the Seaway, the ongoing effects endure today.

For many, Māori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith's seminal work "Decolonizing Methodologies", originally published in 1999, provided a foundation upon which decolonizing practices were sedimented within an academic forum (Smith, 2012; Tuck, 2013). From the perspective of a Māori woman, the text unapologetically presented ways to confront academic institutions which continued to colonize Indigenous peoples and their distinct tribal epistemologies (Smith, 2012; Tuck, 2013). Some of the most referenced sections include the discussion of research as a "dirty word" (p.1) among Indigenous populations, and a definition of the term, decolonization; "once viewed as the formal process of handing over the instruments of government, is now recognized as a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power (Smith, 2012, p.101). In a more recent review of literature, Jackson Smith and colleagues from the Office of Aboriginal Initiatives at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada offer a toolkit to promote Indigenous allyship (Smith et al., 2016). In their discussion of decolonization, the discipline has progressed to encompass understandings and approaches from diverse perspectives internationally. They share how a universal understanding of decolonization cannot exist, but that examples of the practice generally include common self-determining tenets, such as autonomy over traditional territories and political, economic, cultural, and social sovereignty. One factor I found particularly compelling in their summary is the discussion of decolonization as a political spectrum, and that this process can oscillate between an act of undoing or de-colonizing ourselves and an act of reclaiming our indigeneity. Regarding the second act, they offer reference to Absolon (2011) who describes speaking her native language and practicing her culture as actions of re-indigenization (Smith et al., 2016).

I had many conversations about what it means to decolonize with the knowledge holders, for which they offered some of the most insightful examples of its application within their lives. Joe shared of his lifelong dedication to being "Onkwehón:we", and how that meant seeking out traditional gifts and skills from his elders and ancestors from a young age. This underlying theme was interspersed throughout the conversation, but it was only afterwards that I was able to perceive this as an act of service for his people. Later in the conversation he encouraged me to share what I learn through my research journey with my people, and to aspire to acquire the skills that may

help me to better share this knowledge. Tekwatonti shared her aspirations to pass on the stories of political significance from Kahnawà:ke without transferring the emotional trauma tied to the experience. The personal transformation involved with this aspiration represents another act of service. We see that among Joe and Tekwatonti, decolonizing practices are demonstrations of service; contributions to the betterment of their families and community for future generations.

Kanen'tó:kon's take on decolonization incorporates knowledge revitalization and deep introspection:

> We have to reconnect to see what are those ancient truths that we've carried all of this time, that's still within us, that we have to continue to engage with. That goes with actual[ly] not just reading about it, not just praying about it, not just singing about it—which is important—but actually engaging with it, being with it. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

To him, a concerted effort to identify the original intent of knowledge coupled with a connection to the knowledge through lived experience is key. From there, he considers the next step as taking the knowledge and re-indigenizing it. Ultimately, he believes the process is simultaneously a political act, a cultural act, a spiritual act, and a physical act, as these acts are all interconnected.

Within the context of his rites of passage program, he provided two examples of how this decolonizing and re-indigenizing process is enacted. The first example refers to each adolescent's entry to the program, he challenges their philosophical beliefs and their participation in the program, "they have to question their own lives, their own upbringing, their own belief systems and why they're engaging with it in a certain way" (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020). Consequently, he instils an understanding of how their own sense of self-determination is paramount throughout their rites of passage journey and in their everyday lives. The second example is a recent addition to the program, which actually emanated out of personal research into Kanien'kehá:ka traditions. He learned of an ancient tattooing practice that was originally part of the rites of passage journey and that, "tattooing was a huge part of our culture the same as in the Māori world, but for the same reasons; colonization, Christianity, a lot of different things, it went underground" (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020). With the revival of tattooing in Kahnawà:ke, he also brought back tattoo designs that had never been seen by living members of the community. Contextualizing the role of a tattooing practice in Kahnawà:ke today has

enabled Kanen'tó:kon's exchange with other Indigenous tattoo practitioners, he spoke of particular resonance with a Hawaiian artist whom shared the deeper meaning behind their practice:

> …what he said was that, "by tattooing ourselves, it's a physical representation of decolonizing our bodies as well as our minds and our whole being." He said "because now you're wearing these ancient designs on your body again, it has an effect on you mentally, emotionally, and physically, and it's also connected to the spiritual-because these tattoos aren't just lines that go on your body, [they have] a deeper meaning." (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

From there, Kanen'tó:kon spoke of having to discern what that meant for him and his youth. He had to navigate how to ensure their cultural safety through this part of their personal development:

> …that's been part of my work that I've had to engage with carefully; knowing that it's not just taking designs and putting it on people's bodies, it's bringing back these ancient forms and what they were connected to spiritually, physically, historically and if we're going to bring it back today, people need to understand what's behind it. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

We see that although tattooing represents a visible act of de-colonizing oneself and a reclamation of indigeneity, the physical manifestation is ultimately the concluding chapter of a book full of in-depth intellectual growth, emotional healing, spiritual strengthening, and cultural wisdom.

5.6 Teachings & Traditions

5.6.1 Kaianere'kó:wa: The Great Law of Peace

The Kaianere'kó:wa is the constitutional law and governing system in which the Haudenosaunee Confederacy is predicated upon (King, 2007). Also known as the Great Law of Peace, the Kaianere'kó:wa was brought about by the Peacemaker who was sent by the Creator to unify five nations from the north-eastern regions of Turtle Island (Horn-Miller, 2003). Although distinct nations in of themselves, they shared language cognates, similar social structures, and traditional fishing, hunting, and gathering territories (King, 2007). They occupied lands across the regions we now identify as North America, including the provinces of Quebec and Ontario in Canada, and New York state in the United States. From west to east, these Nations include the Shotinontowane'i:ka (Seneca Nation), the Kaion'kehi:ka (Cayuga Nation), the Ononta'kehi:ka (Onondaga Nation), the Oneniote'i:ka (Oneida Nation), and the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk Nation)

(Horn-Miller, 2013). A term meaning "People of the Longhouse" they refer to themselves as the Haudenosaunee, but the English referred to them as the League of Five-Nations, and the French as the Iroquois Confederacy (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, 2021a). At a later stage, they were joined by the Tehatiskaró:ros (Tuscarora Nation), and consequently became known as the Six-Nations Confederacy (Horn-Miller, 2013).

The Kaianere'kó:wa was established as a way to bring peace among the nations and an end to the bloodshed (Horn-Miller, 2003). In the story of the Peacemaker, as it has been narrativized, the Kaianere'kó:wa provides a means for collective strength (Horn-Miller, 2013; King, 2007). As the story goes, in order to demonstrate the potential strength of their allegiance, the Peacemaker broke an arrow in front of the respective leaders of these nations with ease, and then bundled up five arrows to attempt to break them, with great difficulty (King, 2007). From there, the Peacemaker used thread to record the laws of the Constitution in the form a wampum belt, which is more commonly known as the Hiawatha Belt today (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, 2021b; Haudenosaunee Confederacy, 2021c). Today, this wampum belt is still used as a mnemonic device to recount the major tenets of the law, and the pattern has become the flag that represents the Confederacy (Haudenosaunee Confederacy, 2021c; Horn-Miller, 2013).

The major purpose of the Kaianere'kó:wa is to fortify one's connection with all of Creation, reciprocal relationships with our socioecological systems and nature (Horn-Miller, 2003). Horn-Miller (2003) offers extensive explanation of the Kaianere'kó:wa within her master's thesis:

> It is designed to affirm the independent status of nations and individuals engaged in the quest for a unified approach to mutual problems. These relationships are patterned after the natural world. The Kaianere'kó:wa contains all the codes of conduct, thought and knowledge needed for people to function, to understand our ceremonies and to maintain social and political life. These codes are based in nature. So the symbolism is easy to understand and follow. One simply has to look at the world around them to understand the Kaianere'kó:wa in its strength and elusive simplicity. (pp. 21-22)

As the Great Law of Peace, the Kaianere'kó:wa has three fundamental principles; peace, power and righteousness. Yet, King (2007) argues that these English terms fail to adequately depict what is involved within each principle, so she offers further description of the Kanien'kéha terms:

- Skén:nen is more accurately depicted as a state of peacefulness and according to the Mohawk Nation Office (1982), it denotes a sense of peace or soundness when both the mind and the body are well.
- Ka'satsténhsera refers to a state of “strengthful-ness" that emanates from the unity of the collective.
- Ka’nikonrí:io is considered a state of “good mindedness.” The Mohawk Nation Office depicts this as the exercise of a pure and collective-focused action, which is in harmony with Creation.

The Kaianere’kó:wa informs the essential elements for the lives of the Haudenosaunee people politically, spiritually and socially by providing, “a method of counselling and decision making, involving ceremonies and procedures which build toward a consensus of the people.” (Horn-Miller, 2003, p. 27). Included within the Kaianere’kó:wa is the consensus-based decision making process, which was incorporated into the methodological framework of this study. Within the decision making process, the democratic principles of the Constitution are expressed, as every voice is valued (Horn-Miller, 2013). As such, negotiations are open and respectful to all perspectives, and the decisions agreed upon must reflect extensive deliberation of the matter at hand (Horn-Miller, 2013). As a final note, Horn-Miller also describes how this process operates at all levels of the Haudenosaunee social construct, that is, across the Confederacy, among nations, and within their respective clans.

5.6.2 Clan System

The clan system is a governance structure that functions within each nation across the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. King (2007) describes how the Kaianere’kó:wa reinstated the clan system, adhering to the maternal lines of descent and led by a clan mother. Each matriarch was tasked with assembling a working group comprised of five members who would represent their clan; one male chief with a male assistant, and two faithkeepers (one male, one female) to cater to the ceremonial responsibilities of the clan (King, 2007). The Kanien’kehá:ka Nation has three clans, the Bear Clan, the Wolf Clan and the Turtle Clan.

Predating the Kaianere’kó:wa, Joe shared stories of how the Kanien’kehá:ka clans originally came about and why they function as three distinct groups. He recounted how the young men and women were instructed by their elders to go for a walk first thing in the morning and to identify the first animal they came across, as this would become their clan. This part of the

narrative further reinforces a key factor embedded within their philosophical principles, the importance of living in relationship with the natural environment.

As the story continued to another epoch, the Kanien'kehá:ka ancestors had to cross a river while travelling. Halfway through the group's crossing, a vine that aided the passage over rocks snapped and divided the group, with the Bear Clan on one side of the river and the Wolf and Turtle Clans left on the original side. This part of the story provides a rationale for the arrangement of the clans during their political assemblies and ceremonial gatherings. For example, the Wolf and the Turtle Clans sit on the same side of the longhouse, and they engage in the discussion of a matter among themselves in the first instance; whereas, the Bear Clan operates on their own in large part. The Bear Clan's responsibility is to actively listen to the discussion, to take in both perspectives and if consensus cannot be made, they either side with one clan or offer further input into the discussion. When I inquired into why the system operated this way, Joe related it to the specific domains and behaviours of each animal; bears are known for digging up roots and foraging for medicines; wolves are connected to the skies, frequently looking up to pray and mysteriously hiding in ditches; turtles are oriented around waterways.

When I asked each knowledge holder what it meant to be from their respective clans, they described quite varying interpretations. For instance, Tekwatonti perceives her sense of identity to be heavily connected with the characteristics of the Bear Clan. She gave extensive description of the manifestation of these characteristics throughout her life; as medicine people, the Bear Clan's role is to care for the wellbeing of their people. Her means to bring healing comes through her ability to listen, to offer empathy, and to support others to feel understood as they overcome personal struggles that off-set the balance of their holistic wellbeing. Joe discussed his resonance to the Wolf Clan coming from his inclination to pray a lot, but how customarily, Onkwehón:we people will routinely look up when they speak or recite the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen. With regard to Kanen'tó:kon, he simply associated being from the Bear Clan as a part of his mother's bloodline and an operational function of their governance system, "…from the traditional standpoint, any of the decisions that we've made over time, to the best of our ability, has been through that clan system" (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020). From his perspective, the clan system functions to structure their representatives with chiefs, clan mothers, and so forth, in order to carry out their three-party governance system.

Before engaging in the research conversations, I envisioned the clan system would provide a major arc to my study, the equivalence of what the importance of land, language and culture have become as primary findings. However, this did not eventuate. I had worked with the guidance of KSDPP's governing committees for several years at that stage, not to mention, I was well read in their academic literature. I prepared for my research conversations with unstructured guidelines, conversational prompts, and a vignette that would allow the knowledge holders to step into my world through cultural exchange. My assumptions were well intentioned, I had engaged in similar conversations with the Na-Cho Nyak Dun First Nation from the Yukon Territory in Canada, where they had resonated strongly with what I assumed would organically blossom from discussion around the vignette; interpretations of their own clans–but I was wrong. My intentions had been to replicate a similar process during the third proposed data collection phase; the interpretation of knowledge. The objective was to provide a forum where Kahnawakehró:non youth could demonstrate their understandings of their respective clans through physical activity. Ultimately, although the COVID-19 pandemic related restrictions prevented the feasibility of the third phase from eventuating, this phase would have had to have been significantly modified anyway.

Reflexively scrutinizing this experience has produced some of my most valuable lessons from this study, which have demonstrated; (a) the boundless diversity of Indigenous communities and their profound ways of knowing; (b) the adaptability required to go back to the drawing board and pivot a research focus as it unfolds: (c) the integrity required to uphold the voice of the research partners in community-based participatory research; and (d) the humility required to admit that you got something wrong while continuing to persevere with the project. Although, I had missed the mark on the clan system, one cultural tradition that repeatedly rang true throughout the research conversations was the daily relevance of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen.

5.6.3 Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen: Words Before All Else

Reciting the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is customary for any formal event or ceremony in which gatherings of the Haudenosaunee take place, yet it is also a means for personal engagement with the principles of the Kaianere'kó:wa (Horn-Miller, 2013). Although several references to this practice have been touched upon throughout the preceding chapters of this thesis, more can be derived from an understanding of its application and interpretation.

According to Tekwatonti, the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is a tool that connects people to the ancient wisdom encoded within their language and the land. To her, it is a daily custom,

practiced each morning to connect to the earth and to be grounded in order to start the day—this is why it is referred to as the Words Before All Else. It begins with an acknowledgement of the land, and then they work their way through the waterways, eventually continuing on to the skies; being sure to acknowledge everything that encapsulates the natural world along the way. It can also be accompanied with an offering of tobacco, sage, or sweetgrass. Joe emphasised the importance of gratitude is his recount of his personal Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen practice. He also spoke of his current concentration during his daily practice, the pursuit of improvement of all peoples' health. At the time of the conversation, we were grappling with the weight of the first COVID-19 lockdown in Canada in 2020. This traditional cultural practice provides a vehicle to maintain his personal wellbeing and to actively care for the collective wellbeing of others.

In official proceedings, the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen provides an opening that gathers everyone's mind together. Tekwatonti shared how in some settings, fulfilling the formal acknowledgement of everything involved in that forum can potentially take hours, "It's got to be really from the heart, and it's got to give everybody a chance to hear all those words and to make sure that everybody is at the same mind level when you start having a discussion" (Tekwatonti, personal communication, October 30, 2020). We see that the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is a mindful practice of being fully engaged, individually and as a collective. As a practical manifestation of the foundational elements of the Kaianere'kó:wa, the power of this practice is its implicit ability to uphold the cultural, spiritual, emotional and physical wellbeing of their people day in, day out.

In summary, an understanding of the Kanien'kehá:ka from Kahnawà:ke denotes an intimate relationship with their river, as it has contextualized not only the practices they carry out, but it also informs who they are and who they have been for generations. This directly tends to the first environmentally focused proposition and the second cultural practice focused proposition of the study. As an additional overlay, it is clear that many components of their philosophical underpinnings derive from the Kaianere'kó:wa and their place in the broader Haudenosaunee Confederacy in a way that strengthens their distinct characteristics while simultaneously unifying the collective group of nations. In the next chapter I highlight the voice of the community, the study's third proposition, with practical applications that embody all of the philosophical and contextual elements covered so far in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

Chapter 6: Health Resources & Initiatives

6.1 Proposed Resources & Initiatives

By design, this chapter is entirely pragmatic. It presents a stark contrast to the previous findings chapters in that it is focused on equipping the health promotion practitioner with practical tools to serve the community of Kahnawà:ke. It intentionally offers detailed guidelines that entail the application of the study's recommendations, rather than conceptual considerations that require extensive deliberation. In essence, this chapter offers an initial knowledge translation step, whereby, the knowledge holders and I tried to analyse and make meaning out of our research conversations with actionable outcomes in mind.

This chapter details the co-designed pragmatic results of this study, where we propose three recommendations for the development of health promotion resources and initiatives to be taken up by KSDPP. The first two sit side by side as a package; a resource that introduces cultural traditions accompanied by a practical forum to experience these traditions. The third recommendation is an additional resource that proposes a model for discussion. The major focus of the recommendations is to provide tools and fora to engage with the guiding cultural principles pertinent to the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke; which are embedded within teachings and traditions. The following sections provide explanations for these contemporary mediums for Indigenous knowledge transmission to take form, along with connections to their relevance in academic literature, and the research propositions that guided the study.

6.2 Resource: Tools to Introduce Cultural Traditions

The first proposed resource acts as an introductory tool for sharing culturally significant teachings and traditions with an attention to health and wellbeing. This resource would provide a basic introduction to significant traditions, such as paddling, lacrosse, and gardening. We recommend that this resource is developed into easily accessible mediums like a series of short videos, or illustrative books that could be either a hardcopy or electronic-book form. This way, the resource can be widely distributed throughout community networks in person and online.

Justifications for the creation of the resource include its use as an educational tool for children and their families from the community, as it promotes their own cultural narrative. Additionally, the resource could serve as a recruitment tool for the community at large; for community members who do not have an understanding of the traditions, who are not already involved in the activity

being promoted or for community members who are interested in an enhanced cultural understanding of the activity. The creation of this kind of resource upholds the self-determination of Kahnawakehró:non, as the locus of control over the communication of their knowledge and history remain within the community. Kanen'tó:kon spoke to this point directly, as some written accounts of their history have been generated by non-Indigenous people in the past. Giving way for Indigenous peoples to tell our stories from our own perspectives is a significant component of strengthening our sense of identity, it goes on to reinforce decolonization and the reclamation of our unique expression of indigeneity. As Kanen'tó:kon so aptly puts it, "If we just depended on Western social studies books to tell us about our history, we'd have a pretty skewed vision of who we are and who we were." (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020). Thus, it is not merely a desirable, but rather a requirement to maintain our sense of cultural autonomy.

Discussion of apprehensions and caveats were also incorporated into the develpoment of this recommendation. Important considerations include the accessibility and restriction of valuable cultural knowledge. Initially, Kanen'tó:kon and I had discussed the prospect of creating longform resources such as documentaries or podcasts, as a means to go into depth with content situated around their cultural traditions. However, he readily expressed his reticence to making these kinds of valuable tools readily accessible to non-community members. From there, I offered suggestions of YouTube channels and podcast platforms that are password protected. This then brought about a reflexive conversation where we explored who has access to knowledge within our own cultural contexts. He shared his experiences of interactions with community members who identified as Kanien'kehá:ka from Kahnawà:ke, who had not been grounded in a longhouse upbringing—a group we will refer to as "outsiders." Interaction between these outsiders and his camp—which we will refer to as "insiders"—placed a divide between the two camps of community members. Although they could recognize that colonization played a major role in creating the divide, navigating the pathway to reconcile the divide was uncomfortable, messy, and on-going.

Kanen'tó:kon spoke of instances where the group of outsiders criticized his group of insiders, as the insiders were negatively viewed as gate keeping at times when they did not immediately respond to demands to share their cultural knowledge. Whereas, within his camp, the insiders have an understanding that not all knowledge is freely given—in some instances it must be earned. The learner needs to demonstrate that they are worthy custodians of that knowledge.

Failing that, the knowledge could be refused if the knowledge holder perceives the learner to not be ready to receive it.

From there we continued the conversation to traditional Māori practices for intergenerational knowledge transfer; generally passed down by a grandparents' generation, as they fostered relationships and engagement that allowed them to observe children as they developed. This enabled the elders to identify individual characteristics and abilities. This reinforced the elder's authority to decide whether the younger generation had capacity to receive certain knowledge, and at times withhold knowledge if deemed appropriate.

This discussion progressed into the contrasting reality of today's modern society that is now predicated upon instant gratification, where earning knowledge is no longer a required entry point and that every part of our lives has the potential to be monetized. Reconnecting to Kanen'tó:kon's experience with the two camps of knowledge holder "insiders" and perceived "outsiders", he spoke of his suspicion of their motivations to learn the knowledge, as he had witnessed others come in and readily try to commodify insiders knowledge in culturally inappropriate ways—ways that the insiders intuitively understood not to do.

Another aversion to creating long-form, in-depth material resources with cultural knowledge (i.e., textbooks) expressed by Kanen'tó:kon was that it could restrict the knowledge form from evolving. For instance, developing a comprehensive textbook seldom allows for multiple versions of the same story to be shared, as is often the case with most tribal variations of oral narratives. As such, the textbook could become *the way* or *the law*. That is, it could become the major form of knowledge transmission—undermining traditional practices such as a rites of passage journey, and the sharing of oral narratives with the aid of wampum strings.

Once we had settled upon the idea of a short, surface-level resource—like videos and books—that introduce the significant cultural traditions for Kahnawakehró:non, I wondered about the downsides to media based resources. Kanen'tó:kon responded, "the human to human, land to land experience" will be missing (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020). That is, delivery of the resource should be surrounded by in-depth and in person, practical experiences that orientate the learning and engagement within that very environmental domain.

6.3 Initiative: Practical Experiences of Cultural Traditions

As described in detail in Chapter 5; traditionally, canoe paddling was an everyday activity for the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke. The community settlement is located right beside the river,

and paddling served to mobilize community members for many of their central roles and responsibilities (i.e., hunting and fishing, trade, warfare). While many of the community's sustaining activities were undermined by the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway, sport and recreational paddling takes place in Kahnawà:ke today through the local Onake Paddling Club. To practically apply this recommendation, paddling will be used to demonstrate the utility of a material resource that introduces a cultural tradition, coupled with a practical experience of the physical activity involved. At the same time, this example aligns with Delormier et al.'s (2018) call to develop health promotion content from the revitalization of cultural knowledge.

The intention of the practical experience is to provide a forum that offers more detail to the origin of the tradition, in the first instance. For example, offering connections to pertinent cultural principles, teachings, and oral narratives, along with practical explanations of the activity itself (i.e., paddling techniques). It is recommended that delivery of this forum is held by community leadership who are steeped in each of aspect of paddling traditions. For instance, delivery of the session by a coach with only an understanding of how to paddle without a grasp of the historical context would be insufficient. Equally, if an elder was able to share about the cultural teachings involved with the activity, but was unable to teach the community how to paddle, the experience would be incomplete. It is recommended that the experience is open to all community members, with specific considerations made to accommodate families with young children and to elders who may wish to be involved despite the fact that they may not be able to engage in all parts of the experience. From there, the experience will move on to practical engagement with the activity—that is, a hands-on opportunity to try paddling a canoe on the water. Afterwards, the physical activity will be followed by a debrief so that community members are able to critically engage with the experience they just had, drawing connections to the cultural teachings they learned prior.

The practical experience could take the form of a start of season club open day, a series of introductory paddling lessons, or an on-going after-school initiative between the local schools and the club. No matter the forum arrangement, open access to the activity for the wider community must be considered. Some of these accessibility considerations include funding to support activity and safety equipment, operational and cultural personnel, transport to the venue and timing of the event. McHugh et al. (2018) suggest that addressing these potential barriers to participation in physical activity initiatives is a requirement. While these considerations pose real logistical

challenges to the establishment of the activity forum—as they are likely to require coordinated effort between multiple stakeholders—they will not necessarily ensure the activity's sustainability.

Tekwatonti identified activity sustainability as a major issue with helth promotion initiatives in Kahnawà:ke. This issue was also cited in the literature, as Tremblay et al. (2018) identified distinct periods in KSDPP's history where the community indicated how their initiative content needed to evolve to match the development of the community. As such, fundamental facilitators that promote sustainable initiatives have been incorporated into this recommendation, with an understanding that they will need to shift as the a program unfolds. These facilitators are:

- Providing intergenerational opportunities for knowledge transfer.
- Cultivating a sense of belonging among generational peers.
- Creating a forum to critically engage with traditions.
- Demonstrating the importance an Indigenous perspective places on lived experience over theoretical knowledge.

Some of these facilitators are already embedded within the rites of passage program, and others were discussed with the knowledge holders specifically for the recommendations of this study.

6.3.1 Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer

Creating health promotion initiatives that simultaneously cater to multiple generations, while enabling intergenerational engagement was previously promoted in two KSDPP related studies (Delormier et al., 2003; Tremblay et al., 2018). This approach strengthens community cultural autonomy as role models, such as elders who often sit outside professional responsibilities, are enabled to impart a culturally important influence on the community. It allows older generations to not only pass on knowledge, but to also walk alongside younger generations as they develop. This provides a setting that differs from common learning environments such as in school or at home, as they generally segregate age groups or limit the number of generations interacting to two at a time. Kanen'tó:kon shared about the facilitating role that guidance from a generation above plays in the rites of passage program while youth are processing their learning experiences:

> Having individuals around us, having the older ones around us, having the ones who've gone through it, who can sit there and talk to you to say, "Well, let's make sense of that." You know. "You had this dream, now let's try to make sense of it. What does it mean to you? What does it mean to what you're doing, or where you're going, or where you want

> to go?" So, it's helping kind of guide them along in whatever they're gonna do in their lives. It's giving that opportunity to say, "Here's what the dream could be showing you. Is it a message from the natural world? Is it a message from your subconscious? You know, what's this message that you're getting through the dream? And what do you need to do to see it through that will bring you to the next step or whatever it is that you're going to be doing for yourself?" (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020).

This form of mentorship between the adult and the adolescent provides a transformational role for youth in a pivotal period of their lives. It steps into a realm that goes beyond a general Western physical health education mandate; it supports the holistic wellbeing of the individual. In addition, another study has recently recommended and emphasized the value of intergenerational mentorship among youth in Kahnawà:ke (Wasyliw, 2018). In the future directions of this co-constructed study between two Kanien'kehá:ka elders from Kahnawà:ke and an allied researcher, they discuss their intentions to develop an intergenerational mentorship program that brings younger and older youth together by design (Wasyliw, 2018). While the benefits of the guidance offered to the younger youth participants stands to match the rites of passage setting, Wasyliw's program also stands to offer further benefits to the youth mentors with social and cultural responsibility development opportunities. Overall, their proposed program promises to support the wellbeing of the youth and their families, utilizing intergenerational engagement as a key facilitator to attain this objective (Wasyliw, 2018).

6.3.2 Belonging Among Peers

Cultivating an environment where peers form strong relationships with each other stimulates a sense of belonging among group members and a collective relationship with the learning process they experience together. In Murdoch-Flowers et al.'s (2017) review of KSDPP initiatives, five key change processes were highlighted as positively contributing to the perceived wellbeing of a female group from Kahnawà:ke. Of the change processes—which included physical activity, nutrition, relaxation, cultural, and social components—forming new relationships and a sense of belonging facilitated the social component of health. Therefore, in addition to the intergenerational dynamic, the practical paddling experience will form peer groups of community members who are at similar stages of understanding and competence. This does not necessarily denote a separation by age, gender, or physical ability, but rather a gathering around their cultural and practical paddling competency levels.

To further support this point, a sense of belonging among the youth from the rites of passage is also an identified facilitating factor. Kanen'tó:kon framed their connection as a brotherhood; a cohort going through the same pathway side by side, “So, when they're all together it's like they help each other. They begin to form that brotherhood, that cohort, right? Because they're on that similar journey.” (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

Within this cohort, relationship building is of upmost importance as it bolsters the group to stay engaged when they face inevitable challenges and to support each other throughout these trials. Kanen'tó:kon reflects on the power of this support network within his own studies:

> I think of language learning. If I'm the only one sitting here learning a language, it's that much more difficult and there is that much more stress on me. But if I have a cohort of friends or family who are learning the language together, then we're feeding off of each other, we're encouraging each other, we're learning from each other—it's that growth. You're kind of stoking that fire to burn a little bit brighter because we're all in this together. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020)

Returning to the rites of passage youth, Kanen'tó:kon talks of his observations over the years; how a group of peers involved with certain activities often leads to a life that revolves around that lifestyle—for better or for worse. For instance, if a group is into partying, upholding their social wellbeing thwarts the individual’s ability to appropriately care for physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. In contrast, a lifestyle that is oriented around cultural traditions—like the fasting component of the rites of passage—opens doors for both personal and social development. A fasting practice provides opportunities to learn from experiences rather than being numb to them, it leads to the development of personal insights and self-awareness. Thus, a group oriented around a culturally pertinent practice—such as fasting or paddling—can provide opportunities for the collective betterment of physical, emotional, spiritual, and social wellbeing indicators.

6.3.3 Critical Engagement

The main objective of the debrief—which follows the practical paddling experience—is to provide an opportunity for critical engagement with the cultural underpinnings that support the tradition. This component depicts a decolonizing practice which calls community members to reflect, interpret, and discuss the intent of paddling—from the perspectives of their ancestors, and themselves in contemporary times in order to fulfil their custodial responsibilities for future generations. This facilitator is already common practice in Kahnawà:ke within traditional learning

environments. Kanen'tó:kon actively encourages youth to individually engage with the content of the cultural knowledge they are learning, not to just take things at face value. He stresses the need to find relevance universally; in relation to their belief system, their personal identity, and their upbringing to not only develop an appreciation, but to uphold this aspect of their culture:

> You have to understand what those teachings are that are being given to you so that not only does it make sense to you, but you can connect to it. It's not just that you're taking it and carrying it out, but you're actually making that connection to the teaching that's being passed to you. (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, July 7, 2020)

This excerpt further supports the argument that culture is a dynamic expression of indigeneity, and that it continues to be negotiated within relationships, as individuals interact with their respective socio-ecological systems.

I identify resemblance with this approach and the implementation of the principles of Heke's Atua Matua Māori Health Framework (AMMHF) (Heke, n.d.). I engaged in several AMMHF wānanga (workshops) in New Zealand, with Dr. Ihirangi Heke's guidance, where the post-physical activity debriefs challenged us all to consider the intent of the cultural knowledge corpus we had explored. For example, we deliberated over the connections between ourselves and the environmental domains we had just encountered. We interpreted metaphor and applied our understanding of the deeper meaning encoded within the oral narratives and traditions we carried out. To conclude, physical activity provides a vehicle for engagement with Indigenous knowledge systems, however, it is critical engagement with such traditions that promotes their continuation and asserts their continued relevance today.

6.3.4 Lived Experience > Theoretical Understanding

The last practical experience facilitator is a perspective that values lived experience, a type of understanding that is superior to theoretical understanding in an Indigenous setting. This facilitator responds to the evolving nature of Indigenous knowledge more broadly as it "involves constant learning-by-doing, experimenting, and knowledge-building" (Berkes, 2009, p.154). From this perspective, although they both contribute to the package, engagement with the practical paddling experience is more important than simply reading or watching the material resource. While the *hands-on* approach involved with practical engagement in activity can be dynamic, interactive, and a more enjoyable experience for some, practical lived experience takes purposeful effort over an extended period of time to develop.

Lived experience, from Kanen'tó:kon's perspective, develops from an internalization of newfound learning—whether it is practical or theoretical—into a pool of applied understanding. The process of forming lived experience is characterised by a transaction between states; experimentation with a phenomenon to find out whether the lived experience is congruent with its theoretical depiction. Kanen'tó:kon encourages others to "get out there and see; do the words match the actual experience of it?" (Kanen'tó:kon, personal communication, October 14, 2020). We connected over this point as I recounted a regularly referenced Māori proverb: "Hokia ki ō maunga kia purea e koe i ngā hau o Tāwhiri-mātea." Which translates to, "Return to your mountains so that you can be purified by the winds of Tāwhiri-mātea." In Māori cosmology, Tāwhiri-mātea is the son of the primordial parents; Ranginui (Sky Father), and Papatūānuku (Earth Mother). Tāwhiri-mātea is the deity, god, or guardian of his environmental domain; weather forms, such as storms, the winds, and the rains. This proverb prompts us to regularly engage in our relationship with our ancestral lands, as it nourishes our wellbeing holistically. This also alludes to cultural symbolism, as climbing our mountains represents the journey to enlightenment in a Māori worldview. In practice, this means that we climb our mountains repeatedly and in all settings; at dawn, during the day and at night; in the sunshine and heavy winds or rain. For we cannot expect to really understand our mountains and waterways or the traditions that engage with those environmental domains unless we have experienced them fully. Therefore, offering a material resource and a single paddling experience can instigate lived experience development, but on-going engagement with the forum would be required to cultivate meaningful lived experience—with the hope that participants connect with it on another level, identifying with it, in a way that it becomes an integral part of their life.

This resource and practical experience package forms the major output of this thesis. It responds to the pragmatic objective of the study; exploring how to incorporate Onkwehón:we ways of knowing into valuable physical activity health resources for the local community of Kahnawá:ke. It should be noted that while paddling became a useful tradition to demonstrate our co-designed recommendations, several other traditions could provide comparable value. Other suitable examples include a forum that promotes lacrosse, the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, and the gardening and harvesting processes involved with cultivating corn, beans and squash crops, among others. While this package is complete on its own, an accessory resource was developed through

the analysis and interpretation of the knowledge holder conversations. This final resource proposes a model that offers a perspective of the culturally significant factors for Kahnawakehró:non.

6.4 Resource: Discussion Model

The purpose of this proposed model is to stimulate conversation among Kahnawakehró:non around culturally significant factors, including: their interrelated nature, the complexity of their relationships, and a progression of how one affects another. The model offers a perspective of culturally-bound concepts which suggests that holistic concepts of wellbeing, identity, or decolonization are inextricably interconnected and multifaceted.

6.4.1 Interpreting the Model

This model is based on the major principles of the systems thinking discipline, which provides a method of analysing and interpreting systems. Thought from the discipline describes a system as "an interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something." (Meadows, 2008, p. 11). Within each system, three key parts are present: elements, their interconnections, and a driving purpose (Meadows, 2008). As such, great focus is placed on understanding the relationships between elements; their interactions and how they affect each other (Heke et al., 2019; Meadows, 2008). Systems thinking is used across multiple fields (i.e., health, economics, education) to design solutions to complex problems by identifying which elements are key drivers, their facilitators, and the outcomes of these processes (Meadows, 2008).

Recently, scholars have drawn connections between systems thinking and an Indigenous knowledge approach to understanding a health system (Heke et al., 2019). Heke and colleagues (2019) sought to demonstrate the parallels between a focus on relationships in systems thinking and the structure of Māori knowledge, which is arranged through whakapapa, with two Māori communities. The crux of their argument directs attention to the interconnections that bind elements in systems thinking, just like the practice involved with understanding whakapapa. Furthermore, both communities involved utilize Heke's AMMHF as the conceptual model for their health promotion initiatives. For this reason, I decided to gain a better understanding of how systems thinking uses causal loop diagrams to support the portrayal of the rich description model created in this study.

Next, I offer a summary of the model and how to derive meaning from it. At first glance of the model, three key blue elements are centred in the middle: labelled land, language, and

culture. These elements represent the major findings of this study; hence, they are interrelated with unidirectional arrows in a closed loop. Each arrow is marked with a plus symbol, which represents their positive influence on each other. There is another symbol within the loop with an "R" inside a spiral, this indicates the reinforcing nature of each element in the closed loop.

Taking a step out from the centre is a complex web of relationships between each of the elements in the model. For instance, colonization produces a negative effect on a number of other elements, as marked by the negative symbol, and it is also a part of more than one closed loop. However, these loops are marked by a spiral symbol with a "B" inside, which indicates the balancing nature of the elements within these loops. Next, three circles are also coloured blue, with orange text-labelled identity, belonging, and wellbeing. These elements represent the secondary findings of the study. I have arranged the grouping of elements with the same colour to represent similar concentrations. Finally, despite the lattice of connections drawn between the elements of the model, only a three-dimensional model could have shown the complexity needed to properly depict how interrelated so many of the elements truly are.

6.4.2 Origins of the Model

This model was originally developed to frame my understanding and interpretation of the content shared within the first wave of research conversations. I had intended to create a fullsome account of the conversations I held with each knowledge holder, that I could then bring back for the second round of conversations. However, as I started to go through my initial phase of analysis, an extensive text did not fit with the paradigmatic commitments of this study—it did not promote the relational and collaborative aspects of conversational methods as described by Kovach (2010). Consequently, I sought to create an artefact that could represent our conversations in a dynamic way, a representation that could be deconstructed and reframed as the knowledge holders saw fit. This lead to the creation of rudimentary versions of this model, that offered a conceptual representation of the system of knowledge elements and their interconnections shared in the first conversations. In the second wave of conversations I presented similar models to each participant and invited them to give feedback before I offered an explanation. From there, the models were further parsed out with the knowledge holders as the conversation moved through subjects driven by the study propositions. Eventually, Tekwatonti suggested the model be included as an output of the study; a perspective of an Onkwehón:we way of knowing, emanating from the co-constructed perspective of three Kanien'keha:ka knowledge holders and a Waikato researcher.

Further support for the model redirects to Tekwatonti's discussion shared in Chapter 4, around the pursuit of satahkarí:te. Sustaining a holistic balance supports wellbeing, and a significant contributor toward health is healing ourselves. With this model, she suggested its use as a tool to identify which important factor(s) may be missing within ourselves, or alternatively, to recognize factors that may be skewing our balance by thwarting other factors from ticking along. For example, for her the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen is a central mechanism to maintaining her wellbeing; so starting from this factor and carrying out a Thanksgiving Address would lead away from self and into mindful engagement with creation. On the other hand, starting from the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen could also lead her into self; to curate a mindful review of the factors that are preventing her from maintaining this ritual. Another example of the model's use is through exploration of culturally pertinent teachings or traditions that support the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen. For instance, referencing the model could retrace back to the principles of the Kaianere'kó:wa—a major contributor to the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen. Moving forward through the model, beyond the Creator and Creation, could lead to ceremony—practical applications of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen.

While this study means to offer pragmatic health promotion resource and initiative recommendations for the wider community of Kahnawà:ke, this model may be better suited for community knowledge holders, organizations, educators, researchers, practitioners, and students with some level of understanding of Kanien'kehá:ka teachings and traditions—rather than the general public. We present this model with the understanding that it does not offer a complete depiction of how these culturally significant factors function, that is not the intention. Rather, the model offers insight that further supports the study's primary findings, which are predicated upon the complex and intricate nature of indigeneity.

6.5 Summary

The study recommendations respond to the research propositions that drive this case study in collaborative ways. The significant influence of Kahnawà:ke's natural environment on the Kanien'kehá:ka culture takes a stronger presence than the other two propositions. Within this prominent proposition, the focus on the natural environment mostly revolved around the relationship between the land and the St. Lawrence river. Accordingly, the proposed resource and initiative package encourages health promotion initiatives that promote physical activity in this domain. Subsequently, culturally driven physical activity is presented as a tool to embody the

engagement with Kanien'kehá:ka traditions. Special mention is warranted as the physical component of the proposed practical experience is just one of three parts, yet it is the major conduit to forming lived experience. Thus, the learning opportunity would be incomplete without out it.

Next, strengthening the voice of Kahnawakehró:non in this study has materialized in more implicit ways. The most obvious representation of this is the inclusion of the discussion model, for it was not planned, but it responds to the knowledge holder's call. An inherent element of co-design is also demonstrated through the reflexive conversations I held with the knowledge holders. In a respectful manner, I sought to share my personal and cultural perspective whenever it was appropriate. This was an involved process as our research conversations spanned hours at a time. This entailed active listening to learn before offering a follow-up question or forming my own response. This approach allowed us to gather around comparative experience and understandings of subjects, to offer variations that were in line with our cultural perspectives, and most importantly, to form a relationship. I believe this relationship facilitated the creative process required to reimagine engagement with the cultural knowledge embedded within these resource and initiative recommendations.

These pragmatic results incorporate a number of considerations endorsed in other health promotion research involving Indigenous communities across Canada, and internationally throughout North America and Oceania. A major thread discusses the power within physical activity initiatives to support the positive development of Indigenous peoples when such forums promote holistic health and wellbeing (Bruner et al., 2016; Coppola et al., 2019; McHugh et al., 2018; Rowe et al., 2019; Tang et al., 2016). It was widely discussed that effective health promotion strategy among Indigenous communities is pragmatic and supportive of cultural continuity by tailoring to the cultural pillars pertinent to the community involved (Akbar et al., 2020; Auger, 2016; Joseph et al., 2012; Wahi et al., 2019). As such, a key facilitator identified within the literature is the inclusion of cultural traditions and their founding principles (Akbar et al., 2020; Bruner et al., 2016; Coppola et al., 2019; Hanna, 2009; McHugh et al., 2018; Wahi et al., 2019). Specifically, cultural practice is seen as mechanism to instil pride and strengthen identity among Indigenous communities (Akbar et al., 2020; Dubnewick et al., 2018; Pigford et al., 2012). Furthermore, culturally pertinent forms of physical activity are perceived to provide avenues that develop and sustain the spiritual aspect of wellbeing (Akbar et al., 2020; Boyd & Braun, 2007; Kerpan & Humbert, 2015).

Another key facilitator toward health and wellbeing promotion in Indigenous communities that is evident in the literature centres around initiatives that support a connection with land, and that this connection fosters a sense of belonging among social constructs, with ancestors, and in a broader sense with all of creation (Bruner et al. 2016; Coppola et al., 2019; Hanna 2009; Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013; MacDonald et al., 2015; McHugh et al. 2018). Tang et al.'s (2016) study warrants explicit mention as they offer several parallels to these aforementioned facilitators, which are consistent with the findings in this study. For example, they identified how the cultural identity of the Dene Nation—of the Northwest Territories of Canada, who partnered with the study—was the foundation of the entire project. Additionally, their secondary research themes were grounded in the cultural teachings and traditions of Dene Law—much like the principles of the Kaianere'kó:wa for Kanien'kehá:ka. Particular resonance was recognized in their concluding remarks that, "physical activity is cultural activity, and cultural promotion is health promotion, all grounded within Dene culture, tradition, land, and wellness." (Tang et al., 2016, p. 224).

A third key facilitator drawn from the literature discusses how valuable models for Indigenous health promotion incorporate initiatives with multiple generations (Bruner et al., 2016; Coppola et al., 2019; Hanna 2009; McHugh et al. 2018). With particular importance placed on the deliberate inclusion of elders and their traditional responsibilities to propagate intergenerational knowledge transfer (Hokowhitu et al., 2020; Rowe et al., 2019; Whānau Ora Taskforce, 2010). Research has demonstrated how the inclusion of children, adolescents, adults, and elders positively contributes to the wellbeing of all community members involved in a reinforcing manner (Akbar et al., 2020; Rowe et al., 2019; Tang et al., 2016; Wahi et al., 2019). The inclusion of each generational unit upholds the traditional roles entrusted to each developmental stage, therefore; allowing for the continued learning and reinforcement of the principles encoded within teachings and traditions across the life course of all community members (Rowe et al., 2019).

A concluding key facilitator that supports the propagation of successful Indigenous health promotion initiatives revolves around nurturing relationships (Bruner et al., 2016; Coppola et al., 2019; Hanna 2009; McHugh et al. 2018), as the formation and maintenance of connections is fundamental to Indigenous health and wellbeing (Brannelly et al., 2013; Fiedeldey-Van Dijk et al., 2017; Hart, 2014; Rowe et al., 2019). This is demonstrated in research involving Indigenous participants who indicated their preferences toward physical activity in groups, and further reinforced when they depicted the activities involved in cultural traditions as inherently group-

based (Akbar et al., 2020; Boyd & Braun, 2007). Lastly, compounding positive effectives were noted when health promotion initiatives targeted relational engagement for the community at large, in addition to the strengthening of in school and at home dynamics (Akbar et al., 2020; Boyd & Braun, 2007; McHugh et al., 2018; Wahi et al, 2019).

Further support for the recommendations of this study correlate with calls to action published in two major reports regarding Indigenous peoples and their respective federal governments in Canada and worldwide: the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [UNDRIP] (United Nations, 2007, September 13), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's report [TRC] (TRC, 2015b). Within the UNDRIP, 46 articles are presented, and Article 31 gives reinforcing detail to many components present in this study. With specific reference to the right to sovereignty over traditional knowledge and the expression of culture, including environmental knowledge, oral narratives, and traditional forms of sport and recreation (United Nations, 2007, September 13, p. 22). Of the 94 Calls to action stated in the TRC, five (87-91) were explicitly directed toward sport and reconciliation (TRC, 2015). Namely, components of Calls 88, 89, and 90 are incorporated into the present study. For example, in response to Call 89, this study promotes culturally relevant forms of physical activity as a vehicle toward cultural vitality; thus, holistic wellbeing ensues. Furthermore, traditions such as the paddling activity utilized to demonstrate the study recommendations could go on to feed high-level athletic pursuits such as the North American Indigenous Games discussed in call 88. To drive this point home, Call 90 requests the development of, "programs that reflect the diverse cultures and traditional sporting activities" of Indigenous peoples (TRC, 2015, p.10)–The overarching purpose of this study.

Finally, the study's proposed resources and accompanying initiatives offer a response to much of the research surrounding KSDPP's health promotion programming of recent years. They offer promising recommendations to positively affect wellbeing—physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually, and spiritually. Namely, with a focus on Kanien'kehá:ka traditions, they serve to strengthen identification with such cultural traditions, along with the teachings they emanate from. This serves to increase the amount of cultural content in health promotion programming, as proposed by Khayyat Kholghi et al. (2018). This also serves as a reinforcing initiative for the cultural revitalization involved with food sovereignty and security initiatives in the community (Delormier et al., 2018; Delormier & Marquis, 2019). Moreover, the physical

activity application in this tradition promoting resource and practical experience package also offers balance to the predominant nutrition focused initiatives. As a spiritual component is inextricably intertwined with cultural practice and the utilization of native language, all three recommendations serve to support the spiritual aspect of wellbeing for Kahnawakehró:non—a major factor advocated for by several researchers (Hovey et al., 2014; Khayyat Kholghi, et al., 2018; Murdoch-Flowers et al., 2017; Tremblay et al., 2018). Lastly, in what I consider a substantial positive shift, the strength-based approach adopted for this study supports Tremblay et al's (2018) call for wellbeing promotion, demonstrating how the cultivation of mechanisms that support thriving cultural wellbeing also promote holistic wellbeing within individuals and consequently their community.

Conclusion

This study set out to gain a better understanding of the culturally meaningful elements involved in an Onkwehón:we approach to holistic health and wellbeing with the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke. The study explored how to incorporate these elements into valuable physical activity health resources for the community involved. The research process followed an Onkwehón:we paradigm pertinent to the community, including several methodological considerations: critical theory, community-based participatory research, and Haudenosaunee consensus-based decision making. The research utilized an instrumental case study design, driven by three research propositions; (a) the influence of Kahnawà:ke's natural environment on culture; (b) culturally driven physical activity as a vehicle for cultural practice; (c) community voice is strengthened via co-design.

Findings from the study were separated into three chapters to reflect their philosophical and practical learnings, along with a contextual description of the case study setting. Chapter 4 draws on the philosophical nature of indigeneity, with land, language and culture presented as primary findings. The secondary findings discussed identity, a sense of belonging, and wellbeing with a focus on the spiritual component. In Chapter 5 explanations of the Kanien'kehá:ka community of Kahnawà:ke offer valuable insight into the study's socio-political setting. This chapter examined identifying characteristics of Kahnawakehró:non, and the significance of Kahnawà:ke's geographical location. The effects of colonization were contextualized, along with the community's decolonizing practices. Pillars of cultural strength end the chapter, with the rites of passage, Kaianere'kó:wa, clan system and the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen. Chapter 6 presented descriptions of actionable results from the study, offering three health resource and initiative recommendations: (a) tools to introduce cultural traditions; (b) a practical experience of cultural traditions; (c) a discussion model.

Implications for International Indigenous Health Research

The study findings incorporate a number of considerations endorsed by health promotion research with Indigenous communities within Canada, and internationally. A major thread among Indigenous health promotion discourse is that physical activity initiatives must be holistic in nature and application (Bruner et al., 2016; Coppola et al., 2019; Hanna, 2009; McHugh et al., 2018; Rowe et al., 2019). As a supportive overlay, effective health promotion strategy among Indigenous communities is pragmatic in development and design, it supports cultural continuity of the

communities involved, and encompasses culturally tailored initiatives (Akbar et al., 2020; Auger, 2016; Joseph et al., 2012; Wahi et al., 2019). Several key facilitators are identified to positively contribute toward such initiatives, including the incorporation of traditional cultural practice and connection with the land specific to the community involved (Akbar et al., 2020; Bruner et al., 2016; Coppola et al., 2019; Hanna, 2009; Lavallée & Lévesque, 2013; MacDonald et al., 2015; McHugh et al., 2018; Wahi et al., 2019). This reinforces Durie's (2004) position that the international network of Indigenous peoples is bound by a shared experience—a relationship with the natural environment in their respective territories. Two further facilitators consistent in this study and other literature include opportunities for intergenerational engagement, and the fostering of relationships involving the wider community (Akbar et al., 2020; Boyd & Braun, 2007; Bruner et al., 2016; Coppola et al., 2019; Hanna, 2009; McHugh et al., 2018; Wahi et al., 2019).

Finally, this study also addressed calls made by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [UNDRIP] (United Nations, 2007, September 13), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's report [TRC] (TRC, 2015b). Namely, the UNDRIP's Article 31, calling for the protection of traditional Indigenous knowledge systems and expression of culture (United Nations, 2007, September 13). Responses to the TRC in this study correlate with aspects of Calls 88, 89, and 90 (TRC, 2015b), as concentration on traditions like paddling can feed into high-level athletic pursuits such as the North American Indigenous Games; promoting culturally relevant forms of physical activity serves as a driving force toward cultural vitality, thus, holistic wellbeing ensues; and the development of initiatives that represent the diverse cultures of Indigenous peoples (TRC, 2015b).

Practical Implications for the Field

This study addressed domains relevant both internally and externally to KSDPP and their community members. Internal to Kahnawà:ke, it took into account several recommendations highlighted in previous literature that reviewed KSDPP's organizational operations, such as; broadening the scope of initiatives to include multigenerational engagement; increasing culturally pertinent information within the initiatives, with a particular focus on the spiritual component of wellbeing; and shifting the application of KSDPP's initiatives to a strength-based approach focused on wellness, rather than diabetes prevention. This study also broadens the scope of health related research in the community by offering a balance to the strong front of KSDPP's nutrition related research with a contribution that focuses on physical activity. Moreover, the knowledge

translation commitments implemented in this study strengthen KSDPP's community-based participatory principles, and reinforces researcher-community stakeholder partnerships.

External to Kahnawà:ke, this study explored a process addressing the limited understanding of incorporating Indigenous knowledge into valuable health promotion materials internationally. It demonstrated the value of purposeful cultural exchange among international Indigenous peoples as an innovative pathway to reconceptualize health—and inadvertently support cultural revitalization and community empowerment in the process. This study provides a process template for other Indigenous communities to adapt to their setting that may prove more relevant than the current non-Indigenous versus Indigenous model. The pragmatic recommendations and the approach employed in this research project serve to inform public health and physical health education researchers, practitioners, and their housing organizations and institutions, along with governing bodies that regulate public health research funding, policy, and strategy implementation.

Knowledge Translation in Kahnawà:ke

In accordance with KSDPP's Code of Research Ethics (KSDPP, 1997), once the study was ready for initial submission, a summary of the findings was presented to KSDPP's Research Team (RT) and Community Advisory Board (CAB) at their respective monthly meetings. These fora took place as PowerPoint presentations followed by an opportunity for questions, along with a two-page non-academic document to be freely shared with the wider community. From there, KSDPP's research protocol required two CAB reviewers be assigned to evaluate the completed thesis on behalf of the community, before its final submission within McGill University.

Upon review of the thesis, one of the CAB representatives secured funding to implement the practical paddling recommendation at two of Kahnawà:ke's community elementary schools. At the time this thesis was submitted, the objective was to implement a pilot program during the schools' physical education classes in the first two months of the 2021 fall term and the last two months of the 2022 spring term. Before this could be possible, the next steps planned were to coordinate with other community organizations in order to include local elders, preschool children, secondary school youth, and their families. The CAB representative also understood that the local Onake paddling club already held some kind of open day; as such, the associated task was to ascertain what kind of knowledge holder support the club may require with program facilitation.

Although consultation was already underway before the final submission of this thesis, it is intended that the other major tenets from the study findings be discussed in detail with the

KSDPP Executive Committee (i.e., CAB, RT, management personnel). Through on-going consultation, further knowledge translation recommendations to inform health promotion strategy and resource development will be taken from Chapter 6 to be deliberated, according to the Haudenosaunee consensus-based decision making protocol. Outside of the partnership with KSDPP, I will continue to respect the ethical commitment I made to Kahnawakehró:non as a researcher; I will offer copies of the thesis to the study's knowledge holders, and commit to respond to requests by Kahnawà:ke community organizations and individuals regarding the study.

Limitations

Limitations of the study refer to the case study methodology, the socially distanced nature of engagement, and the scope of the resource development process within the confinements of a master's research project. Case study was adopted for this study as it allows a researcher to study the phenomenon of interest in a rich and realistic setting (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994), a feature that is restricted with other types of methodologies. Case study design allowed me to adhere to my epistemological and ontological commitments in a way that other methodological traditions could not provide. Despite these liberties allowed with case study design, analysis procedures are not clearly developed in a case study (Yin, 2003). Therefore, the triangulation of data methods and analysis strategy of the study amassed an immense amount of data that proved challenging to analyse and interpret, particularly while trying to negotiate community based research, Indigenous paradigms and Western methodologies.

Considering the importance that Indigenous cultures universally place on fostering relationships (Brannelly et al., 2013; Fiedeldey-Van Dijk et al., 2017; Hart, 2014; Rowe et al., 2019), the social and physical distancing restrictions imparted by the COVID-19 pandemic placed unprecedented challenges on the study. For instance, special constraints were required for the key informant knowledge holders in the study who were elders—which caused attrition in their continued involvement for the second round of conversations. Moreover, I was only able to meet with one knowledge holder online via video calling due to physical distancing restrictions. As a final point to the matter, I had originally proposed a third data collection phase that involved a practical physical activity forum with knowledge holders, youth, and their families, but this had to be completely removed as the schools in Kahnawà:ke switched their delivery to online methods in both the spring and fall terms in 2020.

The third limitation I acknowledge is how a master's degree program confines the real-life application of the recommended resources and initiatives developed in this study. In a broader sense, the study recommendations would be considered part one of four necessary phases required to make meaningful health promotion resources and initiatives. The phases of a larger scale health promotion project would comprise: (a) developing recommendations for culturally rooted, meaningful physical activity health resources for the community involved; (b) deliberating over the recommendations in order to inform the development of a prototype, in collaboration with the community; (c) practically applying such resources and initiatives within the community setting; (d) evaluating each component in order to understand how they were received by the community. Thus, due to the time restraints of a master's thesis, feedback from the recommendations, development process, and delivery within the intended setting will remain unknown within the confinements of this study.

Future Directions

This study's proposed discussion model does not strictly follow systems thinking conventions of causal loop diagrams, still, the process exploration provided a useful tool to derive understanding of the complex Kanien'kehá:ka knowledge system. Upon reflection, a stronger grasp of the discipline could have facilitated extensive discussion of the rich cultural elements explored in the research conversations. As such, incorporating systems thinking is recommended for future health research where insight into the flow of Indigenous cultural systems is sought.

A major challenge in the formation of this study was the search for an appropriate methodology that considered my epistemological and ontological position as Māori, while simultaneously upholding that of the Kanien'kehá:ka community, and the demands of a Western academic instituition. I struggled to identify a research framework that allowed for both perspectives to co-exist in principle, although we evidently interacted in practice. Interestingly, I noticed it was easier to find common ground between the Kanien'kehá:ka community and other more closely related Indigenous groups, such as other First Nations of Canada, even though they might come from dramatically distant territories and speak different languages. Generally, I attributed this to the fact that Aotearoa represented such a distant setting in comparison to the part of Canada where the study took place. Therefore, the development of respectful conceptual research frameworks that enable Indigenous peoples to align while they simultaneously uphold their own tribally centred epistemology warrants investigation.

In a similar vein, another suggestion for future research is further cultural exchange among Indigenous communities. This study demonstrates the profound value created through genuine, mutually beneficial research relationships between Indigenous peoples. I have personally learnt that the perspective of an Indigenous researcher with a research focus external to their homeland, remains empathetic to the challenges of indigeneity yet removed from the hegemonic perspective of the colonizing majority. It is within this setting that novel insights develop, as their fresh perspective brings perceptions that were otherwise taken for granted by the host community. To be prescriptive, community-based participatory research that uplifts Indigenous knowledge holders from more than one community to lead the inquiry or exploration of research projects represents a powerful decolonizing approach to research. Valuable insights stand to be derived out of a forum where the respect for self-determination is a prerequisite.

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Appendices

Appendix A

KSDPP Ethics Certificate of Approval

KAHNAWAKE SCHOOLS DIABETES PREVENTION PROJECT
Center for Research and Training
P.O. Box 989, Kahnawake Mohawk Territory
Quebec, Canada J0L 1B0

" Daily Physical Activity, Healthy Eating Habits & A Positive Attitude Can Prevent Diabetes "

Review and Approval Process for Ethically Responsible Research
Certificate of Approval

The Community Advisory Board of the Kahnawá:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project has granted approval:

For the Research Proposal Project entitled: Incorporating *Onkweho'n:we* ways of knowing into physical activity health resources with *Kahnawakehró:non*

Proposed by:

Name of Researcher:	Hariata Tai Rakena, BA, GradDip, PGDip
Academic Supervisor:	Lee Schaefer, PhD
Department:	Kinesiology and Physical Education
Institution:	McGill University

Month and Date of CAB Approval: January 21, 2020

Confirmed by the CAB Executive Committee:

Signature: Eva Johnson

Name: Eva Johnson, KSDPP Community Advisory Board.

Date: January 23rd, 2020

Appendix B

Consent Form

Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education
McGill University
475 Pine Avenue West
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 1S4

Département de kinésiologie et d'éducation physique
Université McGill
475, avenue des Pins Ouest
Montréal, Québec, Canada H2W 1S4

Participant Consent Form

Researcher: Hariata Tai Rakena, Master's Student, McGill University, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, (514)349-6850, hariata.tairakena@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Associate Professor Lee Schaefer, McGill University, Department of Kinesiology & Physical Education, (514) 398-4184, lee.schaefer@mcgill.ca

Title of Project: Incorporating Onkwehón:we ways of knowing into physical activity health resources with Kahnawakehró:non

Sponsor(s): Teionkwaienawa:kon – Quebec Indigenous Mentorship Network, Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project (KSDPP)

This is an invitation to participate in a study being led by Hariata Tai Rakena, a Māori Indigenous master's student from New Zealand, based at McGill University, and with the supervision of Associate Professor Lee Schaefer, from the Kinesiology and Physical Education department at McGill University.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this research project is to gain a better understanding of the culturally meaningful components involved with an Onkwehón:we approach to wholistic health and wellbeing. Therefore, this study will explore how Onkwehón:we ways of knowing, specifically Kanien'kehá:ka cultural knowledge from the community of Kahnawà:ke, can be incorporated into meaningful physical activity health resources for Kahnawakehró:non.

Study Procedures: This study requires participants for two knowledge holder conversations which will explore the local clan system-centered cultural knowledge from the perspective of knowledge holders from Kahnawá:ke. I am looking for **2-4 knowledge holders** (at least 1 elder and 1 educator) for this study. We will have **two conversations** at a location that is convenient to knowledge holders.

Conversation 1: Will take **one hour,** but it may be extended if a knowledge holder desires. This conversation will begin with the introduction of a video, which is from a set of Māori Indigenous physical activity health resources that I helped develop in New Zealand. The video will be used to inquire into similar cultural knowledge from Kahnawà:ke, and to gain an understanding of the values and principles involved. The conversations will be audio recorded and then later transcribed (typed-out word for word), so that I can create an account of the conversation.

Conversation 2: Will also take **one hour** with each knowledge holder. The opportunity to have this conversation with other knowledge holders in a talking circle will be offered. In this case, the talking circle will take **up to two hours.** Each version of this conversation will start with a summary of the previous conversation(s) before I give the knowledge holders the account of our previous conversation(s) to review. The account will include personal notes and interpretations of the conversations. Then, the knowledge holders will be welcomed to discuss, clarify, and/or correct any details from the account. The major intentions of the second conversation(s) are to gain further insight into the knowledge shared, to ensure that knowledge holders are comfortable with my interpretations, and to collectively decide on the cultural knowledge to be shared in a culturally centered physical activity session.

(Version June 11, 2020)

Dissemination of Results: The knowledge and data gathered in this study plan to be disseminated through a five-step process consisting of; the delivery of a practical physical activity session with community members in Kahnawà:ke; a presentation of the study to the community of Kahnawà:ke at a KSDPP Community Advisory Board (CAB) meeting; a thesis; publications in peer reviewed academic journals; as well as presentations at academic conferences. A final copy of the thesis document will be provided to McGill University, including the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, the KSDPP Research Team and Community Advisory Board, and offered to the study participants.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may decline to answer any question or to engage with any topic that is discussed in any of the research conversations. You may decline to take part in any procedure of the study, and you may withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. If you decide to withdraw from the study, the information gathered will be destroyed by default, unless you give permission otherwise. Refusing to participate in any of the research conversations or withdrawing will not result in any negative consequences for you personally, nor the organization that you may represent.

Potential Risks: There are no anticipated risks to you participating in this research. Although, some people may experience psychological distress and become upset discussing past experiences. If the researcher notices any sign of distress from you, the participant, the conversation will immediately stop. You will also be reminded periodically that you are able to withdraw from the study, at any time and for any reason, without question or consequence. In the event that the conversation has to be stopped, but that you would like to continue the process at a later date, you will be offered a courtesy call from the research ombudsperson to ensure your wellbeing.

Potential Benefits: While you may not directly benefit from participating in our study, the knowledge gathered in the study is intended to inform the creation of a meaningful physical activity health resource for the community of Kahnawá:ke. It is intended that a resource will result from this study, and that this will be gifted back to the community for use in KSDPP related initiatives, all community schools, and other formal and/or cultural educative settings in Kahnawá:ke.

Compensation: Participants who are a part of the knowledge holder conversations will be offered a modest form of compensation in recognition of their time and contribution to the study.

Confidentiality: The safety of the participants and the confidentiality of the information gathered in this study is my utmost priority. I will be gathering information in the form of audio recordings and handwritten notes. Consent forms will be signed before any data connected to participants are collected. The research conversations will be conducted in a private space where participants feel comfortable, as discussed upon initial engagement. Participants can decide whether their personal and/or associated organizational information obtained in this study remains confidential. In the case that they request full anonymity, I will ensure that no information that could reasonably be expected to identify an individual and/or associated community organization is included in any description of the participant(s) in the transcripts, publications, and oral presentations. Therefore, a pseudonym will be assigned to each participant in the written descriptions of the conversations, and a coding system will be utilized to link the participant's consent form to the data. All non-digital data, including the coding system associated with each participant's pseudonym, and identifiable notes connected to the participants and/or the organization(s) they represent will be kept securely in a locked filing cabinet held in the researcher's home or the KSDPP office. Access to identifiable data and the coding system will only be available to myself as the researcher, and my academic supervisor, but no personal information will be shared across the internet or by phone. While traveling, all non-digital data will be kept with the researcher in a locked document box. All digital data will be kept in a password protected file on my personal computer. Audio files that are recorded by mobile phone will be converted into an MP3 file, uploaded to the same password protected file on my computer, and then deleted from the mobile device immediately after it is recorded. After the research process is completed, all data will be securely held by KSDPP for seven years before being destroyed, in accordance with the KSDPP Code of Research Ethics. The KSDPP general manager will be granted access to all of the study's data, except for the MP3 files of the conversations and the coding system that may identify participants and/or the organizations they represent; these will be destroyed.

(Version June 11, 2020)

Questions: If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Hariata Tai Rakena or Dr. Lee Schaefer:

Hariata Tai Rakena
hariata.tairakena@mail.mcgill.ca

Dr. Lee Schaefer
lee.schaefer@mcgill.ca

If you have any ethical questions or concerns about your rights that may arise in relation to this research project, you are primarily directed to the KSDPP appointed Ombudsperson: Judi Jacobs: (514) 772-1178

In the event that the KSDPP appointed ombudsperson does not fulfil your query, you may contact the McGill Ethics Manager, who is not a part of the research team. Lynda McNeil: (514) 398-6831, lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca

Please check the following boxes that apply to you:

Yes: No: I consent to participate in this research study.

Yes: No: I consent to be audio taped during research conversations.

This is a requirement of being a part of the knowledge holder conversations in this study.

Please sign below if you have read the above information and consent to participate in this study. Agreeing to participate in this study does not waive any of your rights or release the researchers from their responsibilities. A copy of this consent form will be given to you and the researcher will keep a copy.

Participant's Name: (please print) _____

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Version June 11, 2020)

Appendix C

Knowledge Holder Conversation Guide 1

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McGill University
475 Pine Avenue West
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 1S4

Département de kinésiologie et d'éducation physique
Université McGill
475, avenue des Pins Ouest
Montréal, Québec, Canada H2W 1S4

Researcher: Hariata Tai Rakena, Master's Student, McGill University, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, hariata.tairakena@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Associate Professor Lee Schaefer, McGill University, Department of Kinesiology & Physical Education, lee.schaefer@mcgill.ca

Title of Project: Incorporating Onkwehón:we ways of knowing into physical activity health resources with Kahnawakehró:non

Conversation Guide

Knowledge Holder Conversation 1: Introduction of Vignette (video series), inquire into cultural knowledge from Kahnawà:ke.

Interviewer: _____ Interviewee: _____

Date: _____ Interview Time Start: _____ Finish: _____ Location: _____

Pre-Interview Routine

- Informal greeting and offer participant water, juice, tea, or coffee
- Check that participant is comfortable with starting the recorder, start the audio recorder

Introduction

Formal

- Share pepehā (personal introduction in Māori language)
- Invite participant to share equivalent
- Thank participant for his/her participation in the study, and remind him/her of:
  1. The purpose of the study
  2. The objective of Knowledge Holder Conversation 1
  3. The general outline of the conversation

Informal

- Remind the participant that the conversation is informal and that most questions will be open-ended with the intent of generating conversation
- Tell participant that if he/she does not understand a question, they are welcome to ask me to repeat or rephrase the question at any time
- Remind participant that he/she can decline any question and withdraw from the study at any point today and in the future
- Ask if the participant has any questions about the conversation
- Share my whys: career focus on language, culture, and physical wellbeing, relocation to Montreal, fostering relationships within the international Indigenous network, introduction to KSDPP and Kahnawà:ke

Vignette – Video

- Introduce Toi Tangata and my role
- Describe the initial swimming activity session and rationale behind the overall initiative
- Describe the Whai video resource process
- Show Whai (stingray) video
- Describe the cultural relevance of the knowledge in the video, link to its location in Mangawhai and the actual physical movement
- Offer to show Rō Tāne and Kāhu videos if they are interested (if so, repeat process)

Opening Questions

- Ask for initial thoughts and/or feedback on the video(s)
- What excites (does this resonate with) you in a similar way, when you think of your own Kanien'kehá:ka culture?

Key Questions

Cultural values and practice

- Can you a share cultural value and/or practice that you think is important?
- How does this value/practice play out in your day to day life?
- Why is this knowledge valued? Is it commonly shared/passed down?
- How is this reflected/represented in Kanien'kéha (language), and from your worldview?
- Can you describe the clan system?
- Can you share the importance of the clan system from your perspective?
- Can you describe who your clan is and what it means to be from your clan?
- What are the special features of your clan?
- What is the intent of this cultural knowledge you have shared with me?

Geographical location and natural environment

- How is this specific/representative of Kahnawà:ke?
- Can you give me some more detail on the influence the water/land/skies have on this?
- What is a seasonal (time stipulated) adaptation or manifstation of this?
- What is the intent of retaining this environmental/seasonal knowledge?

Closing Questions

- We have come to the end of our time, and I have no further questions at this stage. Is there anything that you did not have the chance to include or expand on, from any of the subjects we discussed today, that you would like to circle back to?
- Is there anything that you would like to take out of the conversation from today?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Post-Interview Routine

- Thank participant again for his/her time and participation in the study
- Turn off the audio recorder
- Confirm Conversation 2 date, time, and location. Confirm that the participant will be contacted and reminded before the second conversation
- Offer gift to the participant

Appendix D

Knowledge Holder Conversation Guide 2 – Tekwatonti

Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education
McGill University
475 Pine Avenue West
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 1S4

Département de kinésiologie et d'éducation physique
Université McGill
475, avenue des Pins Ouest
Montréal, Québec, Canada H2W 1S4

Researcher: Hariata Tai Rakena, Master's Student, McGill University, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, hariata.tairakena@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Associate Professor Lee Schaefer, McGill University, Department of Kinesiology & Physical Education, lee.schaefer@mcgill.ca

Title of Project: Incorporating Onkwehón:we ways of knowing into physical activity health resources with Kahnawakehró:non

Tekwatonti - Conversation Guide

Knowledge Holder Conversation 2: Summarize previous conversation and review artefact, inquire into knowledge shared, and discuss cultural knowledge for physical activity session.

Interviewer: _____ Interviewee: _____

Date: _____Interview Time Start: _____ Finish: _____Location: Online

Pre-Interview Routine

- Informal greeting and discussion from previous conversation
- Check that participant is comfortable with starting the recorder; start the audio recorder
- Thank participant for her participation in the study, and remind her of the:
  1. COVID-19 related implications of the study
  2. Purpose of the study
  3. Objective of Knowledge Holder Conversation 2
  4. General outline of the conversation
- Remind the participant that if she does not understand a question, she is welcome to ask me to repeat or rephrase the question at any time
- Remind participant that she can decline any question and withdraw from the study at any point throughout the conversation
- Ask if the participant has any questions about the conversation before getting started

Conversation 1 Summary

- Summarize major impressions from the previous conversation's discussion
- Allow participant to respond to summary and/or the previous conversation

Opening Questions

With reference to the mind map of the previous conversation and researcher interpretations:

- Ask for initial thoughts and/or feedback on the conversation summary
- Please share some of the higlights of the conversation that stood out to you the most
- What do you think of the diagram?

- Are there any areas of the conversation that I have misinterpreted? If so, can you help me to develop/correct/expand my understanding?

Key Questions

Cultural Knowledge: language, land and identity

- I have reflected on how important language is for you. You repeated this throughout our conversation. Can you please tell me more about why your language is important to you?
- At various moments you discussed the importance of both land and language. How do these two factors influence cultural knowledge?
    - Ask for an example/anecdote of her lived experience and/or a cultural tradition
    - How did/does the Seaway affect your connection to the land in Kahnawà:ke?
- Last time you shared the term skennen'kó:wa and its meaning with me, and how this integrates in to everyday life:
    - Can you please share some more values/principles that you think characterize what it means to be Kanien'kehá:ka?
    - Please describe the difference between Kanien'kehá:ka and Onkwehon:we'néha?
    - How does this support your personal sense of belonging?
    - Can you describe your personal understanding of spirituality, or your relationship with the Creator?

Health and Wellbeing

- What does wellbeing mean to you?
- How does this uniquely reflect a Kanien'kehá:ka perspective?

Physical Activity Resource

- If this research could go on to inform the creation of a resource for KSDPP that demonstrates these teachings: Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, the rites of passage (fasting, tattooing, land-based teaching of medicines and harvesting), paddling, swimming and/or fishing on the river:
    - What would be missing?
    - Can you describe the most important practices?
    - Can you describe what the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen means to you?
    - What role does your Kanien'kéha language play in this belief/practice/tradition?
    - Which of these strategies would offer the most value?
      Story books, resource booklet, long/short form documentary, video series, social media posts, website platform, teaching curriculum

Closing Questions

- We have come to the end of our time, and I have no further questions at this stage. Is there anything that you did not have the chance to include or expand on from any of our conversations that you would like to circle back to?
- Is there anything that you would like to remove from the conversation today?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Post-Interview Routine

- Thank participant again for her time and participation in the study
- Turn off the audio recorder
- Discuss the following study procedures
- Offer gift to the participant

Appendix E

Knowledge Holder Conversation Guide 2 – Kanen'tó:kon

Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education
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Département de kinésiologie et d'éducation physique
Université McGill
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Researcher: Hariata Tai Rakena, Master's Student, McGill University, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, hariata.tairakena@mail.mcgill.ca

Supervisor: Associate Professor Lee Schaefer, McGill University, Department of Kinesiology & Physical Education, lee.schaefer@mcgill.ca

Title of Project: Incorporating Onkwehón:we ways of knowing into physical activity health resources with Kahnawakehró:non

Kanen'tó:kon - Conversation Guide

Knowledge Holder Conversation 2: Summarize previous conversation and review artefact, inquire into knowledge shared, and discuss cultural knowledge for physical activity session.

Interviewer: _____ Interviewee: _____

Date: _____ Interview Time Start: _____ Finish: _____ Location: Online

Pre-Interview Routine

- Informal greeting and discussion from previous conversation
- Check that participant is comfortable with starting the recorder; start the audio recorder
- Thank participant for his participation in the study, and remind him of the:
  1. COVID-19 related implications of the study
  2. Purpose of the study
  3. Objective of Knowledge Holder Conversation 2
  4. General outline of the conversation
- Remind the participant that if he does not understand a question, he is welcome to ask me to repeat or rephrase a question at any time
- Remind participant that he can decline any question and withdraw from the study at any point throughout the conversation
- Ask if the participant has any questions about the conversation before getting started

Conversation 1 Summary

- Summarize major impressions from the previous conversation's discussion
- Allow participant to respond to summary and/or the previous conversation

Opening Questions

With reference to the mind map of the previous conversation and researcher interpretations:

- Ask for initial thoughts and/or feedback on the conversation summary
- Please share some of the higlights of the conversation that stood out to you the most
- What do you think of the diagram?

- Are there any areas of the conversation that I have misinterpreted? If so, can you help me to develop/correct/expand my understanding?

Key Questions

Identity

- What does it mean to be Kanien'kehá:ka to you?
- How does this support your personal sense of belonging?
- What is the difference between Kanien'kehá:ka and Onkwehon:we'néha to you?
- How does this understanding incorporate spirituality/your relationship with the Creator?
- At various moments in our last conversation, you discussed the importance of both land and language. How do you conceptualise their differing and interconnected values towards cultural knowledge?
    - Ask for an example of an anecdote of their lived experience or known tradition, experiential learning

Health and Wellbeing

- What does wellbeing mean to you?
- How does this perspective differ in comparison to other Indigenous people?
- You talked about supporting the youth when they have their own dreams and realizations through the rites of passage journey:
    - Can you give an example or describe what this means?
    - How do you think supporting youth spiritual and/or emotional health could be normalized in settings outside of this group?
    - How do you think the rites of passage journey/program you have led could be integrated into the community schools' and/or after school programming?
    - What do you see as the next steps for the rites of passage?

Physical Activity Resource

- If this research could go on to create a resource for schools that demonstrates these teachings: Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, the rites of passage (fasting, tattooing, land-based teaching of medicines and harvesting), paddling, swimming and/or fishing on the river:
    - What would be missing?
    - Can you describe the most important practices?
    - Can you describe what the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen means to you?
    - What role does your Kanien'kéha language play in this belief/practice/tradition?
    - Which of these strategies would offer the most value?
      Story books, resource booklet, long/short form documentary, video series, social media posts, website platform, teaching curriculum

Closing Questions

- We have come to the end of our time, and I have no further questions at this stage. Is there anything that you did not have the chance to include or expand on from any of our conversations that you would like to circle back to?
- Is there anything that you would like to remove from the conversation today?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Post-Interview Routine

- Thank participant again for his time and participation in the study
- Turn off the audio recorder
- Discuss the following study procedures
- Offer gift to the participant