Building and Sustaining Authentic Partnerships

Business Readiness and Relationships with Aboriginal Communities in Northwestern Ontario

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This thesis has been prepared

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Declaration

I certify that I am the author of this project and that any assistance I received in its preparation is fully acknowledged and disclosed in the project. I have also cited any source from which I used data, ideas, or words, either quoted or directly paraphrased. I also certify that this paper was prepared by me specifically for this course.

No portion of the work referred to in this study has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification to this or any other university or institution of learning.

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Abstract

In order to foster the future economic growth of Northwestern Ontario, cooperation and partnership with key groups are necessary. This exploratory case study identifies new economic trends in industry, focusing on partnerships involving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants in business. The purpose of the study is to determine Northwestern Ontario's readiness to engage in authentic partnerships. Several major themes came to light as a result of the research. These themes include: changing demographics in Northwestern Ontario; legal structure and framework of partnerships; duty to consult; an operationalized definition of authentic partnership; examples of successful partnerships and reasons for success; important leadership characteristics in partnership; critical success factors for partnership; outcomes of partnerships; examples of unsuccessful partnerships and lessons learned; future opportunities; possible solutions and methods to encourage sustainable authentic partnership leadership. Further, the critical success factors for building and sustaining authentic partnership appear to align with the Seven Grandfather Teachings, with the element of "time" as a moderator.

This study contributes to an existing, but limited, body of research by providing practical solutions to assist parties in establishing successful authentic partnerships and by answering the question of Northwestern Ontario's readiness to engage in partnership. Further research recommendations include a more thorough review of the Seven Grandfather Teachings with a focus on one specific case study. With additional work in this area, it is possible that participants to a partnership will not regress in their ability to create authentic partnerships and not repeat the mistakes of the past. The benefit of authentic partnerships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups is the ability to move forward and to share in social, economic and relationship success.

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Introduction

The City of Thunder Bay has historically derived economic benefit and activity in resource development, transportation and government. However, in the past decade, the city has seen significant changes in its economy, particularly due to the shifting focus from grain handling and pulp and paper to an economic climate that now includes mining and mineral resources (North of Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2015). Over the next several years, resources and mining exploration and development across Canada will be expanding, resulting in employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. With over 800 mines, Canada will see 1 of every 46 jobs directly tied to mining, and 1 of every 10 jobs will be in the provision of goods and services supporting mining functions (Mining Industry Human Resouces Council, n.d.). In addition, employment opportunities have shifted the economic base to services and knowledge-based industries in addition to research, education and health care. The spinoff effect of these jobs adds to the economic climate of Canada and, in particular, of Northern Ontario.

Along with changes in our economic activity, Thunder Bay has experienced fluctuations in its population size, due to the changes in internal and external migration patterns. Other demographic changes that have been noted by the North of Superior Workforce Planning Board (2015) include a young and growing Aboriginal[1] population along with an aging non-Aboriginal population (North of Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2015). In the midst of these changes

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[1] The term "aboriginal" is representative those individuals who identify as First Nations (North American "Indian"), Métis, or Inuit, who may be affiliated with a First Nations or Indian Band, and may (or may not) self-report as a Registered or Treaty Indian status pursuant to the Indian Act of Canada (Government of Canada, 2015). Aboriginal peoples of Canada are also defined in the Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35 (2) as including the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada. These groups have been associated with different cultures, beliefs and heritage (Government of Canada, 2012). The literature search includes a holistic approach that includes all Aboriginal peoples, however, the findings in this report are associated with First Nations communities.

are challenges and opportunities for a new value-added economy of the future. Recent research suggests that the Canadian economy will see a labour shortage and the federal government developed programs to assist with satisfying future needs including immigration programs (Belanger & Bastien, 2013). With the ongoing concerns of a labour shortage and a general aging of the population, increasing the skills, training and partnership opportunities with a growing Aboriginal population would benefit the Canadian economy while promoting sustainability for Aboriginal communities.

As the economy of Northwestern Ontario develops, there is a strong interest in collaboration, partnerships and alliances to reach goals that benefit organizations, the market, and our communities. Many of the partnerships that exist today involve Aboriginal communities and businesses. The benefits of cooperation and partnership are many and include investment in economic initiatives leading to improved social benefits, and job and program opportunities. Knowing how to maximize these opportunities and build positive working relationships with Aboriginal communities is critical for long-term relationships and mutually beneficial financial and social outcomes for all. A critical success factor is the readiness of Northwestern Ontario to pursue authentic partnership with Aboriginal communities.

Literature Review

The Economic Climate in Thunder Bay and Opportunities for Growth

It is the year 2036 and there's a new Northern Ontario.

Northern Ontario has a skilled, educated, healthy and prosperous population that is supported by world-class resources, leading edge technology and modern infrastructure. Companies scan the world for opportunities to create jobs, attract investment and serve global markets. Communities are connected to each other and the world, offering dynamic and welcoming environments that are attractive to newcomers. Municipalities, Aboriginal Communities, governments and industry work together to achieve shared economic, environmental and community goals (Government of Ontario, 2011, p. 4).

Northwestern Ontario has experienced economic resilience over the past two decades, with a fundamental shift in business activity (North of Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2015). Traditional economic drivers for the Thunder Bay included resource management in forestry, pulp and paper, grain handling, transportation and government services. While forestry, pulp and paper are resource-based business areas that are still evident in the City, there has been a decline in this field as observed through the closure of several paper mills, temporary and longer term "shut downs" of lumber mills, and a need to diversify into fields such as energy generation to offset the increased price of electricity (North of Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2015). In terms of grain handling and transportation, Thunder Bay is geographically situated to offers unique opportunity in transportation of resources (City of Thunder Bay, 2013). For instance, the city is located in Central Canada along the Trans-Canada highway and approximately 30 minutes from the border crossing into the United States. In addition, Thunder

Bay is situated on Lake Superior and boasts one of the largest ports in Canada (6th largest port, but operating at only 10% capacity (City of Thunder Bay, 2013) as well as an international airport, which is currently the third busiest in Ontario (City of Thunder Bay, 2013).

Established government services in Thunder Bay include municipal, provincial and federal government offices of varying scope. However, centralization of offices and reductions in government staff have reduced overall staffing levels with an impact on Thunder Bay and other smaller communities in Northwestern Ontario (City of Thunder Bay, 2013).

In terms of the city's diversification from the traditional economic drivers of forestry, pulp and paper, transportation, grain handling and government services, the city has also observed a shift in resources-based businesses to knowledge and service sector businesses such as health care, medical research, and new educational program offerings such as law and medicine through Lakehead University (North of Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2015).

According to *Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011*, economic success in North America in increasingly based on several factors including a diversified economy that promotes innovation and entrepreneurship; healthy, educated and skilled human capital; and vibrant communities with modern and efficient infrastructure. These successes reside in a healthy and clean environment (Government of Ontario, 2011). This report identifies that in order to achieve the prosperity required, there must be interconnectedness and a recognized contribution of people, communities, infrastructure and the environment. This requires inclusive and positive relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal peoples.

Demographics in Canada and Thunder Bay

There are demographic changes in Canada that have an impact on human capital to support ongoing economic and employment activity. The largest working age classification in Canada consists of baby boomers, at 36.9% of the population. A similar picture exists in

Thunder Bay, with workers between the ages of 45-65 representing 31.7% of the population (North of Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2014). The city has also observed a rapid growth of the Aboriginal population (Southcott, 2009), with over a 10% population growth between 2006 and 2011 (North of Superior Workforce Planning Board, 2014). Census Canada statistics identify that the population of Indigenous[2] people in Canada has increased by 20% since 2006, and a high proportionate growth in the Aboriginal youth population, under the age of 25 (Statistics Canada, 2011; Southcott, 2009). "The contribution of Aboriginal youth in particular will be vital to the North's future success" (Government of Ontario, 2011, p. 38).

In addition, in order to move the economy forward, there is a need to encourage Northern Ontarian residents' access to health care, education, training and skills development, especially in those in under-represented groups including Aboriginal peoples. Through increased access, new opportunities, including new business ventures, are possible (Government of Ontario, 2011). The Districts of Kenora and Thunder Bay have the largest number of Aboriginal people (Southcott, 2009). More than half of the Northern Ontario population lives in Greater Sudbury, North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins and Thunder Bay (Government of Ontario, 2011). These cities collectively provide an economic hub that benefits all of Northern Ontario and infrastructure developments or investments in these areas can assist others throughout Northern Ontario (Government of Ontario, 2011).

New Ventures and Partnerships

Canadian businesses and Aboriginal communities are moving forward and working collaboratively to meet their respective and mutual needs (Anderson, 1997; Public Policy Forum 2012; SNC Lavalin, 2015). A recent example in Thunder Bay, North Star Air Ltd., along with its

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[2] The term "indigenous" means native to the area, according to the Government of Ontario website (Government of Ontario, 2015).

affiliate Cargo North, have signed a revenue-sharing contract with Bearskin Lake and North Caribou Lake First Nations to provide air transportation services to these communities, with further opportunities to align with suppliers and food retailers to provide resources for the communities (The Chronicle Journal, 2015). These initiatives, while meeting social and economic development needs for First Nations communities, have mutual benefit to the airline company with an increase in business and market share, and the opportunity to work with other potential suppliers or vendors.

In addition to private sector alliances, governments and non-governmental organizations have also created similar partnership agreements. In a recent announcement, the Government of Ontario has launched new projects related to forestry with revenue sharing opportunities with Aboriginal peoples to facilitate economic growth and community development on traditional territories related to forestry (Clutchey, 2015). In addition, Ontario Power Generation has several arrangements with First Nations communities, including a 25% equity share arrangement with the Moose Cree First Nation in a $2.6 billion redevelopment of hydroelectric stations on the Lower Mattagami River, in northeastern Ontario (Ontario Power Generation, n.d.)

These are recent examples of partnerships with Aboriginal communities in order to foster economic growth and opportunities and how corporate-Aboriginal partnerships are engaging in equity investment and profit sharing (Sisco & Stewart, 2009).

As businesses evolve to become competitive in a globalized resource development market, organizations are seeking opportunities such as joint ventures, mergers and other alliances to maintain competitive advantage and sustainability. In the Canadian economy, this is observed specifically with organizations and government agencies that align and conduct business with Aboriginal communities and businesses. For over 30 years, Aboriginal peoples in

Canada have gained an expanding role in the management of natural resources include forestry (Fortier et al., 2013) and mining (Natural Resources Canada, 2014). With this expanding role, various agreements, partnerships and alliances have been created with varying degrees of success (Fortier et al., 2013).

Thunder Bay is still well positioned in other natural resource development opportunities. As of 2013, there were several mining projects being contemplated and at least 10 potential projects related to mining that have been analyzed in terms of impact and benefits (City of Thunder Bay, 2013). Although not all of these projects have come to fruition, at the time they included:

- Cliffs Natural Resources Inc. – Black Thor Chromite Project (Ring of Fire area)

- Noront Resources Ltd. – Eagle's Nest Nickel, Copper, Platinum, Palladium Project (Ring of Fire area)

- Rainy River Resources Ltd. – Richardson Twp. Gold Project (Kenora)

- Rubicon Minerals Corporation – Phoenix Gold Project (Red Lake)

- Osisko Resources Ltd- Hammond Reef Gold Project (Thunder Bay South)

- Stillwater Mining (Canada) Ltd. – Marathon copper-PGE Deposit (Thunder Bay South)

- Bending Lake Iron Group Limited – Bending Lake Iron Property (Kenora)

- Treasury Metals Inc. – Goliath Gold Project (Kenora)

- Goldcorp Inc. – Cochenour/Bruce Channel Gold Project (Red Lake)

- North American Palladium Ltd. – Lac des Iles Project (expansion project) (Thunder Bay South) (The City of Thunder Bay, 2013, The City of Thunder Bay: CEDC, 2012)

Engaging in Authentic Partnerships with Aboriginal Communities

Definitions and Elements for Success

With business development and growth, particularly with respect to resources, it has become increasingly important to engage Aboriginal leadership in decision-making (Public Policy Forum, 2012). Many new ventures are tied to the development of traditional land. As a result, it is paramount that, when working with Aboriginal communities, the partnership is authentic. In this regard, the relationship must be respectful, trusting where mutual interests and needs are considered and openly discussed, achieving equitable outcomes.

There are very few scholarly articles that define "authentic partnerships", particularly in the field of management. The term "authentic partnership" is a specific label that incorporates behavioural and emotional dimensions that include, but extend beyond, "respectful" and "effective" relationships. Authentic partnerships are based on a foundation mutual relationship of trust, engagement and collaboration (Public Policy Forum, 2012). However, authenticity in the partnership relationship can include other additional elements. For instance, several references to authentic partnerships exist in the education sector, specifically noting that the issue resides in engagement. One scholarly article noted that engagement with communities was possible through the establishment of connections, trust, commitment, cultural awareness and participation (Noel, 2011). A fundamental note in one particular report suggested that developing and maintaining trust was critical in establishing authentic partnerships with Aboriginal peoples (Public Policy Forum, 2012). Building trust strengthens relationships and enables creative problem solving and adaptations to challenges or opportunities.

Establishing authentic partnerships with Aboriginal communities requires the ability to understand Aboriginal needs and interests based on their priorities and goals for the future (Public Policy Forum, 2012), recognizing that their traditions and cultural values (Brown, et al.,

2012). Holding authentic communication and expressions of mutual interests and opportunities would provide further exploration and commitment in the duty to consult. Engaging in joint ventures with Aboriginal communities will also contribute to employment and developmental opportunities necessary to add to our national economy and human capital resources (Government of Canada, 2014).

Implementing authentic partnerships with Aboriginal communities can encourage participation in employment, assist in entrepreneurial opportunities and attempt to minimize inequities in well-being and standards of living. With the rise of mineral and resource development, entrepreneurship and technological innovation, and in response to the changing labour demographic, partnerships with Aboriginal groups will become increasingly important (Public Policy Forum, 2012). While some organizations and stakeholder groups have been involved in consultation, genuine engagement is necessary in order to build authentic partnerships. Conversations and consultations need to be deeper to fully appreciate the future landscape and the methods used to work cooperatively and ensure successful outcomes. All parties must have a role in fostering an effective, meaningful and responsible relationship in order to identify issues and develop solutions to encourage authentic and engaged partnerships (Public Policy Forum, 2012).

In order to build successful relationships, all participants must feel a connection in terms of shared and individual objectives (e.g., revenue, employment, and skills), regular and open communication, respect, understanding, and trust. In addition to interconnectedness is the recognition of the distinct contributions of urban, rural and Aboriginal communities (Government of Ontario, 2011). The equitable, amicable working relationships must be

constructed to ensure mutual benefits with shared decision-making and shared accountability (Government of Saskatchewan, 2005).

In addition to fostering authentic partnerships, parties to the relationship must be cognizant of how to maintain relationships. Relationship management is a strategy where a business continuously engages and maintains a connection with its audience. The audience could be a customer or a business (Investopedia, 2015) and the intention is to create and maintain a meaningful partnership, rather than a transactional relationship. The goal is to encourage the relationship such that there is a continued use of services or product, where applicable. It has been suggested that a systemic approach to partnership improves the long-term collaboration required to produce positive outcomes (Barnes, et al., 2009). Aboriginal business partnerships seek opportunities for mutually beneficial outcomes that meet the social and economic needs of the Aboriginal communities as well as providing non-Aboriginal partners access to important resources on traditional land. As a result, it is imperative to successfully create, manage and foster positive relationships with Aboriginal partners in business activities to ensure ongoing commitment and success of the alliance. This must be done while being mindful of the history and cultural sensitivities of the Aboriginal population.

This may also require "deep listening" skills, which focus on the importance of respect and the relation between the storyteller and the listener. According to the author, Stephen Covey, "Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply" (Good Reads, 2015). As a result, misunderstandings may occur. Actively listening and involvement in decision-making improves relationships and authentic partnerships. The act of active listening is also a feature in other relationship models including the health care model

where the parties utilizing critical reflection and dialogue to seek out new opportunities (Dupuis, Gillies, Carson, & Whyte, 2011).

Aboriginal people practice deep listening, which focuses on the importance of respect and the relation between the storyteller and the listener (Voyageur, Brearley, & Calliou, 2014). Deep listening is based on an Eastern philosophy that requires an appreciation of the entire context including the deeper meaning, rather than focusing on content and conceptualization. It facilitates collective mindfulness, which means being aware of the complexities and different viewpoints within a situation. This greater awareness provides a deeper presence and understanding, creating a greater sense of authentic awareness, new dimensions of power and clearer direction, linking inner experience and collective experience in creative, non-linear ways (Voyageur, Brearley, & Calliou, 2014). Deeper understanding and appreciation, or mindfulness, improves organizational functioning (Weick & Putnam, 2006). Collective mindfulness is how Aboriginal peoples seek a complete picture of a difficult situation, expressing perspectives, encouraging dialogue until consensus is achieved (Voyageur, Brearley, & Calliou, 2014). It relies on the practices of awareness through activities of watching, listening, waiting and acting (Korf, 2014). Non-Aboriginal counterparts in a business relationship may consider this in terms of the cultural and traditional distinctions relevant to contemplation, decision-making, understanding the situation in detail, and providing perspective and clarity.

Potential Barriers and Obstacles

Creating and maintaining positive relationships may be difficult. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Erasmus & Dussault, 1996) acknowledges that the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada has a long and turbulent history. This relationship evolved from cooperation (during French-British wars and the fur trade), to paternalism relative to the protection of Aboriginal people from European settler culture, to

coercion (assimilation) and conflict (where Aboriginal people began to organize more actively to resist against the imposition of colonial policies, practices and structures which were thought to destroy their culture or rights) (Calliou, 2011). Furthermore, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its *Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* confirming that for over a century,

> . . . the central goals of Canada's Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights, terminate the treaties, and through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as a distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015a)

The report identifies that residential schools were created to support a policy of cultural genocide. The schools were funded by the federal government and run by churches. Aboriginal youth were taken from their families and their communities "in order to be stripped of language, cultural identity and traditions. Canada's attempt to wipe out Aboriginal cultures failed. But it left an urgent need for reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015b). Considerable damage was done to the relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and it will take time to repair the relationship. However, the process to repair and move forward began with the public apologies of the church in the 1980s, the further findings and commitment of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the recognition of survivor stories (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015a). The Prime Minister in 2008 further publically apologized, as did the parliamentary leaders at that time. These actions have started the healing and reconciliation and further actions must continue

in order to foster change, restoring a country to have mutual respect between peoples and nation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015a).

The Commission report confirms that there is a desire to move forward towards a stronger and healthier future:

Canadians have shared a long and sometimes troubled history. Things have happened that are painful to recount and are deplored by the great majority of Canadians. Many of these events were the result of greed or ill will; others were the product of ignorance, misguided intentions or a lack of concern for peoples already at the edge of Canadian society. They have left their legacy in the social and economic conditions of Aboriginal communities and in the distrust and betrayal felt by Aboriginal people. A sense of profound injustice and pain was expressed in testimony before this Commission. The damage is real and will take time to heal. That history of hurt has to be reckoned with in creating a new relationship. We are not suggesting that we dwell on the past. Aboriginal people, like others in Canada, want to put the events of the past behind them and work toward a stronger and healthier future. (Erasmus & Dussault, 1996, pp. 8-9)

The troubled history between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, means that building trust is not easy and time and care is require to ensure that historical mistakes do not repeat themselves in the present (Poupart, Baker, & Horse, 2009). There is a legitimate need to re-establish trust and authentic partnership through open interactions and honest discussions (Poupart, Baker, & Horse, 2009).

Engagement and Trust

Inter-organizational relationships with agencies, government, media, business and other organizations require a high level of engagement (Misener & Doherty, 2013). Partnerships

require relevant and necessary resources, capacity, knowledge, and social benefits to build community cohesion (Misener & Doherty, 2013). These elements are important to the well-being of participants, including Aboriginal communities (Salee, 2006). Key relationship processes include trust, consistency, balance, engagement, and specific management skills (Misener & Doherty, 2013). These partnerships provide the opportunity to access human and financial capital that would not ordinarily be available to the organization or Aboriginal participant (Sisco & Stewart, 2009).

Furthermore, high quality relationships have additional attributes of engagement (i.e., open dialogue and problem solving, personal connection), balance (i.e., reciprocity), consistency, and trust (Misener & Doherty, 2013). If there is a perceived power imbalance, a sense of equality is difficult to achieve. However, "consideration of the relative evenness of the relationship is essential in partnership work" (Misener & Doherty, 2013, p. 141). Being aware of the possible imbalance is critical because if left unattended, conflict and power struggles may arise, which can be counterproductive to successful partnerships. Partnerships involving smaller firms may involve power imbalances and resource constraints. Specifically, a power imbalance can diminish a smaller firm's ability and interest to pursue relational advantage (Jones et al., 2014). There are also concerns related to a lack of equity in knowledge transfer, capabilities, and control as parties move toward mutual dependence and partnership (Gould, Ebers, & Clinchy, 1999). Cultural and educational differences between Aboriginal people and their non-Aboriginal counterparts (Mabee & Hobert, 2006; Salee, 2006) may create this imbalance in power and therefore have an impact on a long-term relationship or successful outcomes.

In typical strategic alliances, trust and control are linked with risk (Das & Teng, 2001). Greater control over behaviour and output is related to lower risk in the alliance (Das & Teng,

2001). Control may have a negative effect on the partnership, particularly where the organization's desire for control and opportunism are positively related (Das & Teng, 2001). Therefore, when considering an inclusive Aboriginal partnership, the type of control, risk and trust exercised by any one party may have an impact on the success of the venture. Participants in the relationship may also have differing worldviews, which can impact the agreement (Mabee & Hobert, 2006). Therefore, it is important to appreciate the impact that risk (relational versus performance) and trust (goodwill, competence and others) (Huang & Wilkinson, 2014) have on the perception of risk (Das & Teng, 2001) and ultimately the success of the alliance or agreement.

Implementing and sustaining processes that encourage trust and reduce resentment should be pursued (Misener & Doherty, 2013). Effective trust-based governance can facilitate the ability of smaller firms to enter into a collaborative relationship, improving operational and firm performance (Jones, et al., 2014). Trust building is a dynamic process and emotions have a significant role in this function (Sloan & Oliver, 2013). Building trust takes time and there may be barriers including the emotional responses of the parties, differences in values, cultures (Gould, Ebers, & Clinchy, 1999), language, and partner stereotypes (Sloan & Oliver, 2013). If trust is absent, activities are merely coordinated and a true sense of unity is not created.

There are cognitive and affective elements associated with a person's trustworthiness. Affective elements are the demonstrations of sincere and legitimate care in one another (Sloan & Oliver, 2013). Cognitive factors are the judgements made based on observed behaviour and repeated interactions. Therefore, having consistency in representation (membership makeup, identified roles, and interests) is important because the exchanges that occur add to the quality of the relationship (Misener & Doherty, 2013). Building a relationship takes time and ensuring that

the parties are represented well assists in sharing information and experiences. However, many First Nation bands experience elections every two years. Other non-Aboriginal political parties may have elections every four years; board members and employees in private industry may also turnover. Ensuring that the parties are represented consistently throughout the partnership can assist in the transition of turnover. Turnover in the relationship participants may be viewed as disruptive to the stability of the relationship, requiring a further learning curve (Misener & Doherty, 2013). Although there is no integrated theory of the antecedents, consequences, or development of trust (Huang & Wilkinson, 2014), it is a fundamental element in the relationship process. Trust has an ability to lower opportunistic actions, governance costs, and conflict, and it improves inter-organizational learning, experimentation and creativity (Jones et al., 2014, Sloan & Oliver, 2013). The dimensions of trust (cognitive and affective) are affected by the different phases, readiness or situations in a business relationship (Huang & Wilkinson, 2014). Some of the trust issues can be resolved through an acknowledgement and understanding of Aboriginal rights that are protected and preserved by the *Constitution Act of 1982* (Government of Ontario, 2009).

Aboriginal Business Development – Moving Forward

According to the Aboriginal Human Resources Council (n.d.), there are nearly 700 Indigenous communities across Canada that can offer potential partnership opportunities and over 37,000 self-employed Aboriginal people in Canada in 2006. This represents an increase of 85 percent since 1996. The majority (68%) are small businesses (based on the Industry Canada definition of less than 100 employees) and nearly half (46%) had total sales revenues of $5 million or more for the previous fiscal year (Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, 2011). Growth in Aboriginal entrepreneurship has added considerably to the nation's economic climate (Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, 2011).

Social Standards and Programming Gaps in Aboriginal Communities

Despite increased self-employment rates, the employment rate of Aboriginal people has declined. Therefore, while entrepreneurial and business growth may add to the financial and capacity-building experience, there are sub-populations of Aboriginal people who experience significant financial hardship and a severely underfunded level of existence. In 2009, the unemployment rate of Aboriginal people in Canada (living off reserve) was 13.9% (Statistics Canada, 2011) compared to non-Aboriginal workers where unemployment was recorded as 8.1%. First Nations employment rate (on reserve) declined from 39.0% in 2006 to 35.4% in 2011 (The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2015). Combine this with a lower completion rate of high school education and lower salaries for those Aboriginal peoples who are working and the result is a negative impact on Aboriginal well-being relative to other Canadians.

According to research by Daniel Salee (2006), which has also been supported by other scholars (Rose & Rose, 2012), there are gaps in well-being and the standard of living between Aboriginal peoples and their non-Aboriginal Canadian counterparts. The recent release of The Aboriginal Economic Progress Report suggests that some gains have been made by Aboriginal people since 2006, but significant gaps remain (The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2015). It is evident through media and other sources that the Aboriginal population has been experiencing depressed economic conditions, especially when compared to standards that are widely accepted across Canada. While there have been some gains in material welfare and education, Salee suggests that a minority of Aboriginal people have had successful careers. The gap becomes evident in comparison with non-Aboriginal Canadians (Salee, 2006). Even following the recommendations and findings as expressed in the Hawthorn Report (1966), four decades later, Salee (2006) suggests that young Aboriginal individuals continue to be inadequately prepared for the job market (Rose & Rose, 2012), which significantly affects a

general sense of well-being that other Canadians seem to enjoy. In 2010, 54.1% of First Nations on reserve relied on government transfers as their main source of income, compared to 25.6% of the non-Aboriginal population age 15 years and older (The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2015). Material well-being, unemployment and education are measures that assist in understanding the social factors that impact Aboriginal people and addressed by Salee.

Based on collected information from Statistics Canada, 43 percent of those identifying as First Nations completed high school with a post-secondary diploma. The Métis population is slightly higher with a completion rate of 47 percent and 6 percent with Inuit students. Sixteen percent of the First Nation population completed a post-secondary certificate but did not complete high school. Inuit and Métis completed a post-secondary certificate (but did not complete high school) at a completion rate of 12% and 16% respectively (Statistics Canada, 2011, Aboriginal Human Resource Council, n.d.).

In terms of annualized income, Indigenous people's median income levels who have completed high school are $30,000-$40,000 (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) and if they had not completed high school, the median salary was between $10,000 and $30,000. The overall median income of all Aboriginal people from 2006 to 2010 increased from $16,752 to $20,701 as compared to the non-Aboriginal counterparts of $25,855 to $30,195 (The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2015). According to a study released by the Centre for the Study of Living Standards (cited in Aboriginal Human Resource Council, n.d.), if Indigenous people in Canada reach the same education and employment level as non-Indigenous people, Canada's GDP would increase by $401 billion by 2026 (Aboriginal Human Resource Council, n.d.). In an evaluation of the national employment rate and median income (without factoring in education),

the national Aboriginal community saw a decline in employment from 2006 to 2011 (53.7% to 52.1%) (The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2015). While non-Aboriginal groups also observed a decline over the same period (62.7% and 61.2% respectively), the unemployment rate for the overall Aboriginal population was noted as being twice as high as for the non-Aboriginal population in 2011 (The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2015).

These poor economic outcomes for Aboriginal people have been attributed to location (remoteness), lower education (Rose & Rose, 2012), insufficient training, lower proficiency in language (in either French or English), single parenting, moving into a new geographic residence, discrimination, and inadequate infrastructure (The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, 2015).

As a research proposition, Salee (2006) suggests that studying the socioeconomic condition of Aboriginal people begins with social cohesion as a precondition of well-being and quality of life. Further, there exists inner social balance disruption amongst Aboriginal people because of the breakdown in social cohesion. While we cannot change the past, it makes sense to "document and understand the obstacles to improved social cohesion…. And to work from there" (Salee, 2006, p. 12).

Salee also suggests that one method to improve well-being is to achieve a greater capacity in "the ability of individuals, organizations, and whole societies to define and solve problems, make informed choices, order their priorities and plan their futures, as well as implement programs and projects to sustain them" (Nair, 2003, p. 1, cited in Hunt, 2005, p. 1; Rose & Rose, 2012). One way to accomplish this is through the development of social capital, which can be manifested through participation in organizations, by developing trust and

trustworthiness, and with norms of cooperative and reciprocal behaviours (Salee, 2006). As people gather and are engaged through association, a higher level of trust and cooperative problem solving develops and higher strength and productivity of the community results.

Access to education, health care and other social programming is possible, in part, through the development of a transportation infrastructure. Geographically dispersed, many Northern Ontarians must travel a considerable distance to access services. Winter roads and air transportation are essential for remote communities (including northern reserves) and provide a means to obtain fuel, food, education, health and emergency services and other basic amenities (Government of Ontario, 2011). In addition, there is very little infrastructure associated with information and communication technology and a reliable energy supply in remote northern communities. All of these factors have an impact on economic growth and prosperity for these communities as well as access to basic social and educational programs. Attached as Appendix A are maps outlining the geographic scope of Northern Ontario (Appendix A1), the location of First Nations relative to larger city hubs (Appendix A2), placement of air transportation services (Appendix A3) and access points to education services (Appendix A4).

Business Development - Working with Aboriginal Peoples and the Duty to Consult

Aboriginal communities have long shaped the history and economics of Northwestern Ontario (Government of Ontario, 2011). As a result, it is important to acknowledge and welcome continued participation and engagement of the First Nations and Métis communities in the development of the North. As part of engagement and participation, businesses must appreciate the treaty rights affirmed by the federal constitution, particularly with respect to the "duty to consult," even though the Supreme Court has clarified that the main duty rests with the Crown.

Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* pertains specifically to the "duty to consult" and states:

35. (1) The existing aboriginal (*sic*) and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.

(2) In this Act, "aboriginal peoples of Canada" includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.

(3) For greater certainty, in subsection (1) "treaty rights" includes rights that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.

(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the aboriginal and treaty rights referred to in subsection (1) are guaranteed equally to male and female persons.

While the *Act* recognizes existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights, the *Act* does not define them. Therefore, existing Aboriginal and Treaty rights have been the subject of debate and interpretation, requiring, in some cases, legal intervention and judicial interpretation of the Crown's obligation. Aboriginal rights have been defined to include rights associated with cultural, social, political and economic "including the right to land, as well as to fish, to hunt, to practice one's own culture, and to establish treaties" (First Nations Studies Program, UBC, 2009). Furthermore, existing rights are those that have not been extinguished because of treaty or other legal processes prior to 1982. As a result of the interpretation and application, previous rights (before 1982) that had been extinguished were no longer considered "existing" and therefore not subject to revival (First Nations Studies Program, UBC, 2009; Public Policy Forum, 2012).

Several Supreme Court of Canada cases have attempted to set parameters around the concept of duty to consult and have suggested that the Crown has a duty to consult and, where necessary, accommodate when the conduct contemplated might adversely affect potential or

established Aboriginal or Treaty rights (Promislow, 2013). In the earlier Supreme Court of Canada decisions (*R.v. Sparrow)*, the duty consult had initially applied in cases where the right in question could actually be proven. However, in *Haida Nation*, the Supreme Court confirmed that the requirement of the duty to consult applied to rights that were asserted but not yet proven or settled through negotiations. Therefore, this case involved a "reorientation that was grounded in the honour of the Crown" (Promislow, 2013, p. 64):

> The Crown, acting honourably, cannot cavalierly run roughshod over Aboriginal
>
> interests where claims affecting these interests are being seriously pursued in the
>
> process of treaty negotiation and proof. It must respect these potential, but yet
>
> unproven, interests…. To unilaterally exploit a claimed resource during the
>
> process of proving and resolving the Aboriginal claim to that resource, may be to
>
> deprive the Aboriginal claimants of some or all of the benefit of the resource.
>
> That is not honourable. (Promislow, 2013, p. 64)

The Supreme Court of Canada decisions also clearly identified that there must be honourable dealings when considering the duty to consult. Furthermore, the Court in *Haida* also indicated the Crown's actions and relationship with Aboriginal people would also be considered in satisfying the requirement to consult, especially when the actions or activities may have an adverse impact to the rights recognized by Section 35 of the *Constitution* (The City of Thunder Bay, 2013; Promislow, 2013). This duty of consultation and, where necessary, accommodation, must demonstrate reconciliation (The City of Thunder Bay, 2013). Reconciliation has two main objectives including reconciliation between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples and the reconciliation by the Crown of Aboriginal peoples and other societal interests (The City of Thunder Bay, 2013).

While the *Haida* case (Fasken Martineau, 2011) stated that the duty to consult rests with the Crown, it also gave the Crown the right to delegate procedural aspects of consultation or accommodation to the private sector, or other third parties. Delegation of procedural aspects will likely become more common as industry and First Nations communities partner. As a result, the Crown will monitor permitting and approval processes and ultimately must determine whether a duty to consult exists, the extent of the consultation and whether the consultation and accommodation issues were satisfied. Until third parties truly understand authentic partnerships and the impact of the duty to consult, some of the concerns related to consultation and accommodation may still need to be refined through legal precedence and reviews by the legal system (Fasken Martineau, 2011).

Another important Supreme Court of Canada case is *Grassy Narrows First Nation v. Ontario (Natural Resources),* 2014 SCC 48. In this particular case, Grassy Narrow and Wabauskang First Nation were signatories to a treaty (Treaty 3). The First Nation argued that the province did not have the right to take land for development (for forestry) as the treaty was signed by the federal government and that the agreement did not allow for the unilateral taking of land for development. The Supreme Court of Canada stated that the province did have the right to take land for development provided that it complies with the duty to consult, accommodate and justify its uses (Mining Watch Canada, 2014). Until this decision was rendered, the Government of Ontario argued that it did not have a duty to consult because First Nations ceded their lands and the province has sole jurisdiction over Crown lands.

In business partnerships, even though the duty to consult is a legal exercise, it is also a means to encourage meaningful conversation and engagement with Aboriginal partners to confirm their role as strategic partners (Chamber, 2013). Furthermore, through ongoing dialogue

during the business development cycle, including implementation, the consultation and accommodation process should continue to develop as the business activity progresses. While the government has the requirement to address broader issues and interests related to consultation, day-to-day consultation remains with those in the project partnership. This regular and ongoing discussion assists in building trust as well as an awareness of a project's progress and impact in both short and long term planning (Chamber, 2013).

In business literature, the term "collaboration" between Aboriginal peoples and those businesses in the forestry sector focuses on positivity. Collaboration is defined as:

> … a process in which autonomous or semiautonomous actors interact through formal and informal negotiation, jointly creating rules and structures governing their relationships and ways to act or decide on the issues that brought them together; it is a process involving shared norms and mutually beneficial interactions (Wyatt et al., 2013).

It is important to note that relationships are not always positive and subject to break down (Fortier et al., 2013). As a result, other definitions of collaboration could be considered (outside of the business context) that better supports relationship management between Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal partnership with the goal of mutual benefits and cooperation. For instance, in the health care sector, authentic partnership refers to communities engaging in a "crucial reflection and to work collaboratively and equally to promote social change, equality and empowerment" (University of Waterloo, n.d.). The term collaboration in this context is defined as:

> …a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals. The relationship includes a commitment

to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and rewards (Parkinson, 2006, p. 3)

The research in health care is useful in enlightening the issue of relationship management and several parallel themes can be applied in designing a relationship management framework for businesses working with Aboriginal communities. In this research, partnerships are critical at all levels in order to focus on reciprocity, mutual sharing and collaboration. Furthermore, by adopting a "non-directive approach" the concepts of judgement and direction of experts were not necessary elements. Instead, clients require support and opportunities to discover their own inner experiences and insight, setting their own direction (Dupuis, Gillies, Carson, & Whyte, 2011). This approach is similar to the concept of "deep listening" that is culturally present within Aboriginal populations. Participants to a partnership relationship could benefit by a deeper awareness of the issues through this technique.

Governance and Goal Clarity

Partnership development requires various factors and must address risks that can impede development (Barnes, et al., 2009). For instance, unclear boundaries, organizational or management problems, disparate goals, different priorities, and resistance or suspicion pose challenges to developing systemic partnerships (Barnes, et al., 2009). Therefore, carefully drafted arrangements identifying key terminology to confirm a shared understanding, including an understanding of roles and partnership arrangements, are important since there may be differences due to a participant's cultural background and priorities (Mabee & Hobert, 2006).

In municipal-Aboriginal relationships, establishing and maintaining respectful relationships is essential and a principle of good municipal governance (Government of Ontario, 2009). Respecting perspectives and developing relationships help build trust, address challenges,

and provide a vehicle of collaboration to achieve social and economic well-being interests for all (Government of Ontario, 2009). Early and frequent engagement helps in future decision-making. Strong municipal arrangements are based on shared or mutual interests in joint ventures and partnerships including resource management and community development.

Clarity in community collaboration is achieved through information exchange and dialogue, including open, honest and frequent discussions, with transparency in the process for all stakeholders (Barnes, et al., 2009). The partnership, as part of its governance model, must encourage an opportunity for shared decision-making, continuous evaluation of the process, seeking out best practices and addressing challenges or barriers as a group (Barnes, et al., 2009).

Drawing again from the health care model of relationship management, barriers, roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined. Barriers such as negative judgment and leveraged expert knowledge may affect the relationship and these factors may bypass creativity and communicative abilities (Dupuis, Gillies, Carson, & Whyte, 2011). One criticism of a person-centred care approach in health care is the inability to fully contextualize the "interdependencies and reciprocities that underpin caring relationships" (Dupuis, Gillies, Carson, & Whyte, 2011, p. 431). Instead, the relationship management model of care based on a "senses framework" may be considered more effective in that all parties involved should "experience relationships that promote a sense of security, belonging, continuity, purpose, achievement and significance" (Dupuis, Gillies, Carson, & Whyte, 2011, p. 431). Recognizing the knowledge gained through life and experience, participants to the relationship have a voice and are deserving of respect.

There are parallels between this relationship framework in health care and a possible relationship management framework with Aboriginal people. Understanding roles, responsibilities and obligations are fundamental to an agreement (Wyatt et al., 2013), with each

typology of agreement identifying specific accountabilities and outcomes. Some of the difficulties in partnership arrangements are due to its structure and governance models. Clarity in the arrangement and governance can reduce the uncertainty and unrealistic expectations. It is important to clearly identify the type of arrangement, the parties' responsibilities, and capacity gaps in the partnership and how minimize the impact of those gaps as part of the relationship management and governance process (Mabee & Hobert, 2006). Furthermore, discussions and confirmations regarding achievable outcomes based on policy, legislation and socioeconomic contexts should be held as well as potential alternatives should these contextual factors have an impact to desired goals. Leaving a participant with unfulfilled expectations could render the relationship compromised or dissolved (Mabee & Hobert, 2006).

Strategic collaboration requires effective governance, with trust as a cornerstone to successful relational strategies (Jones et al., 2014). Traditional arrangements require Aboriginal peoples to comply with processes established by governmental agencies (Fortier et al., 2013). However, hundreds of studies have been conducted in the forestry sector regarding the relationships between Aboriginal peoples and the forestry sector that found commonality in agreement outcomes such as collaboration, observed through tenure arrangements, consultation process, economic development, partnerships and policy evaluation (Fortier et al., 2013). Australia established a framework that focuses on a blending of traditional knowledge and issues of power sharing and participation. The stated benefits of this approach are the improved solutions or decisions and democratic legitimacy. However, the process has been criticized due to the time and resources required to implement collaborative forest management agreements. Further, some organizations may have their own governance framework. These differing

frameworks can either be an opportunity to encourage traditional methods or a challenge because of an inconsistent governance model. (Fortier et al., 2013).

Pursuing a collaborative framework is voluntary and, as a result, commitment to the relationship can become compromised (Fortier et al., 2013). As an alternative, a hybrid arrangement may be struck that could encourage knowledge systems but not require the abandonment of Aboriginal governance systems. This would require the acceptance of Aboriginal management systems based on customs, traditions and ecological knowledge rather than on western practices and science (Fortier et al., 2013).

Knowledge and Diversity of Perspectives

Complementary expertise and knowledge has been shown to be important factors in successful relationship management (Misener & Doherty, 2013), however, relationship management is a shared responsibility rather than a responsibility that resides solely with formal leadership (Misener & Doherty, 2013). Building and sustaining a partnership is a move away from paternalism, encouraging diversity in perspectives, involving all stakeholders in decision making (Barnes, et al., 2009), and working with (not for) others. Suggested guiding principles include genuine regard for the self and others, synergistic relationships, and a focus on the process. Sustaining partnerships include five enabling factors: connecting and committing (Misener & Doherty, 2013; Barnes, et al., 2009), creating a safe place, valuing diverse perspectives, establishing and maintaining open communication (Barnes, et al., 2009), and conducting reflection and dialogue (Dupuis, Gillies, Carson, & Whyte, 2011).

In the business literature, some of these enabling factors overlap with what is known about relationship management involving Aboriginal peoples and the forestry industry, particularly with respect to collaboration and dialogue (Wyatt et al., 2013). Furthermore, other sources identify the importance and need for the duty to consult (Fortier et al., 2013). However,

the research seems to lack some of the relevant elements defined in other models that appear to be relevant to the relationship management of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partners. These elements may have an impact to the long-term goals and success of the partnership.

Outcomes of Successful Partnerships

Quality and Reciprocity

There are several different outcomes in partnership success. Successes can be measured through program or service quality (higher quality or greater offering than would have normally been provided), operations, and community presence (Misener & Doherty, 2013). Through the partnership arrangement, infrastructure, policies or a greater formalization of management can result in other benefits to the organization. Community presence lends to an improved reputation, awareness and social capital/connection to the community (Misener & Doherty, 2013).

After developing an effective partnership, there are several benefits for the Aboriginal community and Aboriginal businesses including the opportunity to build capacity and overcome barriers (Sisco & Stewart, 2009). For instance, businesses typically build relationships with financial institutions, governments and other businesses. In some business cases, partnerships are also created with training and educational institutions. Successful Aboriginal businesses are able to leverage these relationships to access financial support, network with clients and markets, build expertise and knowledge, access physical and human capital resources and build new relationships (Sisco & Stewart, 2009). The potential outcome of controlling resources, improved expertise and building professional networks can be access to new opportunities and capital. With the rise of mineral and resource development, entrepreneurship and technological innovation, and in response to the changing labour demographic (Statistics Canada, 2011), partnerships with Aboriginal groups will become increasingly important.

Furthermore, these partnership opportunities can have an impact on social and economic programs for Aboriginal communities, which can minimize the differences in the standard of living levels between Aboriginal peoples and their Canadian counterparts (Salee, 2006). Educational, training, employment opportunities and other supports are possible through partnership agreements and ongoing relationship management techniques.

Purpose and Research Question

The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of what elements are necessary in order to successfully engage in authentic partnership arrangements with the goal of improving Aboriginal participation in the economic development and employment in Northwestern Ontario. Challenges, opportunities, best practices and recommended approaches will be identified with an analysis of key characteristics necessary for successful authentic partnerships.

The research question for this thesis paper is: "Is Northwestern Ontario ready for authentic partnerships with Aboriginal leaders or communities in economic development and employment." Other questions that will further explore this question include:

1. What are the critical components needed for the development and maintenance of sustainable (successful) partnerships between Indigenous peoples and businesses in Northwestern Ontario?

2. What are the key challenges and benefits to building partnerships between Indigenous peoples and businesses in Northwestern Ontario?

3. To what extent have Indigenous peoples and businesses in Thunder Bay been able to successfully develop and manage partnerships?

4. What lessons can be learned from the development and management processes that can inform future partnerships?

Appendices B1 and B2 contains the original interview questions and a revised interview guide.

Research Design and Methodology

Literature Review Process

There is a growing body of literature regarding economic development involving First Nations communities and Aboriginal people (Anderson, 1997; Brown, et al., 2012; Loxley, 2012). However, in conducting the literature review for this study, a narrowed review of the literature was conducted to examine authentic partnerships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants in business. Most of the available reports and research on this topice pertained to the forestry sector (Fortier, et al., 2013; Fortier et al., 2013; Wyatt et. al, 2013; Smith, 2015). Therefore, while Aboriginal entrepreneurship has created signficant economic growth (Sisco & Stewart, 2009; Clutchey, 2015) the behaviours and the interactions between Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal partners were of specific interest to understand methods which could encourage and sustain authentic partnerships. As a result, a limited amount of research was available due to this very narrow scope.

Implications and Sensitivities

Prior to outlining the research design and methodology, it is imperative to note that this research paper required the collaboration and joint effort of many participants, including participants from various Aboriginal groups and communities. A particular challenge with conducting research involving Aboriginal communities relates to their views of research as an instrument of oppression, imperialism and colonialism, and therefore, research is viewed with distrust and suspicion (Durst, 2004). Traditional research is based on an outside perspective, where data is collected, interpreted, and findings are shared without input from or respect of Aboriginal communities and culture, with the result of causing more harm to the community (Poupart, Baker, & Horse, 2009). It has been called a "drop-in, drop-out" system (Bharadwaj,

2014) . To overcome some of the challenges, the researcher consulted with and obtained approval of leaders in the relevant areas. The research was approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board (see approval letter in Appendix C) and questions were validated by those with ties to the Aboriginal community.

Philosophical Worldview & Qualitative Strategy

The philosophical approach of this research is a constructivist worldview (Creswell, 2009), whereby the researcher seeks to understand a multiple participant view of authentic partnership, with the intention of developing a deeper understanding of stakeholder perspectives. Understanding context and the interaction between people is a key element of discovery in this research paper.

A case study approach was employed as the basis of the research. A case study involves the study of an issue explored in one or more cases, bound by time and place, by detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (observations, interviews, documents, audiovisual material) (Creswell, 2009). This research case study was framed or bound as authentic partnership arrangements in Northwestern Ontario.

The research design was a qualitative study with participants from various stakeholder groups. It used a cross-sectional design (Wilson, 2014) as data was collected over a short period from a number of different participants discussing their involvement with or knowledge of authentic partnerships with Aboriginal communities. Twelve participants were interviewed and included: Aboriginal leaders, Elders, Aboriginal Band members, various government officials (local, provincial, either holding office or who work in governmental services), members of the business community, educational institutions and businesses that support Aboriginal initiatives and employment. A purposive sampling method was used, where certain individuals were deliberately selected based on their group membership (Wilson, 2014). While this type of

selection strategy may be subject to sample bias, it was the most appropriate method because those who have relevant knowledge or experience were able to speak to the issues appropriately (Wilson, 2014). Other interviews took place based on recommendations or referrals from initial participants.

Initial discussions were held with individuals who currently support Aboriginal initiatives, training and social support. These discussions helped shape interview questions, the method of outreach and communication required, and provided valuable feedback on the project. Involving partners in this fashion added to the credibility and validity of the research. A triangulation validation strategy (Creswell, 2013) was used to ensure a valid research study by encouraging participation from various groups to design and fashion interview questions and to look for common themed outcomes (Golafshani, 2003).

Discussions with these stakeholders are particularly valuable as they have an immediate and direct link to business, government, and Aboriginal communities. Some participants to this study were secured through the networks of the stakeholders that provide Aboriginal support. Additional participants were identified and secured because of personal introductions during a conference and networking event sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce on June 4, 2015. Individual participants also provided further referrals for other participants, which provided further information to compliment the research findings.

Research Method

The research consisted of in person, one-on-one semi-structured interviews. In two cases, however, the participants chose to be interviewed together (in pairs). The reason for this is set out in the section below. During the phone or email invitation to participate, participants were provided the option of meeting either at their office or at a location of their choice outside of the work environment. This option was provided to ensure participants felt comfortable

talking about their perspectives and opinions. The interviews held outside of the work environment were conducted over a coffee or lunch period at no cost to the participant as a gesture of gratitude for the information. In other cases, interviews were conducted in the participant's office, acknowledging their interests of time and their schedule. Questions asked were themed to identify barriers, opportunities and information required in order to establish authentic partnerships. Further inquiries were made into each participant's familiarity and experiences with establishing authentic partnerships and any potential learning because of their experiences.

Participant interviews were audio-recorded. During the recorded sessions, the researcher took notes and collected thoughts on recurring themes. After several interviews with each representative group, similar findings or themes were identified. A determination was made to conclude the research when a saturation point was noted, but only after all invited participants were interviewed.

The recorded interviews were transcribed and reviewed to verify accuracy and to identify emerging trends or categories. Validity is a key component of the rigour and accuracy of the research. To encourage validity and reliability in this study required extended engagement and persistent observation, where trust, understanding the culture and checking for misinformation was ongoing between the researcher and participant (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, triangulation strategies were used earlier in the development of the research questions with participants and, through perspectives obtained, a validation of findings was achieved. Member checking occurred informally during the interview process, by summarizing key themes and further questions to clarify information. This form of member checking ensured that any potential researcher bias had not skewed the findings and recommendations and confirmed the accuracy and credibility of the

account (Creswell, 2013). An executive summary of the research will be available to the participants as further confirmation of findings. Because of the number of potential participants involved, rich definitions and appropriate depth were sought (Creswell, 2013). This depth allowed for a greater sense of detail, using powerful descriptions and quotations where necessary to support the findings, being mindful of confidentiality.

During open coding, data was broken down to identify concepts, and emerging concepts were labeled to refine the data into "manageable chunks" (Wilson, 2014, p. 283). A coding framework was designed to assist in the collection and organization of the data. Axial coding followed. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990 as cited by Wilson, 2014 p. 287), axial coding is where codes are combined into patterns, themes and categories to facilitate an in-depth analysis (Wilson, 2014). During axial coding, connections were identified between a category and subcategory (Creswell, 2007), comparing themes for similarities and differences.

Validation and Community Engagement

Two participants who had working relationships with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people reviewed and validated the interview questions. They were asked to review the original set of interview questions (Appendix B1) to ensure that the questions were properly balanced and worded in such a way that the questions were clear and respectful of the audience interviewed. These meetings were conducted on June 1 and June 7 respectively. As a result of their feedback, the original question set was modified and a new, slightly revised set of questions were developed. This question set is attached as part of Appendix B2, titled "Sample Questions for Interviews (Revised)". One of the changes noted was to change the terminology "Aboriginal" to "Indigenous" as it was suggested to be a more acceptable term to the minority population interviewed. Interviews with the remaining participants were conducted, audio recorded, transcribed and analyzed for major or significant themes.

Participants and Interviews

Interviews, involving twelve participants from various groups were conducted between June 7 and June 24, 2015. Consent forms, letters of introduction and the interview questions were given to participants in advance of the meetings via email (Appendix D). All participants with the exception of two individuals were provided participant numbers in order to protect their privacy. The two individuals provided their verbal consent (which has been captured as part of their transcript) allowing their names to be published as part of this report. A listing of participants, along with a generalized description of their background is as follows:

Participant 1 – Cindy Crowe, Executive Director/Lodge Keeper – Blue Sky Community Healing Centre;

Participant 2 – A municipal government representative and independent business person;

Participant 3 – An Indigenous lawyer with political aspirations;

Participants 4&5 – Representatives from a post-secondary educational institution;

Participant 6 – A representative for a provincial government service, building relationships between Aboriginal communities and provincial government services work;

Participant 7 – An elder;

Participant 8 – An individual representing Aboriginal Economic Development, working in an organization that represents Aboriginal communities in economic development;

Participant 9 – An individual representing economic development for a municipality in Northwestern Ontario;

Participant 10 – Larry Hebert, Municipal Counsellor and independent business person; and

Participants 11 & 12 – independent business owners, working in partnership with

Aboriginal business and the community.

In two cases, interviews were held jointly with participants. The participants that jointly conducted interviews were Participants 4 and 5 and Participants 11 and 12. The reason for this is that Participants 4 and 5 (representing post-secondary education) and Participants 11 and 12 (operating an independent business within Northwestern Ontario), work closely together on a number of initiatives and consistently collaborate with each other on these types of partnership ventures. Most of the interviews conducted were between forty minutes to an hour. An exception to this was the interview with Participants 4 and 5; this interview was approximately 1.3 hours due to the dual participation. Each participant in this interview was given an opportunity to answer the questions posed and their responses aligned well with each other.

Findings and Discussion

Major Themes

Several themes were identified by the participants including the demographics of Northwestern Ontario, in particular, Thunder Bay. Other themes include: the legal structure and framework of working partnerships; the duty to consult; an operationalized definition of authentic partnership, examples of successful partnerships and reasons for success; important leadership characteristics in partnership; critical success factors for partnership; outcomes of partnerships; examples of unsuccessful partnerships and lessons learned; future opportunities; possible solutions and methods to encourage sustainable authentic partnership. The development of these major themes identified critical elements necessary to establish a successful business partnership despite possible barriers and changing demographics.

Demographics

Consistent with the literature review, four of the twelve participants noted the changing demographics of Northwestern Ontario, including the aging population and the population growth of Aboriginal people. Participant 10 stated that although our local population has been declining based on census data, he strongly believed that the statistics are inaccurate and the local population of our communities are higher than reported:

> but I always say our population of Thunder Bay – and I call it the operating
> population – is about 25,000 higher than what we say through Stats Canada; and I
> don't have a lot of respect for their figures, especially since they went to the short
> form in 2011. I think the best one locally for information on population is the
> North of Superior Workforce Planning Board. But I think we have 20,000 First
> Nation people in our community …. because I'm not sure you're aware, but when

you're funding First Nations and – well, maybe get funding too, but I'm not sure –

anyway, First Nations for sure. The provincial money follows the person. So if

they're living in Thunder Bay, it comes to them directly in Thunder Bay. But

federal money follows the reserve and it's to the reserve's benefit to keep them on

their books as residency, even though they may not have lived there for five years

because they get the money; and I don't even know if some of those folks even see

the money, but that's the process.

Participant 10 further stated that because of this increased population, the ability to offer

government services is difficult. Funding for these services is based on census data and a larger

population requesting services lengthens wait times and compromises access to service. Participant

9 agreed that the census data is incorrect, acknowledging that funding for health care is unequal to

the actual spending in Northwestern Ontario. He stated that the population count in the local

community is larger than reported but funding is not provided to match the increased population. In

his opinion, the reason why the census data is not accurate is due to the discomfort of First Nations

people with government and their unwillingness to complete census surveys. Participants 11 and

12 both agreed that the Aboriginal population is the "fastest growing cohort in Northern

Ontario….We're desperate for people all the time."

Participant 1 also confirmed that the population of Aboriginal people, recorded as 12% in

the local community is incorrect. She took the view that the real numbers are not released because

of the negative response of the community. She indicated:

They don't want to reveal the true number because they know that the non-native

population in this city is going to freak out, exactly for the reason why you're

doing this work. People are not prepared. They don't have an understanding and they don't want to have an understanding.

This participant, as well as Participant 10, suggested that First Nations people have migrated to our local community to receive a better home, more affordable options, medical care, and access to education and services. These services are not available in northern remote communities where many First Nations people reside. However, if partnerships are struck between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal communities may become more self-sufficient and economically reliant. Once a relationship is developed, participants in a partnership may look to a legal agreement to confirm a framework and parameters to govern the legal relationship.

Partnerships – Legal Implications & Agreements

As with most formal business partnerships, there is often a legal agreement in place that provides a structure complete with formalized terms and conditions (Participant 10). The agreement structure can vary depending on the type of relationship (i.e., limited liability, sole proprietorship, and corporation) (Participant 8). Sections of the agreement that are important include dispute resolution terms (Participant 10) and how the partnership (Participant 4) or resources will be controlled (Participant 6). As noted by Participant 11, some standardized agreements may be biased to the non-Indigenous partner:

And if you read it to the letter of what it says it's biased towards the non-indigenous

partner. And so I think that looking at those partnership agreements, the way that

it's worded has to – and this goes back to hiring locals – I think the wording has to

be done such that there'll be a partnership agreement to develop the skills of the

locals because right now it's we'll hire anyone who's able to do this. Well, then it's

easy for the partner to say – well, no one on your reserve was able to do that, so we

didn't hire anybody on your reserve. So it's an out for them, but I don't think it's

fair.

According to Participant 12, encouraging a properly developed legal framework is critical

and despite legal advice and expertise involved in creating legal agreements, each legal

representative may have their own bias and agenda, generating short-sightedness in the

partnership. In his view, the short-sightedness arises when "something becomes standardized

and boilerplated … no one takes the time to look at it and read it." Furthermore, when an

agreement it put through a legal review, it seems that parties place an "undeserved trust in the

legal system that they're the experts, therefore it must be right. And they don't take the time to

go through it and read it." This can compromise a party's interests and their understanding of the

resulting benefits.

According to this participant, many agreements with Indigenous peoples have certain

requirements, such as employment and training opportunities. There is a real potential for these

partnerships to fail because of an inability to reach employment thresholds, resulting in less than

desirable outcomes for the Indigenous communities, creating disappointment and bitterness

despite corporate intentions of hiring local people. An inability to hire local First Nations people

negatively affects the ability to increase the knowledge and capacity of the First Nations group

and further influences the economic benefits identified.

Several of the participants discussed the concept of an impact and benefit agreement

(IBA). An IBA is a confidential and formalized legal document that outlines the nature of the

project, its impact, commitment and responsibilities of all parties involved (The Fraser Institute,

2012). Furthermore, these agreements, commonly found in mining partnerships, address how

Aboriginal communities will share and take part in the benefits through economic development

and employment opportunities while providing corporations access to traditional lands (The Fraser Institute, 2012). Participants to the negotiation of these agreements generally include the company, the Chief and Council and their respective legal representatives.

Participant 3 was familiar with these agreements and felt that it was an important aspect to the partnership and that all parties take the necessary time to negotiate and accept the IBA. Participant 6 stated that IBAs were quite popular as they take a very transparent approach to identify processes, opportunities, purpose, and benefits so that the parties know in advance what the outcomes and expectations are from the business relationship. Participant 9 stated that generally, these IBAs have similar contract themes or components, addressing jobs (and in some cases the number of jobs available). He further stated:

> …most of them also speak to opportunities, opportunities between the industry, the contractor, and the community – First Nation community – and it lists opportunities that are potentially available. However, those opportunities have to be somewhat developed, whether it's providing catering or providing fuel or setting up a camp. These opportunities are really dependent upon the capacity of the First Nation to benefit, to take advantage of. But most industry want their IBAs to be what to assure, certainly, the investors that they have sort of a standing agreement – an agreement that allows them to proceed and then in doing so the IBA's can be and probably should be somewhat lucrative for the First Nation.

Natural Resources of Canada (2014) confirms that nearly 200 IBAs exist with Aboriginal peoples. These agreements are at varying steps in the mining lifecycle. Due to the unique needs and interests of the parties and the community, the agreements may vary from case to case; however, despite some of the situational differences, IBAs include similar conditions:

Labour provisions: Aboriginal peoples may be preferentially hired, fulfilling an agreed upon number of Aboriginal employees; training for these jobs could also be provided through local classes and apprenticeships or with scholarships and bursaries.

Economic development provisions: Recognition and support of relevant local Aboriginal businesses through preferential contracting, as long as said business is cost competitive, efficient and timely; possible partnerships with Aboriginal businesses to structure joint initiatives; the creation of a registry of Aboriginal businesses to update the company and monitor Aboriginal content to meet preference requirements.

Community provisions: Support and affirmation of Aboriginal rights and historic/cultural connection to land; funding for youth, social programs, community projects and physical infrastructure; facilitation of ongoing communication between parties through establishment of committee meetings.

Environmental provisions: Establishment of environmental planning and monitoring committees; reclamation commitments; efforts to minimize activity in culturally sacred areas; recognition that the company will not apply for more permits after IBA negotiation has finished.

Financial provisions: Monetary compensation arrangements; fixed or variable cash payouts; funding agreements with an established monitoring committee.

Commercial provisions: project certainty through acknowledgement of adequate consultation; dispute resolution and enforcement clauses if either party were to break the contract; and confidentiality. (The Fraser Institute, 2012)

In addition, these agreements address potential negative impacts and their minimization efforts. Some of the negative impacts that may be addressed include interruption or disruption of traditional economies, animal migration, trails, trap lines and fishing areas; increased population and economic competition; potential health impacts and additional infrastructure (Fraser Institute, 2012). In resolving these issues, the parties work together to understand the impact and work towards solutions to minimize the effect on the community. For instance, environmental impact studies may be required to examine migration pattern of wildlife and the recommendations made as part of those studies reviewed. Often, implemented solutions are greater than the recommendations of the study to ensure mutual satisfaction.

Although IBAs are not legally required, they may help facilitate discussion with Aboriginal groups. While only the Crown has a duty to consult with Aboriginal communities about development on traditional lands, industry seems to be taking the lead in engaging communities to foster a relationship. These discussions, along with the outcome of the IBA reduce confusion and delays associated with a project, particularly where further community support is required (The Fraser Institute, 2012). Furthermore, local communities have greater input and control into natural resource management, which provides the communities with independence in negotiation and managing agreements, while experiencing economic prosperity with respect to the mining development and infrastructure.

Despite the potential clarity offered by IBAs, some scholars have also identified concerns and criticisms of the effectiveness of IBAs. In generating a balanced perspective, IBAs have been recognized as a process to engage in conversation and identify benefits but also have been criticized as stifling the ability of Aboriginals to share information about benefits negotiated by

other groups, reduced understanding of long-term social impacts as a result of development and the pace of development (Caine & Krogman, 2010).

Participant 9 indicated that IBAs should be balanced and fair so that neither party is taken advantage of. He referred to the practice in Saskatchewan where he believed the agreements were called "Impact Agreements for Northern People." He reasoned that Impact Agreements are far reaching and have an effect on more than just the First Nations communities have:

> …they call it Impact Agreements for Northern People. They don't call it First
> Nations because there's white settlers living there and all that, so it's Impact
> Agreements for – and they don't want to get called against this is an Aboriginal
> impact agreement. So they've set it over a certain line in Saskatchewan, then these
> are Northern People's agreements.

Participant 12 stated that IBAs have been developed to provide companies with preference on work or bids if certain criteria are met, particularly with a focus on Aboriginal content. Direct Aboriginal set-asides are also used by some provinces when tendering work. Federal set-asides provide specific opportunities to Aboriginal organizations to bid on contract work (Government of Canada, 2014). A similar process also exists with provincial tenders, where some contracts are reserved for Aboriginal businesses or made available to those businesses that have sufficient Aboriginal content (Government of Ontario, 2015). This bidding process is based on Aboriginal content, which can vary in its definition (Participant 6). A recent example mentioned by Participant 12 was rock-blasting work tendered by the Ministry of Transportation. Lake Helen First Nation of Nipigon collaborated with a local contractor to undertake that work. The value of this work was approximately $5 million. Aboriginal content, however, means more than "buying a white feather" (Participant 9).

Despite the clarity that IBAs provide, there are some negative aspects as well. IBAs are often confidential, which prevents First Nations groups and other participants from developing best practices. Furthermore, there may be possible distribution issues, where the benefits gained may be unequally distributed across the community depending upon community governance structures. Finally, despite intentions, certain employment benefits may not be realistic (i.e., employment opportunities) due to knowledge and capacity issues (Caine & Krogman, 2010).

According to Participant 9, although IBAs often address a certain volume of employment opportunities, there are difficulties meeting this threshold if First Nations people do not apply and, further, if they do not have the capacity or knowledge to perform the work (Participant 9). A certain education level may be required to ensure safety is maintained (i.e., reading and numeracy skills) (Participant 9):

> … if you have to lock something out you've got to be able to read the numbers and read the instructions of how to do that. If you don't know how to do that, you put yourself or somebody else at risk. Does it require four years of university to figure that out? No. But you've got to be able to read and you've got to be able to do some math and you've got to be able to do some stuff. So I'm not so sure that every job even requires a Grade 12, and that's why some people have some special little training that they give. But you've got to be able to do something— rudimentary math—and you've got to be able to read and understand and comprehend, or else it's very risky for the company then. The Ministry of Labour is not going to understand if somebody dies. Why did you hire somebody that doesn't have a skill set to figure out how to protect themselves? And you're responsible for them because you hired them.

Noting this most recent concern, IBAs are evolving to include more Aboriginal partnerships, community well-being considerations, and informed disclosure. Participant 9 suggested that incorporating language in the agreement to ensure capacity and skill building is important because, when it is pursued and applied, positive role modelling occurs in the community. Taking the opportunity to build skills can change the perspective of others and reduce dependency on social services (Participant 9). Participant 9 indicated that further exploration on how to motivate the pursuit of education is required to fully achieve positive outcomes. One strategy is presenting the opportunity to Aboriginal women, who are motivated by providing a better life for their children (Participant 12). Increased access to education assists First Nations women with developing skills and talent, resulting in improved employability options.

In elaborating on the IBA arrangements in Saskatchewan, Participant 9 stated that these agreements are defined by parameters. After the agreement is struck, there is still the responsibility of the participants to create relationships. This is something that is not enforceable by contract; instead, there needs to be a willingness of the parties.

Participant 9 stated that IBAs struck between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants have demonstrated a willingness to include First Nations in these opportunities and encouraged the overall goal of partnership. The willingness to work with First Nations communities is apparent, as more industry participants are taking lead roles in partnerships when compared to the government (Participant 1).

Duty to Consult

In addition to the lack of government leadership in establishing IBAs, some of the participants were critical of the government's role in the duty to consult (Participant 1).

Participant 6 described the duty to consult and its requirements:

Anytime that you're developing in a First Nations traditional territory and/or a

Métis who also have rights in these traditional territories, it's the obligation of the

province and/or the government that a consultation must take place; and the

consultation is designed to gauge whether the project will have impacts on the

existing Aboriginal and treaty rights for the First Nations – for the Métis people. If

they are deemed to have impact, then there's a duty to consult and accommodate. If

it is deemed not to have an impact, then there's a duty to at least notify and to

ensure that they are aware of what's taking place; and this is something from the

Supreme Court of Canada so we are obligated to do that.

Further, the participants indicated that there may be confusion in operationalizing the

"duty to consult" requirements in a partnership arrangement (Participant 1, Participant 4), but

they also noted that not all arrangements require government involvement (Participant 8, 10).

Consultation is a legal obligation (with all levels of government) (Participant 10) and about

seeking guidance of First Nations people when working on their traditional land (Participant 3,

4). Part of this consultation is developing an awareness and understanding of what

accommodations are necessary and building this into an agreement.

The duty to consult has been a concept that has been enshrined through various court

cases since 1982 (Participant 8), but "should have been followed as early as 1850 (sic)" with the

Robinson Superior Treaty (Participant 9). These cases have established precedents to outline some

of the protocols and agreement requirements. Despite these precedents, parties are going beyond

the basic minimums[3] and have generated some best practices and communities have created

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[3] General minimum requirements of an IBA include a negotiated use of land, provisions
on how to mitigate anticipated and non-anticipated damages and methods to achieve maximum
economic community benefit (Cando, 2015).

additional support and resources for improved outcomes (Gibson & O'Faircheallaign, 2010). Participant 8 stated that, in his experience, the duty to consult goes beyond the minimums and includes business agreements that capture the necessary elements of the arrangement and steps moving forward. Further, Participants 11 and 12 have entered into agreements where their duty to consult goes beyond the original request to access land. For instance, work may stop for the purpose of consultation when the company encounters an area that appears to be associated with First Nations' traditional heritage; First Nations elders are immediately engaged and the situation is discussed. In these cases, the Elders seek out solutions, which have typically been ceremonial in nature, and then the work continues. These provisions are not necessarily written into the agreement.

First Nations communities are not necessarily opposed to economic development because of the overall benefits to the community, but the duty to consult and engage is required at an early stage (Participant 1). The government has been accused of being slow (Participant 2), "missing in action" (Participant 9), or too late in its engagement protocols (Participant 1). Government involvement has a tendency to delay progress given protocols and the lack of trust from the Aboriginal communities (Participant 2). Instead, participants suggested that government relies on industry to determine the next steps in a partnership and agreement, including consultation (Participant 1), which may confirm the government's ability and/or desire to delegate consultation, as this is within their legal ability pursuant to the decision rendered in *Haida* (Fasken Martineau, 2011) . Participant 3 stated that the fiduciary duty and the duty to consult do not rest with industry, but industry is taking a lead role in this work, which helps in the acknowledgement and respect of the community.

Participant 9 reasoned that these issues (i.e., failure to consult) do not happen in other

provincial jurisdictions, such as Saskatchewan, because of clearly established protocols and

policy; however, participant 9 questioned whether this would work in Ontario. Other

jurisdictions, such as Alberta and Quebec are also more involved in the process due to formal

reporting requirements of industry to the government. Depending upon the jurisdiction, the

reporting may be one to two times per year.

Participant 6, who works for a provincial services organization, suggested that when his

organization is required to go through traditional territory, he reflects and considers what access

means in relation to treaty rights. As a result, he seeks out a social license from the First Nations

community before a project starts to ensure the appropriate level of support and buy-in. As part of

this process, every project that requires access to First Nations land or a Métis community, the

community is made aware of the project. If they receive feedback that there is an impact to the land

(i.e., interference with agricultural or hunting rights), they have to respond with accommodations,

mitigations or possible solutions. He further stated:

> …any resource development falls clearly in that category. Any major development
>
> like a wind farm, any major development like a solar farm, anything to do with
>
> water diversion, any mining activity – all of those would be subject to the duty to
>
> consult. So those were definitely – you're definitely going to see increased
>
> consultation with the Aboriginal community.

The consultation process also extends from First Nations leadership to the community,

ensuring that the First Nations community supports the proposal. Participant 6 stated:

> Fort William First Nation built a 9.4 megawatt solar farm on their community.
>
> They took approximately 100 acres of recovered reserve. In fact, part of that was

the original town site – community site – mission and they developed it with a U.S.

company. To be able to get to that point, to be able to actually succeed in that, they

had to consult with their own members. They had to convince their own members

that: 1) it was a good thing; 2) it was being done in a respectful way; so to do that

they had to have a series of community consultations. They had to listen to elders.

They had to account for the access through and to the original town site and then

access to the waterfront.

Areas for true consultation exist within policy and legislative development (Participant 8).

This participant stated that the government goes through a process that appears to be consultative,

but realistically, the decision has already been made. In this regard, Participant 8 referred to the

Far North Act, which appeased the environmentalists in Southern Ontario but did not meet the

unique needs of those in the north, and primarily the First Nations communities that reside in the

north. He felt that there was very little to no consultation on the impact of the *Far North Act* in

relation to the unique needs of the First Nations communities. Participant 9 explained the issue as

follows:

…so then you've got the environmental movement in southern Ontario that's

yapping at them, who then influences the votes in Toronto which is obviously

where their votes are. And then they create something like the Far North Act which

pisses off the First Nations to no end, that says 50% of the land up there you can't

touch and neither can the First Nations. Well, it's not your freaking land. It's our

land. So we continue to do things like that because we appease the so-called

environmental movement in Toronto that votes for me and say – well, look at –

we've created this big park land up there, like don't touch nothing. So we're not on

the radar because people don't see us as an economic boom to the province, right, whereas other people like Saskatchewan look at it and say – well, we need these economic booms to the province. We need to do it right and we need to do the First Nations part. And sometimes there's an arrogance level in Toronto …

Based on Participant 8 and 9's interview, there did not seem to be much First Nations consultation about this legislation prior to its development (Smith, 2015). However, in researching the issue of the *Far North Act*, website information states that First Nations communities will be part of the planning of the use of the land (Government of Ontario, 2014). As a result, questions that arise are: was there consultation, or was the consultation conducted at the right time? Based on scholarly review, there seems to be some divide on "conservation strategies and the importance of science, rather than social realities resources" (Chapin 2004 p. 18 as cited by Smith, 2015, p. 26), which suggests that idenfying areas of conservation are often done as an exclusion and an infringement of Aboriginal rights (Smith, 2015). Participant 11 suggested that perhaps further education with the various governments might be in order, recognizing that the Aboriginal people have an improved knowledge and skill set and should be involved in legislative issues particularly where their rights and access to land could be infringed.

Authentic Partnerships Defined

All participants were asked to define authentic partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. A word cloud was developed based on the collective responses provided by the participants and noted in the figure below:

Figure 1: Word Cloud – Authentic Partnership

A pre-defined limit of 25 words was identified on a frequency of three words or more. Incorporating these definitions and the parameters into the word cloud software, (worditout.com), words that were commonly identified included: all, relationship, both, respect, benefiting, build, business, common, more, real. A definition to define authentic partnership based on this analysis is "a business relationship that builds through respect and during the interaction between both parties, where each party is clearly benefiting."

Additionally, participants made specific reference to other factors, such as:

- equality (Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 6),

- mutually agreed and committed to (Participant 2);

- for a long-term purpose (unless specifically time-limited (Participant 2),

- real (Participant 3 and 7);

- reciprocal sharing of information and respect for dialogue (Participant 3);

- respect, understanding, clear communication, clear expectation (Participant 4);

- an appreciation of where the other side is coming from (Participant 3);

- respecting each other's end goal, being able to change to make someone else happy, like a marriage, clear communication, transparency, honesty and open sharing and accountability (Participant 2);

- mutual relationship where both parties are winning and are benefiting (Participant 6);

- both are giving (Participant 6);

- both are on equal footing and both are benefiting somewhat equally (Participant 1, Participant 6);

- understanding where everyone's coming from, what the impact is and how to find common ground, start to build and go forward, valid purpose and meaning and returns for both parties, fairness and a two-way street (Participant 12); and

- more than monetary—both parties need to reach their goals, continuity, getting more employment and opportunities for First Nations communities (Participant 9).

Two of the most impactful definitions identified are as follows:

…all partnerships are authentic and that we would not differentiate between Indigenous and non-Indigenous and that the terms of common visions, values and working together on opportunity, that whoever the participants are that we would be open and direct and honest in using kind of a common platform to communicating and building a relationship and build trust to create and build a partnership. (Participant 4)

and

…it's negotiated in good faith. There's honesty that's involved. There's respect for the initiatives that you're embarking on and it's a win-win situation, meaning that the parties are always satisfied at the end of the day with whatever they're

developing together. And they both profit from the situation aside from being

satisfied with their passion of what they may be doing as a product or service; so

it's all those important points. That's what an authentic and sincere partnership is

and anything beyond that or below that or beside that is questionable (Participant

8).

These definitions were particularly impactful for a number of reasons. In the first

definition, Participant 4 explains that authentic partnerships should not be differentiated because

of race or culture. Instead, the principles of common vision, values and collaboration are

fundamental regardless of the participants involved. Furthermore, transparency, communication

and relationship building are essential to creating trust and partnership. The approach suggested

can be applied across all partnerships without distinction.

The second definition identifies that partnerships are negotiated with common interests in

mind and working towards an outcome where all parties are satisfied and benefit financially. The

definition suggests that the outcomes are always reviewed to ensure satisfaction. In considering

this definition, a continuous review or 'check-in' is required to ensure that parties are satisfied

with the outcomes and, if not, then inherently, there is a need to review the exchange and look

for methods to improve and encourage improved outcomes.

The issue of equality was a common theme in the definitions. In some respects, the

concept of equality involved an evaluation of what a party could provide to the discussions and

to the partnership. Participant 1 stated:

…equal means to me that the industry sees that the Aboriginal community is equal

in the partnership and vice versa. The Aboriginal community sees industry as being

equal in the partnership. So each would need to realize what the other side is

bringing and that they need the two sides for a successful project and in order for

them to each achieve what their goals are, it's vital that they be working together

and they have to trust one another or they should be trusting one another, I guess I

should say.

Furthermore, Participant 2 indicated that if there were an imbalance in the relationship, it

would become very difficult to move forward. Participant 3 shared a similar view stating that the

benefit, or outcome of the agreement, should be beneficial to both parties. It requires an

understanding of what the parties are trying to achieve and the ability to reach respective or

mutual goals. Equality also does not necessarily mean how much money one can bring to the

table. The *Indian Act* precludes ownership of reserve land and, in order to build equity or capital,

other innovative ways of doing business may need consideration (Participant 4). In some cases,

parties may bring technical expertise or financing, and the First Nations community brings land

tenure. In these types of relationships, while everyone is contributing to reach a goal, the

distribution of profit may be at different levels, because the First Nations community in some

cases may only be able to offer tenure and access to land (Participant 6).

Successful Examples

All of the participants indicated that they were familiar with or knew of a successful

partnership opportunity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous parties. Some examples that

were referenced were: Thunder Bay Hydro, Fort William First Nations, Nishnawbe Aski

Development Fund (NADF), North Star, Wasaya Airlines, Confederation College, Lake Helen

First Nation, Aboriginal Procurement Project, Ojibway 1850 Treaty Council, Gull Bay (wood

cutting operations, a family owned business as described by Participant #7), OLG (Casinorama),

TBT Engineering, True Grit and Five Nations Energy Inc, (transmission project between

Moosonee and Attawapiskat).

In a few examples, Fort William First Nations was mentioned as the partnering reserve. For instance, Resolute Saw Mill and a large solar farm are located on Fort William First Nations reserve. Participant 2 also indicated that Fort William First Nations was successful in building partnerships in the engineering field, which opened opportunities in the region and internationally.

In addition, Fort William First Nations had also piloted a project with Thunder Bay Hydro for apprenticeship training of two First Nations people (Participant 10). In this example, the Fort William First Nations was considering a long-term plan where they would establish their own utility company. However, in order to do so, they needed to build capacity within the community and encourage the training of power line technicians. After several discussions between officials at Thunder Bay Hydro, the company's union, and the Chief of Fort William First Nations, the apprenticeship opportunity continued. The parties agreed in advance that there were no guarantees of employment after the apprenticeship program, unless an opportunity opened and the apprentices bid into the positions as part of the recruitment process pursuant to the collective agreement. Upon the conclusion of the program, both apprentices were successful in launching their careers and, according to Participant 10, were sought after nationally by several utilities. This example illustrates that a successful partnership provides mutual benefit, collaboration and trust.

Participant 5 (from a post-secondary institution) suggested that they were involved in a successful partnership because they were recommended by one organization to assist another Aboriginal community with their work, assisting in the planning and development of programming. In his view, partnership started at an early, first level of activity and after developing trust, the referral was made to create a further partnership opportunity. This referral system reinforced the notion that the participant's organization was committed to doing good work and developing and maintaining relationships, which encouraged other opportunities.

Participant 6 discussed the successes achieved because of a pilot project called the Aboriginal Procurement Project. Over two years, various Ministries identified tendered projects. The intention was that these pre-determined projects would be available for tender only by Aboriginal companies. It was considered an exception to the normal process followed by provincial government services. This opportunity permitted First Nations to do the work, but to also collaborate and work with industry professionals. Funding was granted to the First Nations community, and they were then able to sub-contract some of the oversight and responsibility to their industry professional partner. However, to successfully obtain the bid, the proposal required a certain amount of Aboriginal content; i.e., First Nations equipment, human resources, trained drivers, trained equipment operators, etc. A skilled and recognized member of the regulating association supervised the work. Participant 6 stated that upon the completion of one project in particular, the First Nations community profited as a result of the contract administration. They also gained respect from the industry partner and formed further partnerships that secured additional bids.

Participant 6 also suggested that the Ojibway 1850 Treaty Council had experienced tremendous success since 1991. This Council provides advisory services to six First Nations groups in the Robinson Superior Treaty area. In 1991, they did not have any investments or businesses owned off reserve. This has changed over the past two decades, where partnerships and the benefits of private ownership created financial successes. Participant 6 stated that there are many examples of successful partnerships and reasoned that the partnerships that are not funded by provincial or federal assistance are likely more successful. As an example, Participant 6 noted a project on the east shore of Lake Huron, where he recalled a First Nations group collaborating with a company to establish a $7 million wind farm. He indicated that the partnership could not wait for

government assistance and instead the parties are "doing it themselves. They're financing it. They're controlling it. And they expect to see a benefit well into the future." Participant 7 also discussed the lack of government involvement in a Gull Bay business. She stated that her family business did not seek government assistance through Indian Affairs for fear that they will lose control of the operation.

The construction of transmission lines with Five Nations Energy Inc., between Moosonee and Attawapiskat, was also determined to be a success. In that example, several partners had defined roles. One partner had technical expertise, another had design expertise and financial stability, which allowed the project to continue but with the ability for the investment to be repaid. The success of that relationship was due to the willingness of the parties involved, and the strong desire to see the project succeed:

> …and you have willing partners – willing First Nations on one side wanting to see
> this project succeed. And we also had an accounting firm that facilitated our
> creativity in doing the financing that was necessary. So we brought all these
> partners together and we came up with a business model – with a financial model –
> that made sense and it made sense to the government, and the government said that
> initially they were saying we're not sure where we're going here or why we're
> involved, but we'd like to see our communities off diesel and connected to a grid,
> so this is a good project. (Participant 8)

Reasons for Success

There were several reasons for the successes of the examples mentioned above. There was:

- a willingness of the partners to participate; a sharing and sense of equality (Participant 10, Participant 11, 12);

- multiple outcomes that benefit parties' interests (Participant 10);

- a recognition of contributions measured in the return of investment (Participant 8, Participant 2, Participant 6);

- financial investment (Participant 4);

- a trusting and personal relationship (Participant 10, Participant 7);

- an agreement or memorandum of understanding setting out a protocol and desire to move forward (Participant 2);

- fair agreements, written with transparency (Participant 11);

- mutual understanding and respect (Participant 2);

- an understanding of Aboriginal issues and needs (Participant 2);

- caring (Participant 2);

- collective impact (Participant 4);

- understanding roles and involving the appropriate parties (Participant 5);

- engaged communities (Participant 11);

- no government involvement (Participant 7); and

- expressions of interests (Participant 8).

Leadership Characteristics

Participants were asked what leadership characteristics were important when developing authentic partnerships with Aboriginal communities in business. The following traits were identified: respect (Participant 10); consultation with community (Participant 2); compassion (Participant 3); respect for tradition and culture, educated and an ability to function in both traditional and western worlds (Participant 6); aggressive, assertive, fair, willingness to listen (Participant 7); patience (Participant 8, 9); committed (Participant 8); and shared vision

(Participant 12). When examining these traits, there seems to be a high correlation to the critical success factors (explained below).

Critical Success Factors

As part of the initial analysis, the software program NVivo was used to look for common elements and themes in the interviews, both in terms of major themes and specific critical elements for success. Initially, sixty-two nodes were identified. An original listing of the nodes can be found in Appendix E. This number was later reduced to twenty-seven with an identification of seven critical success factors. The reduction to seven critical success factors was the result of a deeper appreciation and review of Participant 7's transcripts. In her interview, the participant mentioned the Seven Grandfather Teachings and its application to her daily personal life choices, interactions and professional teachings. As a result, while not an original area of focus at the time of the initial research and literature review, the Seven Grandfather Teachings became an emergent theme requiring some further exploration and review. In fact, recent literature supports the use of traditional narratives as a means to encourage improved and humanized practices (Shapiro, 2015). Using narratives can assist participants in "sense making" and provide opportunities for reflection to assist in establishing appropriate business practices that go far beyond satisfaction of individual and focused interests (Shapiro, 2015).

Seven Grandfather Teachings

Several of the participants spoke about characteristics and traits that are useful in shaping authentic partnerships, including integrity, trust and courage. Participant 7 (an Elder) addressed how the concept of the Seven Teachings of the Grandfathers helps shapes her interaction with others, stating that she has used these concepts in her career as a teacher and later as a professor at a post-secondary educational institution. Further, by following the concept of the Seven Teachings of the Grandfathers, Participant 7 stated, "if you live by the Seven Teachings yourself,

then – and people know that, like a lot of people know me and they respect me and I respect them." These teachings identify that humans are responsible to act with wisdom, respect, love, honesty, humility, bravery, and truth toward each other as well as with all creation (Verbos & Humphries, 2014; Moeke-Pickering & Partridge, 2014). In some variations of the story, the theme of honesty is replaced by generosity (The Gifts of the Seven Grandfathers - Ojibwe.net, 2015).

The Seven Grandfather Teachings is the most common Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) teaching that is shared from coast to coast (O'Brien, n.d.) through the tradition of storytelling, passed down from elders to younger generations. Each community has adapted the teachings to support the values of their community but the teachings generally form moral "stepping stones" and part of a cultural foundation (O'Brien, n.d.).

A variation of the story has been reported as follows: the "Creator" gave the responsibility to watch over the people to seven grandfathers, who observed life, sickness and general bad conditions experienced by the Anishinaabe community. A messenger was sent to investigate and to bring someone back to the seven fathers. After seven attempts to find someone to bring back to the grandfathers, the messenger found a baby. This baby travelled the Earth and was taught how the Anishinaabe people should live their lives.

Seven years later, the baby returned to see the Grandfathers. The Grandfathers observed that the boy was honest and had learned and understood the lessons. Each Grandfather, through song, gave the boy a teaching:

Nibwaakaawin—Wisdom: To cherish knowledge is to know Wisdom. Wisdom is given by the Creator to be used for the good of the people. In the Anishinaabe

language, this word expresses not only "wisdom," but also means "prudence," or "intelligence."

Zaagi'idiwin—Love: To know Love is to know peace. Love must be unconditional. When people are weak they need love the most. In the Anishinaabe language, this word with the reciprocal theme indicates that this form of love is mutual.

Minaadendamowin—Respect: To honor all creation is to have Respect. All of creation should be treated with respect. You must give respect if you wish to be respected.

Aakode'ewin—Bravery: Bravery is to face the foe with integrity. In the Anishinaabe language, this word literally means "state of having a fearless heart." To do what is right even when the consequences are unpleasant.

Gwayakwaadiziwin—Honesty: Honesty in facing a situation is to be brave. Always be honest in word and action. Be honest first with yourself, and you will more easily be able to be honest with others. In the Anishinaabe language, this word can also mean "righteousness."

Dabaadendiziwin—Humility: Humility is to know yourself as a part of Creation. In the Anishinaabe language, this word can also mean "compassion." You are equal to others, but you are not better.

Debwewin—Truth: Truth is to know all of these things. Speak the truth. Do not deceive yourself or others. (News: Seven Grandfather Teachings, 2013)

The young boy became an aged man and then shared his story and knowledge with the others. He explained how to use the teachings as gifts that he obtained and encouraged the people to use these gifts for an improved, good and healthy life. The gifts were interdependent:

you cannot have wisdom without love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility and

truth. You cannot be honest if you only use one or two of these, or if you leave

out one. And to leave out one is to embrace the opposite of what that teaching is

(News: Seven Grandfather Teachings, 2013)

Typically, today's businesses operate on the "economic man" principal where decisions are made on a cost-benefit analysis, using accounting principles, a realization of profit and mathematical models. Generally, these models provide a "less complete view of the world than do Indigenous perspectives which acknowledges interdependence of all things considered externalities in economic theory" (Verbos & Humphries, 2014, p. 3). It has been suggested that values displayed by the economic man model are at odds with the Seven Grandfather Teachings in that the Western models are not subject to "the physical laws of the universe, the natural processes and cycles of the ecosystem, or values and expectations of society" (Verbos & Humphries, 2014, p. 3). Further, the Teachings may contribute to a practice model of relationship management and working with others (Moeke-Pickering & Partridge, 2014).

The values espoused by the Seven Grandfather Teachings are the human responsibilities that apply universally to all situations, are interdependent, do not privilege humans over other creation, and connect an individual to a higher meaning or purpose. In reviewing the critical success factors identified by the participants in the research for this thesis, many of the themes fell within the characterization of the Seven Teachings of the Grandfathers. Throughout the interview, information presented itself in such a way that there was interdependence, overlap and

similarities in terms and words. Many of these themes were congruent with the themes and the teachings of the Seven Grandfathers.

Wisdom

Based on the traditional stories, wisdom is the first gift or teaching of the Anishinaabe people. Wisdom is obtained through knowledge and experience, not age (Ontario Native Literacy Coalition, 2010). It is demonstrated through the ability to think and behave, using knowledge, experience, understanding, and reflection on people, events or situations (The Pulse Check, 2014). Perception and judgement are used to determine and understand a course of action and often requires controlling emotional responses (The Pulse Check, 2014).

Many of the participants confirmed that a critical success factor is to understand and appreciate culture and to have a cultural awareness of First Nations' traditions, values, history and an understanding of treaties (Participant 11). Participants indicated a need for: cultural awareness training (Participant 1, 10); an understanding of others in the relationships (Participant 1); respect of culture (Participant 4); and a personal association or relationship (Participant 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 10) as important factors in establishing relationships. Clear understanding of expectations because of cultural awareness and an understanding the dynamics of our unique region is crucial for partnership success (Participant 2). Cultural awareness and understanding of unique situations have been noted as important because large organizations from other cities do not take the time to appreciate the unique nature of working or collaborating with Indigenous communities, resulting in failure. Participant 2 noted:

> I think that's essential in developing partnerships, especially with Aboriginal
>
> communities because there is a historical, cultural, demographic, regional context
>
> that has to be taken into account that is unique to Northwestern Ontario. Without

that element, you're going to struggle. The partnership is going to struggle….We

share a common interest and common culture and acknowledging that we are in

their traditional territory. It goes a long way in showing the historical significance

and importance and contribution of the Aboriginal community…if you are a big

company from out of town who uses a template for a business plan, you're not

taking into account the regional, cultural, the demographic and the dynamics. It's

going to be tough in ensuring that the other parties, especially Aboriginal

communities, are going to be satisfied with the end result (Participant 2).

Researching and understanding Aboriginal communities, the impact of business and treaties, the impact of residential schools, and the existing social systems are equally important and are also critical success factors (Participant 3, Participant 11). Partners enhance credibility and trust when they travel to the communities where they want to conduct their business:

You can't listen to people's theories about it. You actually have to go there and

learn about it with them. It doesn't mean move there. It just means take a few trips

first with your team or whatever and just see what these people are about

(Participant 3).

Having that type of understanding helps build a relationship in going forward (Participant 4). Participant 9 stated:

…the biggest challenge is going to be history and understanding each group's

background, needs, and where we are going…. I think people give short shrift to the

problems of the Aboriginal community and I think you go into that in your own

peril if you don't understand some of the customs. So I don't think you can go in

and like – I would use the example as that – and I'm not completely familiar with it,

but if you go in and look at how Cliff's handled when they were doing. They were just Americans coming in and saying – this is how we do business and we're going to slam up this and do that. And the First Nations – it didn't go over well because what's their customs."

Participant 2 added that the Aboriginal communities have their own culture. Parties need to "tune into that"; otherwise, if one imposes their own perspective or cultural views, problems will arise. Participant 2 stated that respect and understanding comes from knowledge.

Participant 9 confirmed that further education or cultural awareness and etiquette would be appropriate for non-Indigenous groups in order to start understanding others in these partnership arrangements. He noted that culturally, the parties are different and if parties do nothing to recognize and understand the differences, the relationship will have obstacles to success. Non-Indigenous parties would benefit from "an understanding in Aboriginal law and history and what's happened." Participant 9 stated that:

> …some of what's missing is that most of us aren't educated properly with respect
>
> to what's gone on and what are the legal ramifications of what's going on today and
>
> what's going to happen in the future. I don't think the bulk of Canadians
>
> understand that one bit.

Participant 12 agreed with this statement stating that a barrier to a successful authentic partnership is the result of systemic ignorance on "how this country came to be." He stated:

> I think anybody that's interested in forming an alliance of any nature with a First
>
> Nation community would start by doing some historical research as to the
>
> development of Canada. Take the time and read a treaty. Read a treaty. Just pull
>
> any one. I mean I read Treaty 3 because that's where we're from. Pull any treaty.

Find out what the language was. Find out why the society we live in today is

structured the way it does and some of those biases and perceived injustices that are

present. If you go back and read the legal agreement – because that's what that

treaty was – between the First Nations and the British government – the Crown.

That's the starting point. But you have to do the research and then from that you'll

gain your own respect of the community that you want to work with.

Participant 1 (supported by Participants 3, 4) stated that partnerships must be focused on

cross-cultural levels of engagement, and the various cultures must come together to work, share

and have a better understanding of each other and one's own culture. Several factors have

interfered with understanding what each other's and one's own culture are, including

communication barriers between communities and families, some attribution to residential schools

and government. These factors will be explored under the area of barriers.

Regular communication over time (Participants 9, 3) is instrumental to developing

understanding and knowledge. Through active discussion, questions and sincere interest,

communication helps identify each of the parties' opinions, thoughts and position on an issue.

Participant 7 stated, "I will give them lots of space to ask questions and have an understanding so

that we all know where we're going and where we're coming from and what has to be done."

However, Participant 4 suggested that during the communication process, it would be advisable to

stay away from the media when possible. He stated:

If you're interviewed and you say something and it's put together wrong and it's

aired in public and you've upset a community, how many years will it take to un-do

that one second? And you might even be innocent and chances are, you probably

are. It was taken out of context. They truncated (sic) off your full sentence for that

little audio clip. So I would say try to stay away from it."

Clear communication and transparency is required in order to establish the appropriate

understanding of goals and objectives (Participant 2). Sometimes the conversations may be

difficult, but they are necessary to avoid confusion, misunderstandings and may be a larger issue

than the other party had contemplated. Participant 4 stated:

So the transparency around the business relationship and goes to everything you do

… taking people the furthest from the labour market and we're going to move them

into new opportunities and jobs so that way the community wins. There's an

opportunity for new revenue generation, for sustainability, for better health, for all

those reasons. But unless you kind of lay that out initially, again, there may be a

narrower vision. So the transparency and authenticity often covers the whole

spectrum that the more you can lay out initially what expectations are and what the

relationship is and what the goals are, the type of vision and values, then the more

likelihood the relationship and partnership will continue and be successful."

As a result, knowledge and understanding of the First Nations culture is important when

creating and sustaining partnerships. These factors fall under the teaching of wisdom. Wisdom is

the ability to speak well, and eloquently and correctly interpret other's ideas (The Gifts of the

Seven Grandfathers - Ojibwe.net, 2015). Other factors that complement the teaching of wisdom

include cultural intelligence, mindfulness and behavioural ability.

Cultural intelligence is the ability to deal with people from different cultural

backgrounds, a multidimensional approach with cognitive and behavioural components

(Thomas, 2006). This ability is also complemented by adaptation and shaping the cross-cultural

interaction through appropriate behaviour. Knowledge, mindfulness and behaviour are relevant in creating a trans-cultural communication competence (Thomas, 2006). Knowledge pertains to knowing what the culture is, how it varies and how culture affects behaviour. It is the understanding of cultural differences and knowing the processes where culture influences behaviour.

Mindfulness is the heightened awareness and enhanced attention to a situation, continuously monitoring the internal state and the external environment. Emotions, thoughts, motives, and external stimuli are reflected upon, with an outcome of cognitive processing that creates new and multiple perspectives on an issue. (Thomas, 2006). As noted previously, Aboriginal peoples actively reflect and implement mindfulness when considering issues before making decisions. Understanding the concept of mindfulness and the time that it takes to understand and appreciate perspectives may be helpful when participants are slow to respond or react to information.

Behavioural ability refers to choosing the correct or appropriate behaviour based on the intercultural situation. Developing an understanding of others' expectations, as well as their motives and goals, helps to shape one's behaviour. Those individuals who are culturally intelligent are able to develop behavioural competencies that permit them to successfully interact across a wide range of cultural situations (Thomas, 2006). As mentioned by Participant 1:

> It's also important for industry to respect the traditions of the native people, so if
> that means going and experiencing ceremony, well then you go and you do it.
> You'd learn something. You'd have a good time. You'd eat well. It would be a
> pleasant experience. But people are afraid. People are afraid to take part in these
> things.

As a result, it is important to model appropriate behaviours in creating authentic partnerships.

Cultural intelligence develops over time and may require iterative and experiential learning. Social learning occurs when individuals learn from experiences and the knowledge is transferred and applied after receiving feedback or reinforcement of the behaviour (Thomas, 2006).

Love

When examining the teaching of love as part of the Seven Grandfather Teachings, the interdependence of love to other teachings becomes apparent. Based on the teachings, love is to show kindness and respect to others (The Pulse Check, 2014) and to be at peace with all things. "Love cannot be demanded...it must be earned and given freely from the goodness of your heart" (The Pulse Check, 2014). Important elements of teachings about Love are respect, kindness, loyalty, sharing, generosity and concern for others, including future generations (Verbos & Humphries, 2014).

In reviewing a successful business partnership, many of the participants discussed equality and contribution (see Authentic Partnerships). Participant 11 indicated that their partnerships have been successful because they want to help other organizations succeed and will often give selflessly to encourage another's success. Participant 11 and her company do this not for recognition or fanfare, but as part of an overall principle of mentorship. She stated: "It wasn't to get anything. I would do it for you and I'd do it for you if you were starting a business. It's just what we do. And it was just that you build that trust and respect over time."

Similarly, loyalty was also defined as a critical factor by Participant 4. With loyalty comes a sense of commitment and togetherness. It is a broad term but helps shape the partnership moving forward (Participant 4).

Participants 11 and 12 also spoke about two other partnerships in which they were directly involved, one where a First Nations partner owned 60% of the business and another with 99.9% First Nations ownership (with the remaining ownership belonging to Participants 11 and 12). With a smaller share in the partnership, Participants 11 and 12 could continue to participate and work on projects that they would not normally be able to perform because of the association with Aboriginal business. The behaviours of Participants 11 and 12 in this scenario support the teaching of love due to the generosity, support and respect they have with their Aboriginal partners. They could have leveraged their expertise and goodwill in industry to negotiate a higher ownership distribution consistent with the minimum federal and provincial eligibility requirements. Instead, they recognized the need to foster and continue growth and development in their trade and to mentor others for financial and personal success.

Respect

This particular lesson addresses the respect that attaches to all of creation, including nature and people. Part of this element is to be non-judgmental and, in order to be respected, one needs to give and not demand respect. Characteristic behaviours of providing respect are being polite, considerate, and appreciative of others (The Pulse Check, 2014).

Several participants identified respect as a success element in building partnership. How people respond to culture and how they treat each other demonstrates respect. Participants 11 and 12 reiterated that respect cannot be demanded (i.e., by being boastful about personal wealth) and must be earned, which suggests a connection to time. This sentiment was echoed in part by Participant 10 who stated: "I will respect any other individual until they give me a reason not to respect them." Further, if individuals are taken advantage of and their interests are not respected, the relationship will fail. This experience was addressed by Participant 7 who suggested that

because of a lack of respect and the sense of being taken advantage of by her supervisor, she quit her employment to move home.

Participant 4 also stated that parties must also be respectful of the land, people, and time (connecting back to the issue of love). Participant 12 stated that individuals must first have respect for themselves in order to present as an open and honest partner. This self-awareness and reflection of honesty is another teaching of the Seven Grandfathers and will be explored in the latter section of this paper.

Bravery

Bravery is to act and behave with integrity, despite the possible unpleasant consequences. Bravery is a personal choice that demonstrates a commitment to honour moral, ethical, spiritual and artistic values and principles (The Pulse Check, 2014). It is based on courage and the ability to use personal strength during periods of adversity and challenge (The Pulse Check, 2014).

The participants discussed the need to develop an open and honest relationship and understand the cultural needs of the parties to an agreement. In keeping with this foundation, transparency needs to be evident. As one participant mentioned, a party to an agreement cannot come with an agenda and take control of a meeting (Participant 1). Instead, commonality must be explored, generally in a fashion where food is shared and information is exchanged to build an understanding of each other's perspective. This takes bravery and commitment from the parties to learn about each other and to determine how best to proceed with an arrangement.

To some extent, a degree of risk is required when determining next steps for possible growth. As stated by Participant 9, several businesses in Thunder Bay have matured. There is an element of risk in determining whether to collaborate with a First Nations community for future growth. He stated:

So that's why part of our strategy as part of our economic development, aside from

what we're trying to market is, we want to start selling those businesses to people

that are 30 or 40 years old that are willing to take risks to grow it because they've

got the horizon of time, right? So that limits us to how will this work. And then we

have the stigmatism of the First Nation person versus us that we have to get over

and so a younger person may have not so much stigmatism as versus somebody

else. So all that will take time, which is why I keep telling people – but you have to

start. If you don't start, you won't get there. And then when the contracts get let go

– how come I didn't get any?"

This same participant also suggested that a relationship could start small and develop a

footprint in the community. Once success is achieved, other opportunities may be evident in the

future. However, this may sometimes require risk, faith and a true commitment to partnership.

If participants are not fully brought into a relationship, or if their standing is not recognized,

bravery may be an element that is missing (Verbos & Humphries, 2014). As a result, it is

imperative that relationships and involvement of the appropriate participants are part of the

discussions. There must be mutual understanding of roles, positions, involvement, expected

outcomes and benefits. Clarity is required in order to provide balance, outcomes and an ability to

move forward in the relationship (Participant 2).

However, consistent representation in discussion may be difficult due to the short tenure of

Aboriginal leadership in First Nations governance. Every two years, as spelled out in the Indian

Act, there is an election for the Chief and Council, unless the community has developed a Custom

Election approach (Government of Canada, 2015). As a result, it is important to ensure that the

community and elders are engaged in the discussions. Expectations of the new Chief and Council

may be different to what was previously understood or agreed. Elders may also have representation standing for the community and building this relationship may help as the Aboriginal government changes (Participant 3). It is equally important to understand First Nations governance on issues of land access; some communities would prefer consultation with elders, while other may prefer consultation with the Chief and Council (Participant 3). As a result, one can see that this teaching can also link back to the teaching of wisdom.

It is also important to understand the roles and engage others in the partnership. For instance, other participants may include various educational institutions such as the community college, training centres, and the university (Participant 10). The provincial government may also be a party to the agreement or have some input into the arrangement and, therefore, these parties may be required to sit as participants in the early discussions. Participant 7 suggested that it was important to know the role of the various people that are involved. Participant 8 stated that others who have specialized knowledge in a particular area might also need to be involved. Having this involvement may facilitate an interaction for the entire project to come together. Tribal councils may also be required to assist.

Even though Chief and Council may change every two years, it is equally important that First Nations and other partners are aware of possible corporate changes. For instance, Participant 5 stated that their President and CEO has a four-year term. He indicated that with the potential turnover of leadership, other priorities may be required, which changes the course of action and direction. There is an equal risk on the organization's side for changing priorities due to changed leadership, but the interest is to work together in the long-term.

Without appropriate discussion and engagement of the represented parties, the partnership runs the risk of failing due to a lack of authorization, consultation or understanding. Endless

questions on consultation, standing and language barriers were issues that created significant delays with the Ring of Fire initiative, costing local reserves considerable sums of money (Freeman, 2013). The Ring of Fire project is one that has significant complexities. However, it provides a good example of the importance of full engagement and participation of the parties from the outset.

Honesty

The teaching pertaining to honesty is to be brave, a quality that is demonstrated through one's character, words and actions (The Pulse Check, 2014). This suggests transparency in speech and actions. One must also demonstrate self-awareness and honesty within oneself in order to be honest with others (The Pulse Check, 2014). Participant 11 agreed that honesty was an important factor when he stated, "You have to respect yourself in order to be able to present an open and honest partner and you have to have respect for your partner on the other side, and they have to respect you." Participant 7 stated that partners needed to be brave enough to accurately communicate a message and its meaning. Stating that the most critical factor in building a relationship with Indigenous peoples is honesty, Participant 5 indicated that honesty must reside in the person who is involved in the partnership, not a corporate entity:

It's not the company, but the person – if he's honest. And you'll know that because other people make referrals where they have a reputation and if they're not honest, then you're not going to do business with them…. The honesty and integrity is key because that's what builds the trust and allows for some future opportunity and to work together in the future.

Participant 7 indicated that honesty is important in interactions and often is reflected upon before partnerships are entered into: "You think to [yourself] – who am I dealing with, a

real honest to goodness person or am I dealing with a politician here who's going to make promises and not deliver?"

The teaching of honesty suggests that actions require integrity, and truthfulness and trustworthiness follow (Morgan-Flowers, 2013). Participant 11 stated:

…integrity. I think that is absolutely essential, given the history – right or wrong, true or false. There is certainly a perception that many Aboriginal communities have that they can't trust white people. That's just reality. It is what it is. You have to have a very strong integrity. That's why we won't go into relationships where we're asked to provide extortion or bribes because that's just continuing the same practice. But we have a high level of integrity. We say what we'll do and we do what we say.

Trustworthiness is also critical in this particular teaching. Several of the participants identified that trust was a critical element in the establishment of a good working relationship and partnership (Participants 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12) and, without trust, the relationship has been damaged at varying levels. The building of the relationship, getting to know your partners, and understanding the history establishes trust. According to Participant 2, the inability to develop trust and mutual respect was one of the downfalls in the Ring of Fire project[4].

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[4] The Ring of Fire is a major chromite development located northeast of Thunder Bay and approximately 240 kilometers west of James Bay (Ontario Nature, 2015). One of the earliest participants to the project was Cliffs Natural Resource and despite significant investment, the company encountered challenges with securing agreements with the provincial government and First Nations on extending transportation infrastructure (340 km all season roadway) into the remote region. (Northern Ontario Business, 2015). First Nations concerns pertained to lack of consultation, the need for environmental impacts and the creation of a future oriented benefit agreement (Murray, 2013).

There is a feeling of distrust when dealing with government (Participant 9). At the time of this study, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its report on reconciliation, including guidelines and principles to help Canada "flourish in the twenty-first century" and, to overcome First Nations' longstanding distrust of government, to facilitate reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015b). The mistrust has been the result of history, with a key development being the creation of residential schools.

Participant 9 confirmed that trust is imperative and, often, relationships are void of trust. He referenced: "And don't forget these are the same people that used to watch airplanes come in with police officers that would take their kids. So are you going to trust the government?" Participant 7 (Elder) also suggested that there is a lack of trust and felt that the government may not trust First Nations people. Participant 7 drew from an experience several years ago with the following sentiment describing her impression of government: "Indian Affairs acts like the Great White Father. They don't trust us. They think we're not bright up here. We're stupid. They've got to do everything for it to be successful." In her longstanding view, paternalism still exists. In addition, she believes that First Nations people are taken advantage of, particularly when it comes to economic benefits. Participants 11 and 12 acknowledged the longstanding history of distrust as well, stating:

> I think a lot of the First Nations have been so screwed by people in suits that they
>
> have an inherent lack of trust and that's a challenge because as much as they want
>
> to develop and as much as they want to allow development on their land, I think
>
> regardless of what the environmental process is – regardless of the lawyers that
>
> come in or the suits that come in – I still think a lot of the community – and I'm not

talking about the chief and council necessarily, but a lot of the community doesn't trust them.

The Summary of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission stated: Reconciliation must become a way of life. It will take many years to repair damaged trust and relationships in Aboriginal communities and between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Reconciliation not only requires apologies, reparations, the relearning of Canada's national history, and public commemoration, but also needs real social, political, and economic change. Ongoing public education and dialogue are essential to reconciliation. Governments, churches, educational institutions, and Canadians from all walks of life are responsible for taking action on reconciliation in concrete ways, working collaboratively with Aboriginal peoples. Reconciliation begins with each and every one of us" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015a, pp. 240-241).

Humility

Humility is being humble, grounded, equal to others, and having compassion (The Pulse Check, 2014). Humility is about having sensitivity towards others, respecting their way of doing things and listening (The Pulse Check, 2014). According to Participant 3, compassion is linked to understanding:

Compassion is understanding if you don't understand, then you need to take the necessary steps to become understanding and educating yourself. I'm going to go into a partnership with someone and I'm not going to understand the way they do things and I'm going to and assume that they're going to do it my way. But I'm going to ask them – how can I make this work? This is how I see it going, but how

can we make this – how can we achieve that goal? What do I need to give up?

What do you need?

He further stated, "The strongest areas of compassion is that respect and the ability to put themselves in that other person's shoes. I'm just trying to think about – if you don't have that, it's going to be a tough relationship. That goes for both sides."

Participant 1 also indicated that parties should take a genuine interest and listen to each other when developing a relationship:

> Well, industry needs to listen. Industry needs to listen to what the communities are
>
> saying because sometimes that means when you go to a meeting you don't say
>
> anything. You simply listen. I will suggest to industry, let's say as one example –
>
> you don't walk into a community with a printed agenda and this is what we're
>
> going to cover today. That's not the way it works. It's not the way it works. You
>
> know you're going to go in and you're going to have a meal together, much the
>
> same as if I was going to learn about the French culture of the Italian culture,
>
> what's the first thing you're going to do? They're going to sit you down at a table
>
> and they're going to feed you. Well, the Anishinaabe culture is the same."

Humility (and specifically drawing in the concept of wisdom) means being aware of one's self, including strengths, weaknesses and understanding that one has the capacity to grow and change (The Pulse Check, 2014). Participant 3 indicated that you have to have respect in one's self in order to have an open and honest relationship with others. One cannot be boastful or display arrogance when dealing with others (Participant 3).

Truth

Truth is to have integrity in all things, especially as it relates to oneself and others (Verbos & Humphries, 2014). Participant 12 stated that integrity was a key element in working

with Aboriginal communities. To him, he suggested that integrity was a matter of "saying what we'll do and doing what we say," suggesting that it was a matter of making a commitment and delivering on it. Behaviours must be consistent with words.

Truth can be demonstrated through speech and actions; trust exists in relationships with another person, an animal, a body of water, or a forest (Verbos & Humphries, 2014). The teachings suggest that it is through respect, humility, and wisdom that people take from nature only what is needed for sustenance. As a result, the First Nations connection to land is very significant.

The First Nations connection to land is a tradition that may be very difficult for people to understand. Only a few participants identified the strong traditional connection that Aboriginal people have in their land and characterized this connection as strong, powerful and spiritual (Participants 2, 3, Participant 4, Participant 11). Others noted that traditional land is an important factor for First Nations, but the spiritual connection was not often addressed.

> They view the ecosystem in a different level altogether. Mother Earth, we're all one – that context is fundamental to their well-being and self-identity as a people. A company comes in. Their purpose is to increase the bottom line. It's a completely different value system and they're going to have problems unless they can meet somewhere. (Participant 2)

Participant 3 indicated that, when he returns to his land where he traps, he feels a connection to his ancestors who have passed on. He felt that the land was so important to him that he would "lay down my life for the land if somebody wanted to do mining or put up hydro poles or develop it." He reasoned that the property was not just a place to hunt; it was something bigger that cannot be explained. He further stated: "It's almost something like my mother. The

way we treat it is with a deep respect that companies need to take into account and a lot of people don't understand that. So when doing business with First Nations, they need to understand that the land is everything."

Participant 4 stated that in resource development there is a considerable time spent on the impact on the land. Resource companies (such as mining) will rush to start production without understanding the First Nations' interest in the land and the possible impact. It is important to recognize traditional lands and the spiritual significance to them (Participant 11). Showing a respect for land while performing work should be guided with direction from First Nations communities (Participant 11). In order to fully understand and cooperatively work on traditional lands, organizations need to appreciate the Aboriginal connection to land.

As part of the teachings on truth, the other teachings are interdependent. "To know of these things is to know the truth" (Morgan-Flowers, 2013) and, therefore, to be seen as being honorable is to be truthful and trustworthy. With truth comes sincerity and genuine in word, action and character. Participant 1 stated that one must enter the relationship with genuine interests otherwise one may not be received well by the First Nation community. Additionally, truth is to carefully understand facts so as not to develop a different sense of reality (Morgan-Flowers, 2013). This suggests having an open mind and objectivity.

As a result, if all of the critical success elements in establishing effective and authentic partnerships are applied, it is likely that all parties to the relationship can benefit. This benefit is based on the parties' respective interests including profitability, community investment, economic impact and improved knowledge, skills, and abilities, which can lead to improved employment prospects and personal wealth.

Outcomes of partnership were another major theme identified by participants. Many of these outcomes are consistent with those identified in the extant literature (Salee, 2006; Rose & Rose, 2012; Sisco & Stewart, 2009). Specifically, community investment opportunities (such as investment in human resources, infrastructure and programs), socio-economic improvements and improved skill set, knowledge and capabilities because of additional training opportunities were noted as beneficial outcomes of partnership.

Community Investment

Participants indicated that improved access to such things as scholarships or internships for young people or the opportunity to complete an apprenticeship (Participant 1) would be investments in the community with the effect of general community improvement. This additional skill set can also encourage additional manufacturing and services in the community which can lead to a more self-sufficient, independent, and economically reliant community (Participant 2). Other complementary or tertiary services may be developed from the economic impact of manufacturing or construction (Participant 2). Community development, including social aspects, may be improved; however, First Nations communities need to be active participants in developing alternatives and solutions (Participant 2). As mentioned previously, several agreements exist where a certain percentage of resources must come from the First Nations community. Money from the economic development is reinvested in the First Nations community. Recognizing that First Nations communities may have limited resources, community economic development corporations may need to be involved in developing solutions and alternatives (Participants 11/12).

Economic Impact

In addition to improving the social system, there is also an economic impact when engaging Aboriginal communities in business ventures and partnerships. Participant 1 indicated that the local community experiences increased business opportunities and an improved local economy because of the additional spending of First Nations people who migrate or travel into the city. Businesses are seeing the benefit and are slowly moving toward partnerships.

Participant 10 indicated that there is an opportunity for shared wealth, particularly in the mining industry. The Constance Lake Mine is likely one of the largest graphite finds in the world and it is located in Northwestern Ontario. Participant 10 stated that considerable potential exists in a successful partnership, which could result in additional job opportunities and tax revenues. These revenues can be used to support further benefits and employment or training opportunities, not only for the First Nations community but also for the region as a whole. Participant 9, who confirmed the tremendous growth potential and economic spin offs, further supported this proposition. The additional tax revenue could also be used to support social services. Furthermore, additional newly-opened services or retail businesses can create further spending opportunities within the community as well as the region. However, if these partnerships do not occur in the Northwestern Ontario region, consumers from those communities may decide to spend their money in Manitoba. This creates an unfortunate loss for our region; encouraging growth and entrepreneurship in some of the reserve areas may improve the cost of living in our local communities and First Nations reserves (Participant 9).

Participant 10 stated that with partnership and the development of businesses on First Nations land, infrastructure spending is required (e.g., roads, power supplies). Access to energy supplies such as electricity or other efficient power supplies is increasingly important as many reserves rely on diesel fuel, an expensive, unreliable and inefficient source of power (Participant

2). Having alternative sources of power and access to information may open other opportunities for development, such as technology, innovation and research (Participant 4 and 5). Participant 8 suggests that by providing some of the infrastructure (such as power), residents can gain further control over their lives and the economic welfare of the community, creating independent growth for the community.

Knowledge and Capacity

An outcome of authentic partnership is the building of knowledge and capacity with First Nations communities. Many partnership and IBA agreements contain provisions to promote employability and training of residents. Having an appreciation of the current skill set and developing training opportunities are necessary (Participant 10) in order to launch programs or encourage enrolment to traditional colleges or universities to help with educational success and employment both on and off reserve.

However, relocating to a larger centre for education is not easy. In an effort to assist in orienting First Nations families and students to a larger city, it may be advisable to have a non-Indigenous person reside in a First Nations community. The benefits of this are twofold: to understand First Nations social norms and culture better, and to help explain the social norms and practices of a larger centre. This may help in the transition when a young person moves to a larger city for further education and training (Participant 10). Ultimately, this can add to the success of an education and training program by removing possible cultural or social norms barriers.

Furthermore, development and training must be sustainable (Participant 3). Promoting entrepreneurial activities in First Nations communities fosters the ability for people to create individual pathways, creating a stronger economy and community capacity (Participant 4). Participant 7 indicated the importance of receiving an education. Education can build capacity

and knowledge that benefits individuals financially and promotes role modelling for future generations. In order to foster continuous growth and development, Participant 8 suggested that every request for proposal should have a requirement for capacity training of First Nations communities, with an understanding of how the training will be delivered and how long the training will take to acquire an appropriate level of competency. Participant 12 suggested that it was not necessarily a competency issue, but rather the barriers to capacity development were student disengagement and a lack of preparation. He indicated:

…there has been a lack of engagement of many of the youth. They don't want to go to school or they may not feel comfortable going to school. They feel disenfranchised so they don't participate actively in school. And this has carried on. It's getting better. But again, going back to when we grew up – true to the last four decades of observing this, there's a skilled trades, skilled development gap in the communities. And it is being identified and there's lot of programs. We're participating with some that are trying to make up that – bridge that gap. They didn't fit in well during high school, so they didn't go to high school. They didn't graduate. They've gone back and done a GED. They've done something – they've finished high school somehow; and now they're getting skill development which is critically important because the biggest challenge that I see in working with chief and councils and project teams is that there's just so much to do and just not enough skilled – I won't say competent. I think there's competency. But they're not prepared. There aren't enough people that have the skill development to assist.

When asked about further areas of consultation, Participant 12 suggested that education is an area where partners could engage in further consultation, stating that there may be some non-

traditional methods of providing instruction and educational opportunities that may be more fitting based on the community and the student's interests. Participant 12 also suggested that different methods of teaching should be implemented to match a particular learning style. If students are engaged early enough, then perhaps more success could be achieved at the high school level, engaging student's and igniting their interest in math, chemistry and biology. Participant 12 also suggested that perhaps the high school system should revert to a dual stream of trades and highly skilled streams, opening the opportunities for people to receive training and exposure to areas where they have specific interests and competence.

Unsuccessful Examples

While reviewing successful partnership arrangements resulted in considerable information, a review of unsuccessful partnerships or factors that made the relationship unsuccessful was equally insightful. Many of the unsuccessful examples identified confirmed that the critical success factors (tied to the categories of wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility or truth as derived by the Seven Grandfather Teachings) were lacking.

Participant 1 suggested that there are a number of unsuccessful partnerships and some of the downfall is the lack of equality and a lack of truthfulness. She stated that non-Indigenous groups failed to communicate fully, providing limited or restricted information based on what the communities wanted to hear. In so doing, these companies attempted to leverage an outcome for their own benefit and not the mutual benefit or interests of the Aboriginal partners.

Participant 2 confirmed that the failure of some partnerships was due to the lack of respect or trust, particularly when promises cannot be delivered. In his commentary, Participant 2 indicated that the Ring of Fire was an example of an unsuccessful partnership [Cliff's Natural Resources] (see section – Critical Success Factors – Honesty). He also suggested that it is important to listen to all voices from the community, including the Chief, Council, Elders and youth.

The Ring of Fire was also an example discussed by Participant 4, but with specific reference to the Aboriginal Training Alliance[5]. Although the parties created guidelines and protocols on how each partner will work together, the project was riddled with false starts due to the lack of infrastructure and the investments required to build the necessary infrastructure (equality and role representation/clarity). Another example raised by Participant 4 pertained to international investment and international technology. Participant 4 assumed that he was invited to the partnership to participate in a business venture and his expectation was a share of additional business volumes and work. However, he was later advised that he was invited for his proposal writing and problem solving abilities, not necessarily to obtain other pieces of work (lack of transparency).

Participant 3 indicated that some of the failure related to the actions of industry taking charge of a situation and not seeking understanding (wisdom). Industry may also be selective in their engagement with the community, working on different activities at the possible risk of excluding the community. Some companies have also brought in other partners without discussion or consultation with the First Nations community (Participant 3).

Participant 10 suggested that he viewed treaties as being unsuccessful and not working well. He also indicated that there is a lack of clarity with respect to the role of government in the duty to consult, even though various court ruling (*Haida* (Fasken Martineau, 2011) and *Grassy*

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[5] The Aboriginal Training Alliance is a partnership involving Matawa First Nations Management's Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services (KKETS), Noront Resources Ltd. and Confederation College of Applied Arts. The collaborative partnership will work towards expanding the Aboriginal workforce's capacity/skill set in order to facilitate employment opportunities associated mining activities associated with the Ring of Fire (Confederation College, 2013).

Narrows (Minining Watch Canada, 2014) as an examples) have attempted to clarify roles of

independent third parties. He stated:

> I think part of the problem is on the non-indigenous side, people don't see
>
> themselves or as a group being party to the treaty. The other failure there I think is
>
> both orders of government, provincial and federal, have responsibilities under the
>
> Constitution to consult and accommodate; and they don't do it, in my opinion, and
>
> that leaves companies hanging high and dry to do something they're not supposed
>
> to do. It's supposed to be the federal government does that. So they get everything
>
> ready and then – oh, you've got to re-look at this because the government hasn't
>
> okayed this or whatever. So I don't think generally the treaties are working as well
>
> as they could.

The Aboriginal Procurement Project was cited as an unsuccessful partnership (Participant

6). He indicated that, generally, a first contract might be difficult to achieve. In his example, a

proposal was submitted jointly by a newly established company, which was a partnership between

a First Nations community and a non-Indigenous company. The company was located in another

geographic location. At the time that the work was required to be performed, the First Nations

partner found work closer to its home reserve. As a result, the non-Indigenous company was the

remaining available resource to perform the work. Although the Aboriginal company had

administrative control, they were unable to participate in the work. Based on a legal opinion, the

provincial service still had a contractual obligation to award the bid to the partnership. Essentially,

"it was up to them to decide who could work there" and the work was directed to the non-

Indigenous group. While the objective was to employ Aboriginal people, the First Nations

community still profited from the partnership, but the employment benefits were not extended to

them. Participant 6 reasoned: "So we feel that was kind of a failure. It's something we learned – we learned from that."

Participant 7 suggested that some of the failures are associated with the preparedness and readiness of the Aboriginal community to perform work in a certain way. In her example, a First Nations community of about 40 people at the time sought an opportunity with Indian Affairs to make snowshoes. There was a requirement to work shift work and, in her opinion, the community was not prepared for that. Consequently, a building was constructed, but the opportunity never came to fruition.

Even if a business was established, Participant 8 suggested that sometimes partnerships fail due to the inability to manage. He stated:

> …a lot of it is related to the inability to manage properly. It's management or the board and this non-profit business issue – the one that I was talking about – the board wasn't properly trained to be a board. And if you don't have a board that understands their responsibilities, they have a tendency to micro-manage the operation and then it can lead to many problems. So that's what happened in that situation.

He also suggested that sometimes boards can also be non-participatory or not involved to the extent required, resulting in failed opportunities.

Participant 9 stated that there are many examples of failures of partnerships involving two non-Indigenous parties. The typical downfall, in his opinion, is where the two parties do not have common goals and objectives. Participants 11 and 12 suggested that sometimes a partnership requires faith and trust. In some cases, they have provided funding for an initiative that has yet to start. The hope is that the other party will take the gesture as good faith for future opportunity.

These examples of unsuccessful business partnerships provide an opportunity to reflect on possible best practices, identify areas for improved practices and encourage future successful partnerships. Because of these "failures," those who are willing may learn from these experiences and take the necessary steps to promote partnership and mutual success.

Lessons Learned

In generating a list of "lessons learned" from participants' past experience or knowledge of unsuccessful partnerships, many of the factors that were missing in the relationship are directly related to the critical success factors:

- improved communication (Participant 3);

- informed consent (Participant 3);

- forward thinking required and not just focused on the immediate project (Participant 4);

- clear understanding, agreements and relationships (Participant 4 and 5);

- appropriate ministry involvement (Participant 6);

- understanding capacity and knowledge to ensure opportunity (Participant 6);

- training on board governance (Participant 8);

- learning about your future partner to determine compatibility (Participants 11/12); and

- patience as funding arrangements may be delayed due to paper work (Participants 11/12).

Barriers

Barriers that were identified by the various participants included:

- lack of support from government agencies (Participant 1);

- lack of information on best practice for building relationships (Participant 1);

- making a mistake due to lack of knowledge or confidence (Participant 1);

- lack of cultural awareness (Participant 2);

- lack of investment of time (Participant 4) or money (Participants 5, 8);

- legislative restraints (i.e., Indian Act) (Participants 4, 8);

- unfamiliarity with politics (Participants 4, 9);

- stereotypes (Participant 6, Participants 11/12);

- misunderstanding of the capacity of First Nations business people (Participant 6);

- complicated contracts and documentation (Participant 7); and

- lack of trust (Participants 7, 11/12).

Racism

Racism, stereotypes and prejudice were identified as challenges and reasons success stories are not communicated with sufficient frequency (Participants 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12). Most of the participants stated that based on their perspectives and awareness, the stereotypes do not accurately reflect their characterization of the First Nations community. For instance, while Participant 10 stated that he believed that there is considerable prejudice and racism in Thunder Bay, the reality is that:

> . . . most First Nation people have jobs in Thunder Bay … I think it's 68% - I could
>
> be corrected – of First Nation people that live here have jobs. It's fairly high.
>
> People don't realize this. They think they're all bums.

Participant 7 confirmed that in her experience, stereotypes are prevalent, but there are a considerable number of established professionals in the community who are First Nations. However, in her view, these are the First Nations people that the community does not see. Participant 3 stated that not every "white person is racist" and while the local community may possess a high rate of racism, businesses are able to work through those barriers. In his view, things are getting better. Participant 2 suggested that media does not often print a success story on

Indigenous and non-Indigenous partnerships because these types of stories do not "sell" unless there is a larger human or emotional context that will be viewed as appealing by the reader. Instead, we hear about the failures because of the stigmatization (Participant 9):

> We just try to stigmatize it from – well, it's white person to First Nation person. Of course, it was going to fail. But how many white person to white person businesses succeed? And there's lots of people that won't play with another person because they hate each other's guts or they don't like the way that guy runs his business. We just don't dwell on it from a racism point of view because we just look at it from – well, that's a business decision. Whereas on this side of the fence we try to throw the racism card in it, but that's not necessarily so, because you see they had common goals to start with.

Time

In order to establish successful relationships, most of the participants referred to the amount of time required for its cultivation (Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12). Some have reasoned that the partnership is like a marriage, where parties need to build trust, openness and understanding, which occur over time. Others have referred to the need to demonstrate patience (Participants 8, 9, 11, 12). Furthermore, a factor of trust is time (Participant 2) and in order to deal with an associated level of risk in developing a relationship and opportunity, time is required to develop background and understanding of the partners involved (Participant 8). It takes time to understand, learn and nurture the relationship and understand the interests of the parties.

Participant 3 indicated that to establish a relationship, businesses should invest time to understand and interact with elders, youth and other community members. A simple discussion is not enough. The parties need to invest time and interest in learning, hearing, and understanding

those with whom they wish to work (Participants 3, 9). Participant 9 suggested that one cannot

go into the community in the morning with the focus of obtaining a partnership for a request for

proposals for the afternoon. In his opinion, it takes years to foster a successful partnership,

including the time it takes to develop a rapport, test receptiveness, deciding upon a framework,

determining roles and responsibilities, and determining training and capacity levels

He further reasoned that an organization should plan and identify the type of work and the

outcomes, getting to know the community and understanding the Chief and Council, the business

acumen of the people that reside in the community and the willingness of the community to

participate. It takes time to source out what partners an organization can work with as well as

getting to know their interests and needs. Sometimes this relationship starts small, but investing

the time with the community and the partners requires planning. Once you have made a

"footprint," the relationship and the arrangement can grow further. Participants 11/12 stated that

there is a high degree of patience required in developing a relationship, and leadership must show

this characteristic. He stated:

> You can't walk into a community today and have that trust or that respect. It takes
>
> time. It takes time to develop a relationship with a First Nation community and it
>
> might be 10 years. … But because we had established that relationship and it
>
> wasn't even working together, it was just that you live in the region, you work in
>
> the region, you hire local people, and you slowly build that relationship over years.
>
> It just doesn't happen overnight.

Ensuring the appropriate time to investigate and plan a partnership and business

relationship is part of an overall strategy to build and grow. As a result, research on strengths,

opportunities, weaknesses, and risk require an investment of time (Participant 2). Strategic

direction and vision should be determined from several perspectives (Participants 2, 4), realistic outcomes should be understood (e.g., mining companies are there to make money) (Participant 3), as well as defined goals and objectives (Participant 7). The strategy should be planned, staged and managed (Participant 4), keeping focus on the core fundamental of the business purpose, but remaining aware of possible and further opportunities (Participant 4) by bringing people together (Participant 8).

Opportunities reside in partnerships between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal communities collaborating in business opportunities in terms of responses to bids or tenders (set-asides) Participant 9 stated that local businesses should change and look at possible partnerships in order to grow or sustain themselves in the marketplace. Otherwise, other organizations from outside of Northwestern Ontario will be actively bidding and taking the work due to increased competition. However, many businesses in our region have matured, in both life cycle and ownership. Previous financial success had been achieved because of traditional business opportunities in forestry, including pulp and paper. With less opportunity in these industries, these mature companies need to decide whether to growth and invest in new market areas (assuming some financial risk) and partner with Aboriginal communities or businesses for future work opportunities. Mature owners who are looking at retirement may be risk averse due to the unknown financial risk associated with establishing this partnership. However, unless these businesses change, they will continue to shrink and the opportunities will go to those businesses that are more competitive and have an appreciation for partnership. As a result, a local business should invest sufficient time and resources to determine their own business goals to determine whether partnership is appropriate based on their interests and risk.

Future Opportunities

When asked about future opportunities for business partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, all participants were positive pointing to several different business ventures. Energy was listed as a common business venture, including renewable energy (solar, hydro-electric, natural gas) (Participants 1, 2, 3 6, 9, 10). While one participant was not in favour of wind energy due to the disruption caused to wildlife and access to natural agricultural areas (Participant 1), another participant indicated that wind power was a possible area for further partnership (Participant 6). Mining (Participants 3, 4/5, 6, 8, 9) and technology were also identified. Due to the availability of minerals in the northern region of Ontario, mining is a large industry that will have great potential if successful partnerships can be developed. In terms of technology, Participant 5 stated that technology knows no boundaries and this type of work can be done in any geographic location if there is appropriate access (power, internet, etc.).

Traditional partnerships continue to be future opportunities, such as forestry (Participants 8, 9), road construction and rock blasting (Participant 6). While there may be moral objections to gambling, Participant 6 stated that perhaps casinos may be an option in the future, particularly considering the success of Casino Rama in southern Ontario and other casinos located throughout the United States.

Other suggestions included services, such as government services (Participant 2), retail stores and outfitters' shops (Participants 2, 10), housing (Participant 2), health care and social services industries (Participant 7), and the development of sports and recreational opportunities (Participant 3).

Participant 12 stated that there may be benefit in establishing an economic development corporation (EDC) with each First Nations community. In his opinion, it is not always easy or

practical to connect with Chiefs or Elders. As a possible solution to bridge a community-to-business relationship, an EDC could assist and provide assistance to help establish partnerships:

> I think every First Nation community should be encouraged to establish and
> formalize as required funding an EDC. They need an Economic Development
> Corporation and many don't have them. It's baffled me as to how many don't have
> an EDC. But for us to formalize any kind of a partnership or a joint venture (*sic*)–
> and many can get along without it, but if you want a formal joint venture (*sic*) or
> formalized corporation, our business has to align with their business. They need a
> corporation; and in the absence – we can't make a connection with a chief. We
> can't make it with an elder. I mean we can do the individual thing. But as far as a
> formalized community to business partnership, the communities all have to have an
> EDC and they don't. They don't all have EDCs[6].

Participant 10 indicated that there is a willingness and interest in working with First Nations communities. He commented that he is currently working on a new venture that has the potential to bring in 30,000 jobs to our local community. However, this project will take at least three years to build, with production output occurring a year thereafter. The opportunity would encourage apprenticeships and journeymen positions. Ongoing discussions are held with Fort William First Nations, as well as planned conversations with Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), the provincial territorial organization representing treaties 5 and 9, and other treaty groups.

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[6] An EDC (economic development commission) is generally responsible for assisting in business development and promotion, providing business support to entrepreneurs, while maintaining records and statistics relevant to business opportunities, labour market data and trends in a regional area (City of Thunder Bay, 2009). Some EDCs support employment opportunities for its region. EDCs for First Nations typically invest in, manage or own subsidiary businesses for the members that they represent (Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, n.d.)There are approximately 260 active EDCs for various First Nations communities across Canada (Canadian Council of Aboriginal Business, n.d.).

Participant 10 also suggested that our local community and other utilities should be forward-thinking and consider apprenticeships and internships for Aboriginal people. Furthermore, he was very complimentary to the Northern School of Medicine and appreciated the placement opportunities for medical students in the north:

> … they assign people to go up to these reserves and stay there for long periods of time, not just two weeks. They're there so they understand and also provide a service to the people. But we should be doing almost the same thing and opposite with them; and I think that's a role a municipality like Thunder Bay should be playing. I think – why can't we do the same thing we did at Hydro with TBay Tel? We own that. It's right across Northwestern Ontario. Let's do it.

Participant 7 stated that there are opportunities for First Nations youth to become more involved in health care due to their personal knowledge of First Nations culture and issues that Aboriginal people face:

> Most social workers are educated non-native people. They don't know anything about the culture. They make their assumptions built on their own lives. They measure you according to their own stick. They don't go beyond that to learn about the culture, to learn about the people, and when they do come and talk to you, they treat you as such.

When reviewing these opportunities, it is clear that the participants are forward thinking and many of the industries identified are part of a thriving and growing community. Participant 8 stated: "Once we understand what some of those best practices are, then we can begin to innovate. And once we start innovating –oh wow, the world is our oyster, right? Then we start building on what we have."

Building successful and authentic partnerships is about looking for opportunities and working collaboratively with others so that all can benefit. Understanding those best practices can create the innovation to encourage the achievement of individual and collective interests.

Solutions

In terms of next steps, Participant 1 stated that society should find ways to move forward, and that many have worked to provide a factual and non-judgmental way to progress despite situations that have happened in the past. " It's not about pointing fingers anymore. It's about moving forward." However, it becomes difficult to move forward if media continues to focus on negative aspects, preventing an ability to learn from other successful ventures or collaborations involving Aboriginal people and businesses.

Participant 6 referred to a conference that he attended on Aboriginal Partnership Exchange (APEX) and commented that additional opportunities need to be encouraged to promote partnership and the awareness of the possibilities. He stated:

> Chief Clarence Louie talked about the true nature of an Aboriginal community and his people as being one that did not take social welfare, did not sit on the couch all day and they were out there harvesting. They were out there active – feeding their families. That's what they want to do. So getting businesses to come in and actually see the successes that are out there for First Nation businesses can do an immense amount of good. I think it was demonstrated in the APEX session that there are some remarkable businesses – business people; and I've seen that for years. I've seen some very successful enterprises – First Nation businesses. But I think more people need to see that. More people need to believe that there is an opportunity for partnering and not just a social welfare situation. So we need more get-togethers like APEX.

Bridging communities and building connections or networks would be a helpful method to encourage understanding and potential opportunities for the future. However, as Participant 8 suggested, this requires willingness for people to come together and their desire to find a solution.

Sustainability

In answering the question about how to sustain an authentic partnership, projects and agreements must have some future benefit that participants appreciate (Participants 4, 5). Furthermore, recognizing traditional territories, culture (Participant 8) and land will help with establishing a long-term relationship (Participant 6), along with developing and fostering trust. Understanding others and their contributions for positive impact will also go a long way in sustaining authentic partnerships (Participant 8), as well as compatibility in morals and ethics (Participant 12). Sustainable relationships have trust and respect embedded throughout the relationship (Participant 2).

Contributions to Research and Practice

Throughout the course of this research, it was apparent that there were limited sources of studies associated with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partnerships in business with a focus in Northwestern Ontario and on partnership development and sustainability. As a result, this research will add to the limited but existing body of information and knowledge associated with building and sustaining authentic partnerships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants in business. Furthermore, this paper attempts to identify the critical elements necessary in order to foster and build relationships. This builds on the theories identified by other scholars related to the ethics and morals applied in business.

This paper also speaks to the issue of the readiness of participants to engage in partnership opportunities with Aboriginal peoples, with a focus on Northwestern Ontario and Thunder Bay. While prejudices and racism exist in the social setting, it is hopeful to see that these barriers may not be as prevalent in the business forum and that the participants remained positive on the need to move forward. The participants addressed a sincere willingness or readiness to build relationships despite barriers and past historical issues.

As a contribution to practice, this research has the potential to inform individuals and organizations that are seeking to develop authentic partnerships. The principles and conditions identified by the participants in this study may help future partnerships to be more successful. For potential partners, it is important that they consider the traditional customs and norms of the other culture. For instance, non-Aboriginal parties should consider a deeper understanding of the customs and cultures of the specific First Nation's community, recognizing that not all customs, traditions, and representation needs are the same between communities. In addition to fulsome discussion and meaningful interaction, this study suggests that the Seven Grandfather Teachings

may form a meaningful framework to approach partnerships and help to foster authentic

partnerships.

Limitations and Future Research

While the practical application of this study contributes to a very limited body of existing research on authentic partnerships with Aboriginal communities in Northwestern Ontario, the study does have its limitations. The research cannot be considered inclusive of all Aboriginal interests due to the various different Aboriginal groups that exist throughout Canada and in northern Ontario. Aboriginal participants that were interviewed are those that are within the District of Thunder Bay. Furthermore, participants to the study were "self-selected" and were asked to volunteer to participate. However, this too may have its limitations as it reduces the opportunity to build trust through conversation and relationship building. This may reduce participation as a result.

Furthermore, participants in the research have already engaged in authentic partnership arrangements and, therefore, may be able to address the issue with a high degree of knowledge and familiarity. As a result, a true reflection on the area's readiness for authentic partnership may be biased.

This particular research proposed critical success factors for successful partnerships, with an alignment to the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Future research could test these factors through further analysis, possibly using a more specific case or longitudinal study and further confirmation of the theory with Aboriginal communities. Through an analysis of one particular case, a deeper understanding of the various roles and representation of the parties could be explored more deeply. Specific interactions and the methods in which relationships have been generated would be valuable to determine a best practices approach.

Furthermore, in conducting a case study analysis, travel to a reserve where a project is underway could be valuable. It would add to the researcher's credibility and foster better

communication, understanding and trust. Answers to questions may be more thorough and rich

with information necessary to help with guiding principles or best practices. In order to do so, an

investment of further time is required. Ironically, time was noted as a moderator to relationship

building.

Conclusion

There is considerable economic value in engaging in authentic partnerships with Aboriginal communities and businesses, including improved access to social programs, a sense of well-being, employment and building on our capacity in the workplace. Knowing how to maximize these opportunities and build positive working relationships with Aboriginal communities is critical for long-term relationships. Understanding how to build authentic partnerships, including the opportunities, barriers and best practices, can help all parties succeed in achieving positive and mutually beneficial outcomes.

In reviewing the critical success factors, it appears as though many of the elements are directly tied to the Seven Grandfather Teachings. These teachings include the characteristics and behaviours of wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility and truth. The teachings generally form moral "stepping stones" and are part of a cultural foundation. When examining the reasons for failed authentic partnerships, many of the reasons are associated with a lack of congruency to one of the teachings: for instance, a lack of trust, related to the teachings about honesty and truth; caring, related to teachings about love and respect; understanding, related to teachings about wisdom, bravery, honesty and humility; poor representation, related to the teachings about bravery, or lack of transparency, related to the teachings about both bravery and honesty.

In terms of answering the question of the readiness of non-Indigenous and Indigenous partners to enter into authentic partnerships, the findings indicate that the answer is "yes". Despite the past, Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners are prepared to move forward, even if the move is slow and with caution. Some of the issues associated with the past may still reside within our respective groups. However, there are signs that many of these barriers can be

overcome with a positive focus and guidance and assistance from multiple sources, including our Aboriginal partners and elders. There is a greater awareness of the issues associated with respect and anti-racism campaigns. While many have suggested that racism exists in Northwestern Ontario, one participant indicated that this barrier would be overcome through partnership.

Many of the participants have suggested that they are cautiously optimistic about our future partnerships. Some have mistrust in the government and legislation. More consultation could be conducted in terms of policy and legislation, but these issues cannot be resolved at a local level and should not be an impediment for industry to work with First Nations communities. Many industry partners are going beyond the legislative requirements to consult with our First Nations partners. As noted, the first contract may not be successful the first time, but with a commitment to open dialogue and sharing, the parties may rectify mistakes themselves rather than through the courts.

In answering the question about "readiness", Participant 8 stated:

I think we're starting there. I mean we're getting there and it's taken awhile to – I mean we've got a lot of learning to do. I think people are beginning to drift away from what was and I think that some people are beginning to understand that there's a new normal that we need to get used to. And the sooner the people that do get to realize that and understand that, will be the first to do really well and the laggards will follow…. there's got to be more interaction, more willingness to sit down and come together on solutions. So that's beginning to happen, I think.

Participant 9 also suggested that "a hunger" will make us ready. Twenty years ago, we have not experienced the same level of partnership as what we are seeing today (Participant 9). Participant 11 stated that there have been a number of partnerships in northern Ontario where the

First Nations community or group is a silent partner. This was done at the time because of the biases that existed. Had people known that a business was owned by a First Nations group, they may not have supported that organization. However, Participant 11 stated that this is changing and that people are slowly accepting and working with First Nations-owned business. Northwestern Ontario needs to continually look forward, seek opportunity and work alongside with our First Nations community as a valued partner.

It's not about pointing fingers anymore. It's about moving forward.

.....Cindy Crowe

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Appendix A1 –Northern Ontario – Geographic Scope

Appendix A2: Northern Ontario – Locations of First Nations Communities Relative to Larger City Hubs

Legend

- Municipalities (Pop. > 8 000)
- Municipalities (Pop. < 8 000)
- First Nations Communities
- Local Services Boards
- Northern Ontario Growth Plan Area*

— Major Highways
▮▮ Border Crossings
▮ District Boundary

Sources: Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry, Ministry of Natural Resources and Statistics Canada

*Ontario Regulation 416/05, as amended

50 25 0   50   100   150   200 Km
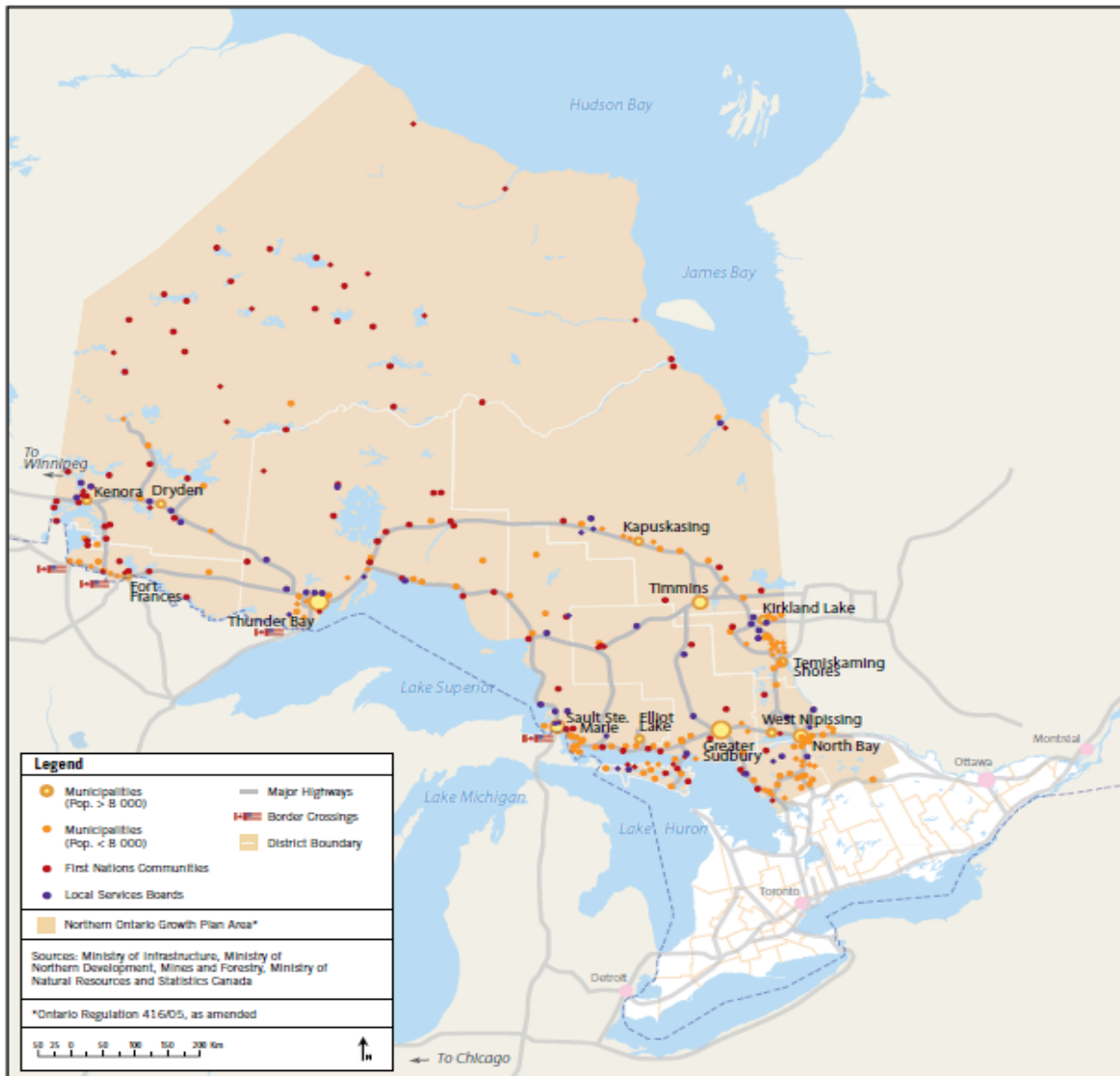
Ontario
PLACES TO GROW
BETTER CHOICES. BRIGHTER FUTURE.

APPENDIX 2
Northern Ontario Communities

Note: This appendix is included for information only and is not part of the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011. The information displayed on this map is not to scale and the location of the information shown may not be accurate. First Nation reserve lands are not subject to the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011. The Province of Ontario assumes no responsibility or liability for any consequences of any use made of this map.

Appendix A3: Location of Air Transportation Services in Northern Ontario

Appendix A4: Access Points to Education Services in Northern Ontario

Legend

- College
- University
- Satellite Postsecondary Campus
- Medical School
- Research & Innovation Centres
- Contact North Access Centre
- Major Highways
- District Boundary
- Northern Ontario Growth Plan Area*

Sources: Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry, Ministry of Natural Resources, and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

*Ontario Regulation 416/05, as amended

50 25 0   50   100   150   200 Km

Ontario

PLACES TO GROW
BETTER CHOICES. BRIGHTER FUTURE.

APPENDIX 4

Research and Innovation Centres and Postsecondary Locations

Note: This appendix is included for information only and is not part of the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011. The information displayed on this map is not to scale and the location of the information shown may not be accurate. First Nation reserve lands are not subject to the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, 2011. The Province of Ontario assumes no responsibility or liability for any consequences of any use made of this map.

Appendix B1: Sample Questions for Interviews (Original):

1. What are the critical components needed for the development and maintenance of sustainable (successful) partnerships between Indigenous peoples and businesses in Northwestern Ontario?

    a. Can you tell me a story of a successful business partnership involving multiple participants including Aboriginal communities? What factors made them successful?

    b. Can you identify an unsuccessful business partnership involving multiple participants, including Aboriginal communities? What factors made the partnership unsuccessful? Are there any "lessons learned" that you can address?

2. What are the key challenges and benefits to building partnerships between Indigenous peoples and businesses in Northwestern Ontario?

3. If you could identify an ideal industry or business opportunity for partnership, what would it be? What factors would need to be in place to see that the business opportunity was a success?

    a. What future opportunities could be created by establishing partnerships?

4. To what extent have Indigenous peoples and businesses in Thunder Bay been able to successfully develop and manage partnerships?

5. What lessons can be learned from the development and management processes that can inform future partnerships?

6. What economic areas could businesses and/or Aboriginal communities see more engagement and consultation?

7. What is required for effective governance if there is a business partnership?

8. To what extent do values play in the development of authentic partnerships?

9. In partnership arrangements, describe desired characteristics of the leaders and participants in the business venture.

Appendix B2: Sample Questions for Interviews (Revised)

1. What does an authentic partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants look like?

2. What would you consider critical factors when building business partnerships in Northwestern Ontario?

3. How would you describe an ideal partnership?

4.

   a. Can you tell me a story of a successful business partnership that you were involved in or know about involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous parties? What made them successful?

   b. Can you identify an unsuccessful business partnership involving non-Indigenous parties?

   c. What factors made the partnership unsuccessful? What do you think are possible lessons for future business?

5. What are the key challenges to building partnership between Indigenous peoples and businesses in Northwestern Ontario?

6. What are the key benefits to building partnerships between Indigenous peoples and businesses in Northwestern Ontario?

7. If you could identify an ideal industry or business opportunity for partnership, what would it be? What factors would need to be in place to see that the business opportunity was a success?

   a. What future opportunities could be created by establishing partnerships?

8. In your opinion, do you believe that Indigenous peoples and businesses in Thunder Bay are successful in developing partnerships? Why or why not?

9. From your perspective, what lessons can be learned and applied to future partnerships?

10. What business areas could Indigenous communities see more engagement and consultation?

11. What type of structure or foundation is required for a successful business partnership?

12. Values are principles and beliefs that guide judgement and behaviour. They can help guide people make important decisions. How do values play a role in the development of authentic partnerships?

13. In your opinion, what characteristics should leaders and participants have in the business venture.

Appendix C: REB Approval Letter

Lakehead
U N I V E R S I T Y

May 27, 2015

Principal Investigator: Dr. David Richards
Student Investigator: Christina Brassard
Business
Lakehead University
955 Oliver Road
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5E1

Dear Dr. David Richards:

Re: REB Project #: 160 14-15 / Romeo File No: 1464540
Granting Agency: N/A
Granting Agency Project #:N/A

On behalf of the Research Ethics Board, I am pleased to grant ethical approval to your research project titled, "Building and Sustaining Authentic Partnerships: Business Readiness and Relationships with Aboriginal Communities in Northwestern Ontario".

Ethics approval is valid until May 27, 2016. Please submit a Request for Renewal to the Office of Research Services via the Romeo Research Portal by April 27, 2016 if your research involving human participants will continue for longer than one year. A Final Report must be submitted promptly upon completion of the project. Access the Romeo Research Portal by logging into myInfo (WebAdvisor) at:

https://myinfo.lakeheadu.ca/

During the course of the study, any modifications to the protocol or forms must not be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. You must promptly notify the REB of any adverse events that may occur.

Best wishes for a successful research project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lori Chambers
Chair, Research Ethics Board

/rks

Appendix D: Request to Participate and Consent

Dear Potential Participant:

A Study about Authentic Partnership in Business with Aboriginal Leaders and Communities
My name is Christina Brassard and I am currently enrolled in the Masters of Science in Management Program at Lakehead University. As part of the Masters' program, I am interested in studying authentic partnership development in business with Aboriginal communities and leaders.

What is authentic partnership?
Authentic partnerships describe the relationship between two parties to an arrangement. The relationship is usually a connection that has mutual respect and trust of the parties and the outcomes of the business arrangement.

Purpose of the Study:
I am requesting your help to participate in my research study. Through a series of interviews, I would like to identify what is necessary to encourage positive business outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal business partners. In addition, I would like to provide recommendations on possible opportunities for building superior authentic partnerships in the future.

Procedures involved in the Research:
Information will be collected through interviews with a set list of questions. Possible clarification questions may also be asked. Each interview will be recorded for accuracy and then transcribed. The interviews should take no more than an hour to complete. Information collected will be held in confidence and your name will not appear in the reported statistics. Quotes may be pulled to further illustrate certain points of comments, but no identifiable names will be used to connect an individual with their response. If quotes are used that could be linked to an identified person, I will contact you in advance to obtain your permission to use the quote.

Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts:
There are no physical risks of harm. The questions asked may be considered by some to be sensitive in nature, but the results of the interviews at all stages are anonymous and cannot be traced back to you. More information on this can be found under the section "Privacy and Confidentiality." At any point in time, you can end your voluntary participation without any consequence.

Potential Benefits
The goal of the study is to determine the readiness of participants in entering into business partnerships involving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants. The research is valuable, as it will attempt to define what is necessary in order to establish a positive and good business relationships and what factors are necessary in order to encourage an appropriate framework for authentic partnerships.

It is possible that recommendations will be made for businesses and Aboriginal groups in general on how to structure partnerships, what factors are required for success and what opportunities exist for further development.

Payment or Reimbursement
All interviews, where possible, will be scheduled at location and time of your convenience. As a 'thank you' for your participation, we can meet during lunch or a meal period at my expense. Otherwise, we can meet at another location and a $20 gift card to a restaurant will be provided as a gesture of thanks.

Privacy and Confidentiality
You are participating in this study confidentially and anonymously. No one outside of the research team will know that you participated.

Lakehead University has a strict policy on data and information storage, including securing data to preserve confidentiality. All electronic research obtained will be stored on a data encrypted and password protected hard drive. It will be housed in a locked office, in a locked cabinet and access is restricted to me and my Research Supervisor. Once the research is completed and I am no longer an active Masters' student, the electronic data will be given to my Research Supervisor for storage.

For data that is recorded as paper copies, the information will be stored in a locked cabinet. Data will be filed and categorized in an orderly fashion. Only my Research Supervisor and I will have key access the storage cabinet. Once I am no longer an active student in the Masters' program, I will return my key to my Research Supervisor.

Information about the Study Results:
An executive summary of the research will be provided to all participants. If you do not want a copy of the executive summary, please let me know at the time of the interview or anytime thereafter.

Questions about the Study:
If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please contact me at:

Christina Brassard
Cbrassar@lakeheadu.ca
(807) 631-8684

Alternatively, my Research Supervisor, Dr. David Richards, may be contacted by calling the Faculty of Business Office at (807) 343-8386.

This study has been reviewed by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. If you have any concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283 or research@lakeheadu.ca.

CONSENT

- I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Christina Brassard of Lakehead University.
- I agree to participate in this study and have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study and to receive additional details I requested.
- I have been given a copy of this information sheet and consent form.
- I understand that my responses and participation will remain anonymous. I understand that if I choose to, I may authorize the release of my name and my response upon written notice.
- I understand the potential risks and benefits of this study and understand what those risks and benefits are.
- I understand that as a volunteer to this study, I can withdraw from the study at any time, and may choose not to answer any question.
- I understand the safeguards in place to protect my data and that the data provided will be securely stored at Lakehead University for a period of five years.
- I understand that the research findings will be summarized and made available to me through my request noted below. I understand that my responses will remain anonymous in any publication/public presentation of research findings, unless specific authorization is given otherwise.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Participant (Printed) _____

_____

… No, I do not want to receive a summary of the study's results.

*****

Appendix E: Project Summary

Project Summary

authentic partnerships

2015-07-18 6:23 PM

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Create	Created On	Modifi	Modified On
C:\Users\Chris\Documents					

Created By:	**Chris**				
Created On:	**2015-07-12 2:56 PM**				
Last	**Chris**				
	2015-07-18 6:21 PM				

Externals

Extracts

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Create	Created On	Modifi	Modified On
Extracts\\Coding Summary By	Extract	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Extracts\\Coding Summary By	Extract	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Extracts\\Node Classification	Extract	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Extracts\\Node Structure	Extract	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Extracts\\Node Summary	Extract	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Extracts\\Project Summary	Extract	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Extracts\\Source Classification	Extract	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Extracts\\Source Summary	Extract	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56

Framework Matrices

Internals

Internals\\Conference Aboriginal Exchange

Internals\\Conference	Audio	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:15
Internals\\Conference	Audio	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:15

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Create	Created On	Modifi	Modified On
Internals\\Conference	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:15

Internals\\Interviews

Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:06
Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:13
Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:07
Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:07
Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:07
Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:07
Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:07
Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:11
Internals\\Interviews\\Particip	Documen	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:13
Internals\\Interviews\\Particp	Documen	Chris	2015-07-18	Chris	2015-07-18 5:24

Memos

Models

Node Classifications

Node Matrices

Nodes

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Create	Created On	Modifi	Modified On
Nodes\\7 grandfather	Node	Chris	2015-07-16	Chris	2015-07-16 9:50
Nodes\\Agreement	Node	Chris	2015-07-18	Chris	2015-07-18 5:34
Nodes\\Authentic	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:26
Nodes\\Barriers	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:58
Nodes\\Bids	Node	Chris	2015-07-17	Chris	2015-07-17 9:24
Nodes\\Community	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:55
Nodes\\Connection to land	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-18 5:37
Nodes\\Control	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-13 9:15
Nodes\\Cross cultural	Node	Chris	2015-07-17	Chris	2015-07-17 9:33
Nodes\\Culture	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 3:31

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Create	Created On	Modifi	Modified On
Nodes\\Demographics	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:29
Nodes\\Dispute resolution	Node	Chris	2015-07-18	Chris	2015-07-18 1:03
Nodes\\Duty to Consult	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:38
Nodes\\Economic Impact	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 12:29
Nodes\\Future opportunities	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:01
Nodes\\Government -	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:06
Nodes\\Government TR	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 12:10
Nodes\\Impact Benefit	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-18 6:05
Nodes\\Integrity	Node	Chris	2015-07-18	Chris	2015-07-18 5:50
Nodes\\intellectual property	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-13 8:41
Nodes\\Leadership	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:09
Nodes\\Lessons learned	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-18 5:41
Nodes\\Lifestyle adjustments	Node	Chris	2015-07-16	Chris	2015-07-16 9:30
Nodes\\Media	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-16 9:01
Nodes\\Participants in the	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:38
Nodes\\Protocol	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-13 8:39

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Create	Created On	Modifi	Modified On
Nodes\\Racism	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:59
Nodes\\Readiness	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:00
Nodes\\Relationship	Node	Chris	2015-07-16	Chris	2015-07-18 5:29
Nodes\\Risk	Node	Chris	2015-07-18	Chris	2015-07-18 11:28
Nodes\\Role Model	Node	Chris	2015-07-18	Chris	2015-07-18 5:56
Nodes\\Social license	Node	Chris	2015-07-15	Chris	2015-07-15 6:47
Nodes\\Socio-Economic	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:12
Nodes\\Solutions	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-17 9:15
Nodes\\Structure	Node	Chris	2015-07-17	Chris	2015-07-17 9:42
Nodes\\Success Elements	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 4:38
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-18 12:22
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:58
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-18 6:09
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-15 6:42
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-13 7:18
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-13 7:39
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-17 9:40
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-18	Chris	2015-07-18 12:15
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:08
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-16 9:46
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:11
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-13 8:03
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 12:22
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:34

2015-07-18 6:23 PM

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Create	Created On	Modifi	Modified On
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 11:02
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:09
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:43
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:11
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:50
Nodes\\Success	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-13 7:52
Nodes\\Successful	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 12:15

Nodes\\Successful	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 6:03
Partnerships Examples\Elements that			5:16 PM		PM
Nodes\\Sustainability	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-18 6:10
Nodes\\Treaty	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 12:09
Nodes\\Unsuccessful	Node	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-18 5:40
Nodes\\Values	Node	Chris	2015-07-13	Chris	2015-07-13 7:47

Nodes\\Culture

Queries

Relationship Types

| Relationship | Relations | Chris | 2015-07-12 | Chris | 2015-07-12 2:56 |

Relationships

Reports

Reports\\Coding Summary By	Report	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Reports\\Coding Summary By	Report	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Reports\\Node Classification	Report	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Reports\\Node Structure	Report	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Reports\\Node Summary	Report	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Reports\\Project Summary	Report	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Reports\\Source Classification	Report	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Reports\\Source Summary	Report	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56

Hierarchical Name	Item Type	Create	Created On	Modifi	Modified On

Results

Search Folders

Search Folders\\All Nodes	Search	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Search Folders\\All Sources	Search	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56
Search Folders\\All Sources	Search	Chris	2015-07-12	Chris	2015-07-12 2:56

Sets

Source Classifications

Summaries