

# International Institute of Social Studies



Social Exclusion, Structural Violence and the denial of Social Justice and Human Rights of  
Indigenous Communities:  
*An Ethnographic Study of Whitefish River First Nation in Birch Island, Ontario, Canada*

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## **List of Acronyms**

TRC :- Truth and Reconciliation Commission

WRFN :- Whitefish River First Nation

CHRC :- Canadian Human Rights Commission

MMIWG :- Missing & Murdered Indigenous Woman and Girls

**Abstract :**

While Canada is generally upheld as a multicultural and a tolerant society, this research demonstrates that social exclusion and discrimination continue to be the experience of First Nation communities in the country. It focuses on the experiences of the First Nations Communities in the metropolitan areas in Northern Ontario region in Canada, specifically in the Manitoulin Island Municipality in the 21st century in Whitefish River First Nation, Birch Island. It uses an ethnographic approach and the use of individual life narratives to reflect on how these legacies of exclusion and discrimination influence their lives as individuals and as a community, over a period of time and beginning from their early childhood. It demonstrates the continuing disadvantages and marginalisation, that these peoples face with regard to their basic capabilities, i.e. , income, health and education. In addition, it also highlights the effects of racism that still pervades their lives. The paper argues that these practices continued over a period of time have resulted in these communities experiencing physical, structural and cultural violence, it claims that these features demonstrate serious social injustice for these groups, reflected in a denial of their social citizenship and human rights.

**Relevance to Development Studies:**

Social exclusion and the denial of basic human rights run counter to the objectives of sustainable and inclusive development. Through documenting the discrimination and the consequences experienced by indigenous communities in Canada, this research contributes to the development of relevant policies that can support them as individual or communities to lead dignified lives and in line with the acceptable norms and standards of human rights.

**Keywords:**

Indigenous People in Canada, Human Rights, Social Citizenship, Social Exclusion, Structural Violence, Cultural Genocide, Systemic Discrimination, Missing and Murdered Woman

## **Chapter 1: Canada's Legacy to Indigenous Communities**

### **I Background**

In the book *Canada's Economic Apartheid : The Social Exclusion of Racialized Groups in the New Century* (2006), author Grace Edward Galabuzi, reflects on the “persistent role of historical patterns of racialization and systematic racial discrimination” in Canada, which could be seen in relatively high representation of what he refers to as “racialized groups” in “unemployment, poverty, and social marginalization” (2006:xi). Another author, Jenny Godley, in the article “Everyday Discrimination in Canada : Prevalence and Patterns” noted that while Canada is viewed generally as a multicultural and tolerant society, it still continues to practice prejudice and covert discrimination based on gender and race, with high prevalence on the First Nation communities (Godly, 2018). The latter term refers to the main indigenous peoples of Canada the First Nations, dominated by the Metis and Inuit ethnic groups.

From the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, attempts were made to ‘assimilate’ these groups into the European-based ‘Canadian culture’ on the basis that the latter was superior. As early as 1876, the then Prime Minister of Canada John A. Macdonald ratified the Indian Act of 1876, which led to the establishment of the Indian Residential Schools across Canada to culturally assimilate the native populations with western ideals, practices and ideologies. In the book, *Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Indian Residential School*, the Chapter 3, called “Killing the Indian in the Child” argues the European settlers were also frustrated that the land could be cleared for new settlers and that one way of achieving this was to remove the indigenous groups

from their land and to give up their rights to their land as a separate people. These factors led by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century to the colonial powers in both the United States and Canada establishing boarding schools, where indigenous children could be physically separated from their families and traditions. As a result, from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century young indigenous children were often forcibly removed from their homes and taken far from their communities. Many were inadequately fed, clothed and housed. All were deprived of the care and nurturing of their parents, grandparents and communities. First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages and cultural practices were prohibited in these schools. Tragically, some of these children died while attending residential schools and others never returned home. All the successful children who did survive the school claim to have lost a sense of belonging. They neither felt home in their original homes nor did they in the mainstream Canadian society (Canada's Dark Secret, Al Jazeera Documentary, 2017). In the process of cultural assimilation, Indian youth were often tortured to forget their ancestral indigenous culture. Upon completion of school, they were left in a limbo where they neither felt at home in the mainstream Canadian society, nor in their reserves. This trauma that was inflicted to about 150,000 children from across Canada have given birth to several generations of alcoholics and substance abusers (TRC Report 2015).

It was only in June 2008 that a formal apology was provided by the government with the Prime Minister recognizing “ the decades of harm that had been endured by these groups” and particularly to former students of Indian residential schools for the forceful removal of Aboriginal children from their families and for Cultural Assimilation carried out in the Indian Residential schools for about 150 years between 1830 AD to 1980 AD (TRC Canada 2015 report). He noted that the system “aimed to “to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture”

on the assumption that “Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal”; His apology also emphasized the long-term deprivation and discrimination that was experienced by these groups. In the apology it noted that the policies were not only “profoundly negative” but also “had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language” (TRC report, 2015). He noted the “tragic accounts of the emotional, physical and sexual abuse and neglect of helpless children, and their separation from powerless families and communities.” According to his official statement the “legacy of Indian Residential Schools has contributed to social problems that continue to exist in many communities today”, as also shown in the Al Jazeera featured documentary “Canada’s Dark Secret published on June 13th, 2017 ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peLd\\_jtMdrc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peLd_jtMdrc)).

Subsequently a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in line with the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. It described how these schools began around 1860s and have continued to be in operation until 1996, which was the year when the last Indian Residential School (Gordon’s Residential School in Regina, Saskatchewan) was permanently closed. The main objective of this commission was to acknowledge the experiences of surviving former students, and to lead the healing and the reconciliation process in the affected First Nation communities (TRC report, 2015). In the Truth and Reconciliation report, the Indian Residential School system has been described as “cultural genocide” by the reporters. This is one of the many historical disadvantages which was experienced by the indigenous groups in Canada. The government of Canada has subsequently taken steps to remedy some of the effects of this “cultural genocide” through progressive allocation of resources/services for these groups.

This research is concerned with understanding the extent to which these discriminative norms and practices by the Canadian government and society in the past continue to prevail and influence the experiences of the indigenous groups in contemporary society. It focuses on the experiences of the First Nations Communities in the metropolitan areas in Northern Ontario region in Canada, specifically in the Manitoulin Island Municipality in the 21st century in Whitefish River First Nation, Birch Island. It uses an ethnographic approach and the use of individual life narratives to reflect on how these legacies of exclusion and discrimination influence their lives as individuals and as a community, over a period of time and beginning from their early childhood. In this process, the research deals with the continuing disadvantages and marginalization that these peoples face with regard to their basic capabilities, i.e. , income, health and education. In addition, it also highlights the effects of racism that still pervades their lives. The paper argues that these practices continued over a period of time have resulted in these communities experiencing physical, structural and cultural violence, It claims that these features demonstrate serious social injustice for these groups, reflected in a denial of their social citizenship and human rights.

### **Research Objectives and Research Questions;**

The objective of this research paper is to analyze through narratives of WRFN community members, the ways in which indigenous communities continue to experience problems of social exclusion and discrimination, and the consequences these features hold for their livelihoods and perspectives on their future. These narratives are based on primary work done in the community of Whitefish River First Nation on Birch Island, Ontario.

## **Main Research Question**

Why and how are the First Nations experiencing social exclusion as well as physical, cultural and structural violence, and what are the consequences for their social citizenship, human rights and perspectives for their future?

## **Sub Questions**

1. Which are the disadvantages that the indigenous communities experience with regard to their social citizenship and basic capabilities?
2. What is the nature of the social exclusion faced by the First Nations on Birch Island?
3. How are physical, cultural and structural violence experienced by the Whitefish River community?
4. What is the role of Government and other institutions of society in dealing with these problems?

## **Original Contribution**

While a lot of research exists on the past discrimination experienced by these groups, particularly in relation to race, I hope to shed light on the experiences of individuals and groups as part of a long-term life cycle of cumulative exclusions faced by this specific group of people in Birch Island. I documented and quoted my respondents and shared their experiences and perspectives just as they are, in their voice, in the following chapters to keep it as real and simple as possible.

From a social researcher's point of view, I researched and later reflected on my findings in an unbiased manner. I had reflected on my journey about writing this research paper, and how the human rights of First Nations people have been in a continuous denial from past to present day.

## **Chapter Structure**

The argument is developed in the following order. Chapter 1 outlines the historical background of the problems experienced by the indigenous groups in Canada as well as the objectives of the research, the research questions and the logic of the chapter structure. Chapter II details the methodology used and the limitations. Chapter III discusses some of the important concepts that are used in the analyses. Chapter III reviews the disadvantages that these groups face in contemporary society. Chapters IV and focus on the narratives of the people. The final chapter summarizes and provides key conclusions reflecting on the research objectives and questions.

## Chapter II Methodology

The methodology of my field work combines ethnographic research with a focus on life cycles and stories to highlight the experiences of individuals in a small group of First Nation people, living in Manitoulin Island, the only island in Lake Huron/Michigan, in Northern Ontario, Canada, as well as on the US side. While the research is largely qualitative and based on primary data, equal attention was given to the available literature on the experiences of persons from the Indigenous communities, particularly in Canada.

Prior to undertaking my fieldwork, I had discussions with key persons, who were familiar with the experiences of the indigenous communities. Of importance was Larissa Crawford who works at the Centre for Aboriginal Student Services at York University. I also visited and did library research and had discussions with persons at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Canadian Aboriginal History Museum, and the Centre for Aboriginal Research at York University. I also emailed and came into contact with two organizations namely *No More Violence* and *Shades of Our Sisters*, who helped me gain a solid understanding about Indigenous struggles, and especially the MMIWG, which had become a key area of my research. These grassroots organizations don't have a physical office, but work through social media. I had interviewed 2 people working at these organizations and found credible leads for my primary data collection. During this period, I came across an ongoing case trial on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in the First Nation communities across Canada. On June 3, 2019. I read a newspaper article on CBC.ca stating that it is the final report on the Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and the 'Special Advisor' on the Inquiry was

Ms. Meggie Cywink from Whitefish River First Nation in Birch Island. I was able to stay with her during my fieldwork and conduct my research successfully.

It is useful to detail how I was able to make contact with Ms Meggie Cywink, as her narrative forms an important component of my ethnographic research which is detailed in Chapter 4. I found her first on Facebook, we had a mutual friend in common named Audrey Huntley, who manages Aboriginal Legal Services in Downtown Toronto. I knew Audrey from the protests we had participated together in the past, during my Bachelor years. But because of differences between Audrey and Meggie, Audrey replied back to me that she is not in talking terms with Meggie and cannot help me to be introduced to her. Upon reading Audrey's text, I directly sent a note on the 28th of June 2019 on messenger, without having any contact or reference, to introduce myself to Ms Meggie. I explained to her that I read about her work as special advisor into the Inquiry on MMIWG and gave her the details of my research and requested her support. She read my message the same day but did not respond to me until July 17th, 2019. In her reply she said that she could not help me with my research because, I am a complete stranger to her and this is a very sensitive topic and she couldn't trust me with vital information about MMIWG. I replied her back on July 18th and begged her to video call with me on Facebook for 5 mins whenever she had time. She agreed to come on the video and I started talking to her. I told her about our school, my work, my background, about my family, and I asked her if I could send her my draft and she could just give her opinion on it, because she is working as special advisor and in a crucial position in the MMIWG case. I also clarified that she need not spare her valuable time in doing anything for me, but if I could have a little support from her, I will be very grateful to her. After going through my draft, she replied back to me that I could come on my own expenses to Birch Island in Ontario and that she would host me and help me in the research, if at

all I made it there. But she warned me that she is not going to take any responsibility for my safety in the reserves and that I shouldn't use her name anywhere else except here in my Research Paper.

I lived in Birch Island from Aug 1st to the Aug 22nd, 2019, collecting data and conducting my primary research. During this period, I conducted participant observation, semi-structured interviews and life history interviews. While in Birch Island, I prepared and finalized my sample after spending time and observing the community members in the Birch Island and Little Current for about one week. My method of sampling was done by snowball and random sampling, basically whoever consented to talk to me in the first place. My sample size was ten individuals. The snowballing was possible because of making successful contact with Meggie Cywink who facilitated the process through introducing me to others, some who talked to me and some who threatened me for being there on Meggie's recommendation. Meggie introduced me to the families of MMIWG in her community that she knew other than her own self who is directly involved in the MMIWG. In this way, I had the opportunity to conduct fieldwork and procure more informants along the way. I first conducted a focus group discussion with the informants I had successfully convinced to talk to me in person. Upon conducting the focus group, I selected 7 informants to conduct qualitative interviewing with them. I strived to choose my respondents with an extensive life experience, who are having both time and in good health condition to give me interviews to learn about their life experiences.

It is important to note that the whole field work was not an easy experience for me even if I had generated important data and credible information. There were times when my respondents got angry in the middle of interviews. There was also heavy alcoholism, Meth abuse and domestic

violence among the community members. Dealing with the mood swings of my respondents was quite challenging to me as a social researcher. In one instance, a prospective respondent threatened to kill me if I continued my interview with her. In another instance, one respondent yelled on my face that I was not even a North American and why was I there to conduct my research, and to achieve what, myself being a person of colour! Some respondents asked me to buy them booze and/or drugs to be interviewed. Not to mention, I lived with Meggie and to my surprise, her partner had gotten violent on her in two instances during my stay. There were many things which I couldn't talk to Meggie even. I lived off on eggs, fries and water and spent sleepless nights due to an unpleasant feeling of threat around me all the time while I was there.

My own feeling at times was that several members of the community were too drowned in alcohol and drugs to even think about living a better life. I felt unfortunate to see people unable to live unto their full potential due to their dependence on alcohol and drugs which makes them violent in their behaviour with their own self and as well as others in their families and extended communities. I made sure that I didn't cause any further harm to the community members as mentioned in the article "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones" by Elisabeth Wood. As mentioned in the same article, I made sure of taking an informed consent from my respondents. Some have requested that I keep their names anonymous which I will definitely abide to in my research paper in the following chapters.

I have stayed in Meggie's home and trailer and moved while conducting participant observation, talking and interviewing with different individuals as I had mentioned before. She, along with her husband Tom P Whooper said, they lived 6 months in Chicago in the US and 6 months in Birch Island in Manitoulin. Around Lake Huron, the indigenous people in Canada and the US

belong to Nishnawbe Aski tribe. Nishnawbe people come under Ojibwe First Nations, who are the second largest First Nations in Canada, the first being the Cree First Nations. This was explained to me by Meggie on our drive to Birch Island from Little Current. During our car journey, I had discussed with Meggie about the following :- What are their objectives in terms of promoting social citizenship among the First Nations? What has been achieved until today? What lessons can be learned from the past to facilitate healing and reconciliation among the First Nation communities?

Based on my fieldwork and other secondary research, I analyzed the social exclusion and social injustice in Birch Island, and how that is exactly occurring, which then I had argued that the experiences in residential schools contributed towards the continuation of social exclusion and denial of social citizenship and rights in such communities.

### **Scope and Limitations**

Some of my respondents were very elderly people and it depended on the time they had and their health condition that day to have discussions. I had to tailor my data collection according to the willingness and mood of the people I was visiting. It was physically endangering to me, but the information I had gathered to prove the theories of social exclusion, denial of social citizenship and violence in the communities has thus made it a worthwhile experience for me personally.

### **Chapter III: Structural Violence and the Persistence of Disadvantage: Social Exclusion, Discrimination and Denial of Rights**

This chapter elaborates on the essential concepts that guide the research paper and that help analyze the different processes and consequences of the long-term disadvantages faced by indigenous communities/First Nations in Canada. These include the notions of social citizenship, social exclusion, structural violence and human rights. It argues that social exclusion can contribute to the denial of social citizenship and social injustice. It then argues that over time, these processes are associated with structural, cultural and personal violence. Throughout, attention is given to discrimination experienced and violation of human rights of the indigenous groups in Canada.

#### **Social Exclusion, Social Citizenship and Social Injustice**

The notion of social exclusion takes on both the structures and the dynamics that promote of inequality in a society, which include restricted access to critical resources, that determine the quality of membership in the society and ultimately produce and reproduce a complex system of unequal outcomes (Room, 1995; Byrne, 1999; Littlewood, 1999; Madanipour et al., 1998). Social exclusion is, therefore both a process as well as an outcome. It can be the outcome of policies from the past, such as during the colonial period, but still are reflected in terms of inequality in accessing rights by marginalized groups. The concept of social exclusion is used to show how a combination of processes have led to social marginalization of First Nations communities. Historically in Canada, structural inequalities in access to social, economic, political and cultural resources have arisen out of the often intersecting experiences of oppression relating to age, race, social class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and immigrant

status ; these inequalities could be understood as social exclusion, because these identities, in their intersectional sense, influence the social, political and economic participation of an individual in the society. In Canada, four groups have been identified as particularly at risk for the processes of social exclusion; women, new immigrants, racialized group members and Indigenous peoples (CHRC Report, 2002).

In the book *Canada's Economic Apartheid*, author Grace Edward Galabuzi writes about the social exclusion experienced by various marginalized groups in the Canadian society. As far as the indigenous communities are concerned, the author explains that indigenous people are perceived to be less than human in an intellectual sense, which is why he explains the colonial mentality towards the indigenous communities, has always been derogatory and still continues to be even today. Everything related to indigenous religions, culture, practices, beliefs, food, dance, music, dressing, languages have all been, just looked down by the colonizers and the colonial mentality stayed back in the governance system to date according to the author. The author also mentions about covert discrimination in Canada. This was new to me to learn, but covert discrimination according to the author means, a person is discriminated in and by the system even before meeting the person in person. This happens mostly in Government service offices, hospitals and in employment opportunities. Just by looking at the application details of an applicant, they are rejected, just because the specific details of the applicant represent something, that is not deemed equal and credible by the white people. It was astonishing to read about covert discrimination. This means in my understanding, people who are being discriminated, don't even know that they are being discriminated in the first place and so the people who are being discriminated feel bad and low and lose self esteem, and keep wondering about the reasons for being discriminated. Also, if their application is rejected somewhere, they would think they

might have gotten rejected because of their credentials and or fair competition, but won't doubt that they are being discriminated, even if their credentials are totally worthy. This I will call as social exclusion in a very sophisticated and unfair manner, which is explained well in the book *Canada's Economic Apartheid* by Grace Edward Galabuzi.

Several ways in which social exclusion and discrimination are practiced is captured in the book, *Seven Fallen Feathers*, by a Canadian Journalist Tanya Talaga. The book comprises of seven stories of different indigenous women from the Thunder Bay area in northern Ontario and their experiences, where they had been sent to pursue their education. It is worthy to note here that, Indigenous children still need to travel off to faraway places, to pursue further education. It is a book that depicts the discrimination based on race and gender in the Canadian society at large, which starts in schools and spreads into every other domain of the society. Newly arriving immigrants to Canada often have little to no knowledge about the dark chapter of indigenous people in the Canadian history and the Government tries to downplay the past and asks for forgiveness to its treatment of indigenous people that it did in the past. But what is deeply disturbing is, the indigenous communities still face discrimination and social exclusion in education, jobs and political participation. The basic right to self-determination and free will is severely limited, due to the proximity of their reserves to the main urban cities. To add to the social exclusion, violence against indigenous people is almost always legitimized by the Government and law, because it is shown as though the indigenous people are responsible for their own bad choices made, but never does the Government and Law admit the legacy they had left on these communities. The discrimination and violence faced by the indigenous women is painfully clearly depicted by Tanya Talaga. In many remote places, the Government does not establish schools for the local kids to attend and the parents are forced to send their kids away to

cities for education. In the past during the residential school era, kids were forcefully taken away from their parents to be culturally assimilated, which by the way Tanya also acknowledged as a cultural genocide like it was recognized by the TRC. Now the Government does not take away kids by force, but if indigenous parents want to educate their kids, they should be sent far away from their homes regardless. Once the kids are in the city, they face discrimination based on their race and gender in the schools, at the University, in health centres, on the street, and just about anywhere and everywhere, as mentioned by Tanya. It is literally a mental trauma to be very honest according to what Tanya writes about the indigenous experiences in the cities. If you stay back home, you stay socially excluded, if you travel to study and improve skills, you are treated badly. This dilemma is depicted by Tanya Talaga in her work in a crystal-clear manner.

These continuing discriminative norms and practices reflect a denial of social citizenship of these groups. According to T.H. Marshall, citizenship can be divided into civil, political and social parts. While civil citizenship is concerned with individual liberties and freedoms, and the political allows for the participation in the political process, social citizenship refers to “the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society” (1950:11). Social citizenship is therefore denied for those who are not achieving the average standards of living. The more-detailed analysis in the Chapter IV shows that, the indigenous groups were denied these basic norms of social citizenship.

## **The Violence Triangle**

While violence can take an immediate form such as a physical attack, structural violence as defined by the Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung, is the outcome of long-term denial, and informs the understanding of the experiences of the indigenous groups. According to him, “violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations” (1969:168). Violence, according to him, was the “difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is” (1969:168). “Violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance” (1969:168). He distinguished between physical and psychological violence, recognizing the important difference of one where “violence that works on the body, and violence that works on the soul; where the latter would include lies, brainwashing, indoctrination of various kinds, threats, etc. that serve to decrease mental potentialities” (1969:169). According to him structural violence is when the “violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances” (1969:171). This could be the outcome when resources and income, literacy and education, and other services such as medical services are unevenly distributed with some groups being far worse off than others (1969:171). He highlights the importance of the government and those in power in this process noting “Above all, the power to decide over the distribution of resources is unevenly distributed. The situation is aggravated further if the persons low on income are also low in education, low on health, and low on power - as is frequently the case because these rank dimensions tend to be heavily correlated due to the way they are tied together in the social structure” . He viewed the “condition of structural violence as social injustice.”

In 1990 Galtung detailed the significance of “cultural violence” as “aspects of culture” including ideology, that “that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (1990:291). A reflection of cultural violence is the systematic denial of the value of indigenous culture through force and discrimination. According to TRC report (2015), the reporters have used the term “Cultural Genocide” to describe the impact of Indian Residential Schools on the members of the communities of the First Nations in Canada. This fits the definition of cultural violence as explained by Galtung in my understanding. In the article “Colonialism as a broader social detriment of health” by Karina Czyzewski, she mentioned that, indigenous welfare is achieved by eliminating the colonial relations and improving self-determination among the indigenous people (Czyzewski, 2011). In TRC report (2015), it is mentioned that Residential Schools were mainly to culturally assimilate the First Nation kids, rather than allow them to live up to their full potential in their own cultural and traditional ways.

In many ways, the study shows that, different forms of violence are present in the lives of the indigenous groups in Canada. At the same time, what is clear is that, these forms are so closely interrelated that, it is often difficult to distinguish between them. In addition, such norms and practices of violence have have resulted in the loss of self-esteem among the community that I had visited. The nature of these interlinkages, and how the different forms of violence reinforce one another can be seen in the literature review below.

The book “I am not a Number” by Jenny K Dupuis and Kathy Kacer is the story of a seven-year-old girl, who was separated from her parents to be sent to a residential school. In this book, it is depicted that, it was by law that the indigenous people had to send their kids to residential school without fail. Not sending the kids was perceived as disobeying the law and had legal consequences to the parents as well as the kids. Authors explain how the parents knew that the treatment in the Indian Residential schools was torturous and still had no choice but to send away their kids. Authors also showed how the Church ran the residential schools in the name of providing a better life to the indigenous kids upon their successful completion but exploited the kids physically and sexually in the name of God. The cutting of their hair, public shaming, severe punishments for trying to run away and keeping them starved and isolated for several days and nights for as simple and normal childhood instances like bed wetting at nights during sleep, have all been explained in this book “I am not a Number”.

“Dreaming in Indian : Contemporary Native American Voices” a book by Mary Beth Leatherdale and Lisa Charleyboy is a book that explains the importance of art and folklore in the indigenous communities and how the same art and folk were deemed inhumane and forcefully made to be forgotten by the indigenous kids at the Indian Residential Schools. These arts and folklore are now being brought back into practice and existence to depict the tragic indigenous past experiences and to voice their call for social justice in the contemporary time. Emerging and established Native artists, including acclaimed author Joseph Boyden, renowned visual artist Bunky Echo Hawk, and stand-up comedian Ryan McMahon, contribute thoughtful and heartfelt pieces on their experiences, growing up as Indigenous kids, and expressing their childhood experiences through art, food, literature, poetry, sport, dance, and fashion. Chef Aaron Bear Robe explains, how he introduces his restaurant customers to his culture by reinventing traditional

dishes. In a vibrant photo gallery, model Ashley Callingbull and photographer Thosh Collins re-invented the trend of wearing 'Native' clothing. Addressing the effects of residential schools, “Dreaming in Indian” book shows the historical and contemporary struggle, as intense as they really are.

“The Inconvenient Indian : A Curious Account of Native People in North America” is a novel written by Thomas King. He takes the Indian existence into account ever since the Indigenous were first discovered by the explorer Christopher Columbus and how the relationship between the natives and settler colonizers has evolved over time. The author never attempts to speak collectively for the hundreds of First Nations in both Canada and the U.S., noting that “there never was a collective to begin with.” He interprets the terms “Native American” and “First Nations” as completely wrong in a descriptive sense, but has unfortunately become default in usage across North America because, they have been used since the fifteenth century and are colonial terms. This book has a natural flow and author explores the alternately sexualized and demonized image of Indigenous in popular culture, and examines various attempts at cultural assimilation (including residential schools), and brings out everlasting hypocrisy in the attitude of white people toward native population. From the Trail of Tears to Ipperwash, land has been the crucible of the relationship between natives and non-natives. Accordingly, King spends considerable time detailing the many ways – racist laws, broken treaties, forcible removal – Indians have been swindled out of land, that was rightfully theirs. Personal experiences were often injected into the mix, much of it tinged with King’s trademark humour, and he is often critical of the decisions, the natives make about their lives. He concedes that ‘casinos aren’t the ideal solution to Indians’ economic woes but argues that, for now at least, gaming “holds the

most potential for the least effort.” Humour aside, this is an unflinching, occasionally fierce work. Natives are often criticized for dwelling too much on their past in this book.

The discussions above shows, how the government and societal norms and practices over time, promote social injustice and embedded violence, but also a violation of human rights of these groups. The subsequent chapters elaborate on these aspects, initially on the disadvantages as reflected in available research, and subsequently on the narratives of persons who have experienced these problems in their lives.

Comparing the colonial style and strategies in other ‘settler colonies’ from the past, there is much similarity in the treatment of Indigenous people by the colonizers in various settler colonial states. In the journal article “Culture and Wellbeing : The case of Indigenous Australians” by Alfred Michael Dockery, author discusses how indigenous groups in Australian , prior to Western colonialism, were predominantly hunter-gatherer societies. He also estimated that for 40,000 to 60,000 years before settler colonizers had arrived, the indigenous peoples of Australia had already developed a complex and sustainable relationship with the Australian environment, through their customs and practices (Dockery, 2010:2). From the arrival of the first settlers in the year 1788, the western society and its customs and practices had emerged as dominant culture, along with its free market economy, associated social, legal and economic institutions and policies towards indigenous people have evolved through different stages (Dockery, 2010:2). A

similar cultural assimilation strategy was undertaken in Australia just as in Canada, accounting to the abuse and violation of human rights of Indigenous people.

In the journal article “Who’s Sorry Now? Government Apologies, Truth Commissions and Indigenous Self Determination in Australia, Canada, Guatemala and Peru” by Jeff Corntassel and Cindy Holder, the authors compared and noted that the assimilation strategies by settlers colonizers in Australia, Canada, Guatemala and Peru were quite similar. The indigenous population in different countries, who were very different from each other, were all perceived by the white colonizers in the same light. Their right to self determination was not respected and force was used to make them adopt western customs and traditions, which authors argue was denial of human rights of the indigenous people in these respective countries (Corntassel ; Holder, 2008).

In my analysis, during the colonial era, the dominant colonizers who ‘explored’ the world were solely on the mission of extraction of resources and labour, accumulation of wealth for colonizer’s home countries and competed in trading. The specific mission to assimilate the local indigenous people is only observed in settler colonial states like Australia and Canada. This in my understanding is because, the white ‘settler’ colonizers ultimately sought to mimic the practices and customs of their home countries, mainly the British and French ways in the subsequent settler colonies like in Australia and Canada. This is being said because, in my observation, though other countries like India, Sri Lanka, Tanzania etc were still colonial states of the British empire, however cultural assimilation of local people was not even tried by the colonizer because the colonizers didn’t have an intention to settle in these countries. So the

colonial strategy, widely differed depending on the intentions of the colonizers, whether they intended to settle down in the colonial states into future or whether they intended to only extract, accumulate and trade in their colonial states.

Canada is definitely a settler colonial state, because colonizers had never intended to leave Canada for good, but rather arrived to settle permanently in the land. The same is the case with Australia as well. Therefore, it was felt needed by the white colonizers to assimilate the indigenous populations in their settler colonies because, it is in the best interest of the colonizer's future existence in these settler states. Consequently, these assimilation strategies had discriminated against the indigenous people, leading to their social exclusion, cultural and structural violence and ultimately causing a serious denial of their rights and also their right to self determination and freedom of religion.

## **Chapter IV: Disadvantage and Discrimination : the Indigenous Communities in Canada**

This chapter reviews the problems of marginalisation experienced by indigenous communities to set the background to my local fieldwork. It reflects on the statistics and research that highlights how they experience denial of social citizenship and experience social exclusion and racism in different forms, in their everyday lives.

### **Disadvantages in terms of Health**

According to Statistics Canada report of 2005, the health of Indigenous people in Canada is significantly poorer than that of the remainder population. The reports of the Ontario Commission of Human Rights show that the average life expectancy for Indigenous people is 15 years shorter than the non-indigenous populations of Canada. Similar comparisons can be seen with regard to Diabetes, Blood Pressure and Obesity rates from the Statistics Canada report of 2005, where 26% of First Nations & Inuit Populations combined, 22% of Metis suffer from these modern day diseases where as 16% of the total non-indigenous people suffer from the same. It is highly relevant to note that, only 4.9% of total population of Canada come from the Indigenous communities, whereas 94.9% people belong to non-indigenous backgrounds. Also according to Statistics Canada report of 2005, infant Mortality Rate is reported to be 3 times higher in the Indigenous communities compared to that of non-indigenous communities overall. These statistics have been provided to showcase the intensity of a few pressing social problems endured by the Indigenous people of Canada to set the background.

## **Racism and Discrimination**

The Indigenous communities continue to experience the impact of racism in just about every aspect of their lives, starting from their education, healthcare, judicial, governmental and non governmental systems, which impedes their inclusion into the mainstream Canadian society. The discrimination that the Indigenous communities face, is beyond the socially constructed categories like age, gender, class, sexual orientation and disabilities. According to the report of First Nations Longitudinal Survey conducted in 2005, 38% of Indigenous people have reported to be victimized to racism in one form or the other during their past 12 months of lifetime. Also, 63% of the survey respondents reported that, these discriminatory experiences have severely damaged their self esteem in one way or the other. If we take these experiences of discrimination reported into consideration for analysis at a macro level, there seems to be a deliberation in systemic ways to keeps the Indigenous people socially excluded from the urban areas of Canada. It is mentioned in the documentary “The Pass System” published in 2015 that, in the past, any of the Indigenous community members had to apply for permission from the Canadian Government to move out of their reserves, to seek a better life elsewhere in Canada. University of Saskatchewan history professor Jim Miller was quoted in a CBC interview published in 2016 saying “The Pass System was developed as an emergency measure to keep First Nations on the reserve at a time when, of course, the Metis insurrection had broken out and was shocked to find out that, this policy stood in direct conflict with the promises made under the treaties.” This systemic discrimination of indigenous people directly led and is still leading to the denial of social citizenship and their basic human rights to live dignified lives. Stereotyping, as well as a persisting stigma towards these indigenous populations, have contributed towards the injustices, these communities face even in today’s time.

## **Stigmatization and Demoralization**

In the journal article “The Role of Dependency and Colonialism in generating trauma in First Nations citizens” by M.A. Gagne, author portrays a number of negative assumptions including alcoholism, substance abuse, high rate of high school drop outs, unemployment and violence within these communities, have been associated with the indigenous people and contribute further to stereotyping and stigmatizing them. This is an easy way out to stereotype indigenous people to keep them socially excluded, but nobody considers what these communities had to endure in the past, that led to the entire communities getting enslaved to substance abuse, in the first place. These assumptions by the system and people in power, further demoralize the people in these indigenous communities who are pushed into a vicious circle of social marginalization. In the media representation of Indigenous people, these negative assumptions are reiterated so fiercely that, a common reader is not left with any other options, but to believe that the assumptions being made as true. Further stigma is created, which only widens the social exclusion of these people from Indigenous communities.

It was mentioned time and again by different survivors in Canada’s Dark Secret (Al Jazeera Documentary, 2017) that, indigenous people are accused of being lazy and too drowned in drugs and alcohol to achieve any better lives for themselves and their families, but neither the non-indigenous populations nor the people in power talk about the legacy of Indian Residential Schools, left on the Indigenous community members. The trauma that was caused due to Indian Residential Schools, among the populations of Indigenous people is inter-generational. The people are unable to feel a belonging in their own communities as well as elsewhere in Canada, as mentioned in the TRC report 2015. The perceptions about Indigenous people are only negative

among non-indigenous people and also that they only live on welfare from the Federal Government, therefore it is perceived better leave them socially excluded in their reserves. These perceptions often reiterated in the media representation deny the right to self-determination and autonomy among the indigenous people. The impact of media representation and stigma is so strong among the community members where I had visited that, many of my respondents have decided to not even give it a try to aim for a better living and improve their lives, and it is no wonder the same feeling persists in the Indigenous communities across Canada from the coast to coast. Additionally, there are many social, economic, religious and political organizations in the Canadian society, that create and reinforce the acts of systemic and covert discrimination. For one example, the reserves that have long been established for these communities, are often met with inadequate funding from the Government to improve their social well-being.

.Mentioned by Meggie in one of our conversations, “In today’s date, for example, a person coming from Indigenous background is more likely to be convicted for a crime in the court, than a person from non-indigenous background for the same crime in a similar scenario.” This is explicitly stigma in practice. Also it was mentioned by Meggie that, “a person from indigenous background is more likely to be a victim of torture and abuse, than a person from non-indigenous background.” This discrimination is not hard to observe in the everyday life in Canada, as for the fear of judicial system, discriminatory policies and treatment from fellow Canadians in the cities encourage the Indigenous people to stay back in the familiarity of their reserves, which again contributes to their social exclusion.

## **Exploitation of Resources**

A major role is being played by the geographic locations of these communities which are also rich in minerals and natural resources. According to a CBC article “Sudbury Basin formed by comet, not asteroid, researcher says” published on November 22nd, 2014, there is a clear resource rush in Canada. If everything is combined and analyzed together, we understand here that social exclusion of Indigenous communities is profitable to the Multinational corporation and politicians in power, regardless of whichever Federal party is ruling. In my observation, Lafarge Canada operates on Manitoulin Island from the past 40 years. This is clearly an evidence that, the improvement of the social wellbeing of such communities directly has a negative impact on the corporate activities of the companies like Lafarge. Logically speaking, a bustling city atmosphere is directly incompatible to the mining and extracting activities to keep it as simple as that. In order to allow the corporation like Lafarge and Vale Mining & Metals to continue their operations, it is in the interest of these corporations and the Federal Government, to keep the Indian reserves underdeveloped, in order to keep them excluded, in order to facilitate their activities. This continuous disadvantage faced by almost all indigenous communities across Canada keep the native populations relatively impoverished. In the article “Reforming Social Justice in Neoliberal Times” Janine M Brodie shows how the government has increasingly allowed multinationals to erode into the lands of the indigenous groups, often extracting raw materials for their profit. According to ‘Transcripts of Timeline’ retrieved from [LafargeHolcim.com](http://LafargeHolcim.com), Canada Cement Company which was founded in 1909, was acquired by Lafarge Cement of North America in the year 1970. According to the same report, mining and extraction activities were present in Northern Ontario, cutting through the Indigenous lands ever since then. In the newspaper article “Lafarge and Whitefish River First Nation Celebrates 40

years of partnerships” published on Manitoulin Expositor on August 27th, 2014, the history of Lafarge Cements and Canada Cement before acquisition and their relationship with the community of Whitefish River First Nation is clearly mentioned. In 40 years of presence, all Lafarge did for the local community was to fund building a cenotaph and a primary school. In the same article it is clearly testified that, the activities of Lafarge do not give enough employment opportunities to the local people, but “spin off jobs” and “tax base” are crucial for both Lafarge as well as the members of WRFN. Moreover, since mining and construction are heavy duty, often minors and adults alike are employed in these “spin off jobs” in a precarious manner to meet with their annual demands and expectations. More recently, the demands for labour market flexibility in the urban “globalized” economy had disproportionately exposed racialized groups to precarious employment and higher levels of poverty than White Canadian people according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission report of 2002.

### **Social Exclusion and Structural Violence**

The racial discrimination, stereotyping, stigmatization and marginalization have contributed and led towards the social exclusion and structural violence in the Indigenous communities. As a form of escape from past trauma, the community members have resorted to heavy alcoholism and substance abuse, which further clouds and complicates their problems, rather than solving them to any degree. These problems have colonial roots and customers predominantly come from a place of privilege and workers from non-white backgrounds to say the least. This indeed leads to indigenous people going Missing and Murdered due to their own bad choices, and social exclusion they face. Discrimination in all forms is exclusively experienced by only Indigenous people. The alcohol and drug abuse are due to social exclusion and discrimination and the

damage that has been caused to their self-esteem, and because they lack self-esteem, they are prefer to be kept excluded from the mainstream society.

## **Chapter V: Life Histories and Narratives**

This chapter is based on the narratives of key respondents on their life and challenges. It uses life stories to explain the persistent nature of these experiences. Their perspectives and experiences reflect the complex ways in which, the state and other institutions, such as the police and the companies, continue to expose them to exploitation and discrimination, leaving many with little other options, but to remain in their state of disadvantage, causing the lack of self esteem. This chapter focuses on the life-story and feelings of Meggie Cywink, one of of the key respondents in my research. The voices of the police are used to outline their perception of the problems of Indigenous people. It demonstrates the multiple ways in which, the indigenous groups continue to experience social exclusion, and are exposed to physical, cultural and structural exclusion and a violation of their human rights.

### *The story of Meggie Cywink*

Meggie Cywink is a native Indigenous Woman from the Nishnawbe Aski tribe. She remembered well, how her tribe was not allowed to abide by their own cultural practices.

According to her:

We traditionally spoke the Ojibwe language until the missionaries came and striped us out of our cultural practices to make us more like them but we are trying to remember and bring back our culture that we had lost.

Thus from her early years she was a victim of cultural violence, denied of her rights, with the decision being argued as necessary and legitimate.

Her life story reflects the difficulties that she faced. Her mother died from “illness “when she was young, and her father lived till 2000. The reasons for their deaths were not clear but it is likely to be the outcome of disease and not adequate medical facilities.

### Meggie’s Sister Sonya

Meggie’s sister however pursued a path that led ultimately to her death. Her sister Sonya was a year older than she was and they both studied in the same grade when they went to school. Meggie admired her in many ways, noting that she “ was more into poetry and prose” and “ had a beautiful way with the words and was able to express very deep things in a few words even” According to Meggie Sonya also actively participated in the Church mass every week. Meggie remembered she and Sonya as siblings spent a lot of time growing up together. Whether it be the giant willow tree in the backyard, the dock across the street, or the raspberry patch down the road, in smaller communities like hers, there is only the highway 6 and only streetlights at bigger junctions. This place Birch Island “being so close to the nature offers a different living all together than in the cities.”

In spite of these positive features, Sonya, like many other girls, would not “attend classes instead she would sit in the common hall with her friends and pass the time” and dropped out of school. In grade 10, Sonya “admired cities and she had a clique with expression and understanding. She was spontaneous and thoughtful.” But such attitudes not always bring rewards that could improve her future. In her own words, Sonya was “too giving if you know what I mean”. The trauma faced by the members in the community is inevitable according to Meggie. She explained how geographic exclusion and wilderness give way to industries like

Casino, gambling and sex industries where violence is mostly likely to happen in the relationships of workers and clients tells us about the still existing colonial relations of power.

After she dropped out, she got into all kinds of troubles including drugs and prostitutions. The process was explained by Meggie:

Ever since then, she started lying to us in the family about what she was doing, who was with and where she was going. One day she left home without saying anything to anyone of us. I was dismayed. Her phone won't work, and the social media was not in operation back then in 1970's. It was exactly the year 1973 when Sonya was 17 years old. I was 16 the same year, that was the first time when Sonya left home. After a couple of months, she visited Birch Island and informed us all that she started working as a pole dancer at a night club in London (Ontario). She looked fine when she visited first but over her subsequent visits, I could observe a marked change in her appearance. She had unhealed wounds all over her body and I have observed needle pokes around her wrists and elbows. My father did not notice her syringe pokes because he was already in his 70's by that time. I confronted her with my questions about what she was into in London and what about those needle pokes on her body. She violently reacted towards my questions and even beat me up into pulp for asking her questions out of concern. I knew right away that she was into drugs with the behaviour and her expressions on the face, but I was also as young as she was. I was continuing in my high school and took care of my father. All my siblings were gone pursuing their own lives, everyone else was doing just fine but Sonya. That was a big reason to worry about Sonya in the first place because everybody in the family and in the extended community knew precisely what she was into, but she had never given us a chance to help her".

The above narrative clearly depicts that Sonya was being stigmatized and stereotyped as a vulnerable Indigenous woman by the customers in the sex industry she was into. Clearly from her change in appearance, it is proved that she led a bad lifestyle which had contributed towards her making bad choices, which ultimately led to her kidnapping and murder.

According to Meggie, Sonya loved writing letters because though she dropped out of school, she began working young in Thunder Bay and later shifted to London, near where she was found murdered. According to Meggie, Sonya always sought to live her life hiding her identity as an

indigenous woman. She feared discrimination in the bigger cities, Meggie said she relied when Meggie had asked Sonya. As an observer and a social researcher, I did understand that Sonya, like many other indigenous women who are active and outgoing, have no choice but to hide their anxiety and fear of discrimination and violence through abusing alcohol and drugs. It was clear from her statements that Meggie cared deeply about Sonya and was also aware of the types of problems that she experienced, some of which blamed on the ‘white colonizers’. In her words:

Night clubs are different from gentlemen clubs, yes that’s what they call strip clubs in Canada. Gentlemen clubs are wild places for rich white men who go there to watch women take their clothes off on the men’s faces. The white colonizer men have turned it into a business, it was still worse during the colonial time when slavery was legal as well. YSonya started as a pole dancer and not long after which she turned into a sex worker. To a gentlemen’s club, rich white folk who can afford the money visit and the women who work there come from a place of absolute poverty like the Birch Island. Once anybody is into adult entertainment, there is no bouncing back into a routine lifestyle like other folk.

The above narrative showcases that the treatment of indigenous women by the white men has a colonial legacy attached to it wherein the abuse of these indigenous people is being continued until today. Such discriminatory practices keeps the violation of social citizenship and exclusion intact for the indigenous communities.

Meggie was clearly aware of how persistent disadvantages could lead people to a destructive lifestyle.

She got into the vicious circle of alcohol and morphine and her life started to revolve around them until she was murdered. The needle pokes were from self-administering morphine and she would either be high while awake or be sleeping. She passed away in 1990, and the year before she came home for Christmas. She was unrecognizable to some of our family members. This was the third time she was relapsing back into the pit hole, I pulled her out of which the two previous times. I cannot deny that she was my blood sister, but the choices we had made in our lives are completely individual. Sonya went missing twice before she went missing again and was murdered the last time.

The above narrative is proving that the social exclusion and the stigma these communities face turns vulnerable and innocent people like Sonya towards alcoholism and drugs, which ultimately is facilitating for the violence to commence. Meggie is definitely a mature and courageous woman to stay away from the fear despite coming from an indigenous background throughout her course of life, not many indigenous woman have.

### **Exploitation by Mining Company**

She was very critical about the role of the mining company Lafarge which operates with permission from the government on the lands and water bodies that were on the indigenous land “that we owned for many centuries”. According to her, the land they live on is, according to the Indian Act under the Federal government, and “it is a complex problem for the indigenous people to start their own businesses as permissions and money from banks are not easy to attain. So the business on the native land that you see, they are all owned by the white people and inherited by their kids”. According to her the company has destroyed their type of livelihoods and employed people on poor and insecure wages. She said that until 1970’s, the people in the community were mainly hunter gatherers and “had autonomy to practice our religion and culture as long as we stayed in the reserve”. But this was changed with the incursion of the company Lafarge Constructions, which makes highways and cement which supplies Vale Mining and Metals. She noted:

You should always know that Geology and Geography go hand in hand. It is known in the history that Sudbury area was hit by a meteorite and therefore the entire geographical span is rich in precious metals, which Vale Mining is behind to extract. It is their business after

all. Now, extracting mental from deep underneath requires labor who are willing to work in dangerous conditions.

She explained that many members of the community were employed in this work in spite of what this meant for their health and wellbeing. She noted that the crime rate had “markedly increased with the arrival of the Lafarge corporation which employed us as daily wage labour for something that is both dangerous work as well as it is precarious”. If someone goes into work, they get paid for the day”. Unfortunately, most of this money is spent on alcohol and drugs, as people “live to consume and indulge and don’t care if they are doing the stuff at the expense of their health, family members and the community as a whole”.

### **Bias by The Police Constable**

When I asked the police constable from RCMP about why he thinks the indigenous people face social exclusion, his answer illustrated his bias against these groups but also an awareness of the ‘vicious circle’ in which they lived. According to him:

Lack of a basic motivation to earn whatever they need, but rather sit around boozing and doing drugs on welfare money. Also, it is a vicious circle to be born into an indigenous community and not in their hands for sure, but a person can choose to break free of the vicious circle they are born into and create a better life for themselves.

When asked about the residential schools and the violent treatment of indigenous people by the colonizers in the past and for which he answered, he also showed a degree of sympathy for their situation.

It is true that the communities had faced an unfair share of violence and torture in the past. The Government has issued an apology for its past actions, but what more can be achieved about something that is long gone.. As I've said before, life in an indigenous community is vicious because it keeps revolving around the so-called past trauma for which they abuse controlled substances even today. The Government is doing everything that it could to facilitate the healing, but the community members are reluctant to move on to a better way of life. The admission procedure to any University across Canada and the US is far more relaxed to people coming from an indigenous background, they don't work hard to make it there. None of the band members pay GST and HST taxes like you and I do and over that, the Federal Government provides welfare money to every registered Indian every month. What else do you expect from a Federal Government that has to take care of everybody from the coast to coast huh!?

I was feeling my nerves getting tight by listening to his response. I cannot say about the entire police force, the justice system and the Government, but the white policeman I was interviewing undoubtedly was biased against indigenous people and their lives. So next, I asked him what the legal process is in filing a missing case and when exactly are the missing people declared dead, for which he said

This process is not only for indigenous people but applicable to every Canadian citizen. Taking the vastness of our country into consideration and the wildlife, people can go missing for several reasons. Some of them could have criminal intentions like it has been proved in Sonya's case and some can miss on a vacation in the woods, we need to be specific depending on the case and the circumstances. In 5-7 years, if a person is not found and still registered at the station as being missing, we issue a death certificate on the name and close the file.

Continuing on the interview with the policeman, I asked him what about the unreported cases and why do people not choose to report missing people in the indigenous communities in the first place for which he answered:

There are definitely unreported missing and murdered people. In the indigenous communities, many people do not trust the Government and Police. Also, due to their lack of proper education and employment and a lifestyle that comes with a predictable living,

chances are people do not have time to be violent and criminal because they are motivated to be on their jobs the next day morning. It is not the lifestyle that the indigenous people choose to live. They are either living on welfare or working on daily wage.

I had observed the bias the police carried in his demeanor and was trying very hard to play the devil's advocate. In no way was he ready to accept or acknowledge the shortcomings and disadvantages the Indigenous communities face in their reserves. In many ways, this man helped me understand how the white settler colonizers viewed and still view the indigenous people in a demeaning way. I did not leave him there as I was curious to draw more of his viewpoints about the indigenous people. I kept asking him why he thought social exclusion is so rampant in the indigenous communities. He paused for a good two minutes to frame his answer and replied

“In my observation, they have no value for family relations and no clear motivation to live a dignified life. The alcohol and drug dictate their choices daily and that is cumulative. Now I drink as well, but only when I am completely relaxed and feel deserved to have a drink after a long day at work, but the way indigenous people drink is they start off in the morning at coffee time and keep drinking and doing drugs until they can become dysfunctional. In that state of mind, in such an insane state of mind, what rationality is left to stop themselves from committing vehement crimes you tell me! You had seen and talked to Meggie, did you ask if she drinks and does other drugs? I know she doesn't! She chose to finish school and dedicate her life in achieving justice for whatever has happened to her sister. She fights ferociously trying to make sure that whatever has happened with her sister and is happening in other families not repeat in a cycle. Do you understand?”

From the above answer, I was swayed for a little bit time that whatever this policeman was saying is absolutely true. Yes, the past trauma is evident among the community members of First Nations but as the policeman said, a person cannot also afford to resort to substance abuse because of something that had happened to their ancestors. But, I was surprised when this man tried to legitimize residential school violence by saying, they were established and ran always

with good intentions. I asked him exactly what the Government is doing to reconcile and create hope in the communities for which he said

That's what they tried forever in the residential schools. The indigenous practices and way of life is not compatible to modern living. If the Government takes responsibility to care for the indigenous, people like you say that the Government is being unfair and abusive towards the indigenous people, and if the Government is not taking responsibility and allows indigenous people to live in their own traditional ways, you will again protest that Government does not care. It is a hard fact huh!

I made my question clear this time around to him and asked what is the Government doing in today's time to bring healing for past traumas caused in the Indigenous communities. He frowned at me and stared for a good minute before he said

Government is constructing Indigenous Healing Lodges across Canada to first detox the community members. We need to help the community members regulate their alcohol and drug consumption and from that point, a new life will begin for them. People should take the example of Meggie and not her sister Sonya to sort their lives out. No body will believe and respect people who relapse and are bound to stay excluded. We can provide opportunities for healing, but the people should also have the intentions to heal. See the world goes by this saying..if you can't help yourself, even the God can't help you!

I reflected that ,an indigenous woman such as Sonya was probably intoxicated, and even abducted, raped, murdered and her body thrown away in the bushes. I checked with Meggie that night when I was back in their home, and she said, "I insisted that sniffer dogs and intelligence be used in finding Sonya's body to give her fun funeral rights. I had the power and voice and influence to instigate the investigation into my sister's case." Now, how many people will have the same power, voice and influence to push the police to find the missing people in their families, you tell me, she asked? I am still searching for the answer and trying to contemplate about how the vastness of this country affects the lives of people who are living in far off

reserves in the middle of a forest. This is a severe and a complicated question to contemplate indeed.

In many ways, it is clear that there exists a gap between the services that are being offered by the Government for reconciliation among the indigenous communities and how far are these services reaching and being received by the indigenous people. The healing is a process in my understanding which cannot be enforced upon people coming from a place of trauma. But, the indigenous people who fight their own vicious circumstances to come out clean and stand are often helped by the Government, but clearly this is not sufficient to bridge the gap.

## **Chapter VI: Survivors Stories:**

Given the wide condemnation of the Indian Residential Schools in the Truth and Reconciliation Report, I decided to pay special attention to the survivors of the system. At the same time, it is important to understand how people have been active and engaged with trying to change the system. The voices of these persons are included in this chapter.

### *Ozzy Madabee*

Ozzy is an Indian residential school survivor. His name I have consent to share and is called Ozzy Madabee. He survived the residential school and later worked for Canada Cement Company, at the time still not acquired by Lafarge. Ozzy is 79 years old and was born in 1940. He is a native of Birch Island and belonged to WRFN.

When I had asked him to share about his schooling years, he initially reflected on the physical violence that was involved:

I was sent to school by force. The Indian agent would come every year to pick the kids to be sent to the residential schools. I never wanted to go. They wouldn't even spare the children of a Chieftain. My brothers and sisters were also sent to residential school. We had no choice to decide, they would just take us away.

This was in the year 1948 when Ozzy was 8 years old. I can understand that even today, kids don't have an option but to go to school because that is where everybody learns about the world and life skills etc. But Ozzy was saying about an "Indian Residential School" like the Mohawk school shown in the Al Jazeera documentary. Also, being a Chief's child didn't matter and spare

him from sending him and his siblings away to a residential school back in 1948, not long time ago very seriously. When I had asked him what did he exactly learn while he was in school for which he replied:

“I didn’t learn much except a few farming techniques and playing cards, but I was made to unlearn my native language, unlearn my cultural practices like eating with hands for example. As simple as eating with hands was severely punished by the school staff upon seeing someone eat with their hands. Similarly, I was made to forget our Gods and were made to recite the Christian Prayer twice everyday. It was more like a military school. They would only teach us what they wanted us to learn and be in a certain way. They would not allow us to be ourselves. It was not a pleasant thing to be there.”

I was astonished to hear from him that he was made to unlearn his cultural practices. Formal education should be about personality building and helping the kids ingrain high moral values to grow up to pursue whatever interests them, in very simple words. But a school where kids would be punished severely for speaking their mother language is definitely a denial of their own dignity and human rights in the first place. From where else inter-generational trauma would build if not from such heinous childhood experiences. I asked him, if he tried to run away or had ever tried to disobey what his teachers ordered him to do for which he replied

Oh boy, I would never do that because they would beat you up into pulp. Most commonly, you would be beaten with cane on the knuckles for disobeying for the first time. The more times you disobeyed, the more severe the punishments used to get.

I understand that kids are beaten in school at young age by the teachers to discipline them. I was beaten by my teachers in my primary school I remember in Hyderabad for speaking in my mother language to a friend. My primary school’s is called Seventh Day Adventist School. I could readily relate to what Ozzy was saying. Children are beaten at English Convent Schools and Islamic Madrasas, I know from my own knowledge. I felt amused talking to Ozzy and

continued asking him about his experiences in school. He would take too long to think and after a long break, he would say he doesn't remember anything. I kept asking him the same question thinking it might trigger his memory and it did. This is what he said about other punishments in detail up to what he could remember

If you didn't participate in the prayer or if they found out that you just murmur and not really say the prayer out loud, they would make you starve for that whole day. If you were seen speaking native language, they would make you lick the floor or their boots in the assembly hall. If you did not wake up on time or were noticed bedwetting, they would splash ice-cold water on you were you were still asleep. For anything, the medicine was beating and for the beating the medicine was novocaine. If somebody tried to run away and later caught, the kid was left naked in the freezing temperatures outside for several nights.

After hearing to that, I did really feel how severe the treatment was indeed in the residential schools. Novocaine is a local anaesthetic and used to numb the body parts before performing any surgeries. I was shocked to hear that novocaine was so loosely available and used back in his day and that too on children similar to his age. This treatment at schools is definitely atrocious and traumatizing to anybody. But according to himself, Ozzy was an obedient child and not overly naughty, especially he never tried to escape the school, so he did not face severe punishments like licking the floor and getting exposed to shivering cold or left alone in a dark room. By that time, Ozzy was remembering much in detail and I quickly jumped into sexual exploitation that was shown clearly in Al Jazeera documentary but I wanted to hear from Ozzy. I asked him if he was ever sexually molested or anything like that for which he relied

Ah God Forbid I was an obese kid and obesity runs in our family, so I was never called at the night to pray. Boys and girls unlike used to be called in the night time to offer special prayers. Priests would do and take an oral and exclaim that it is the process to cleanse our indigenous souls. Some were sodomized too. It was a painful experience from what I've heard from people who had gone through that. Girls were treated in a much harsher way than boys, in a way that girls were also given sacrifice to the Gods and a virgin girl was

considered purest to be sacrificed to attain higher powers and all. It was a dark time during my childhood and I don't think it is any better now as far as for us indigenous people.

I was out of words and took me time to digest what Ozzy had just shared with me. In a Christian Missionary school, pedophilia was justified by saying that the priests and nuns are cleansing the souls of Indigenous people. There was nothing more traumatizing to me than to hear this out. I could not imagine how worst it would be to experience that. How disgusting it would be to live with such a memory from childhood for throughout the life. This was incredibly a heart wrenching knowledge to collect, interpret and write about it for me. Ozzy had cleared the clouds for me. He was able to speak about how the racial discrimination and violence was incorporated into today's society. I asked him about the social conditions of indigenous people like him and what's the difference between the lives back in the day and now for which he replied

We were kept away from our families and cultures by the Church back then, and that Church has become the Government today. In the past they assimilated us by force, now they expect us to assimilate by ourselves. And if you don't align, you are left out to your own fate in the woods like here on the Birch Island. They will through pennies at us as welfare and that's the end of story.

Upon having my theories explained in a crystal clear manner in Ozzy's words, I asked about his work life after he grew up and later on his family life. When I asked him about his work life, this is what he had to say

I worked for the big cement company Lafarge. Before when I joined, it was still called Canada Cements but later it was bought by the Lafarge guys. I came back to Birch Island from Spanish after my schooling, and by the time my parents had passed away and my family got scattered. I came back and build this home with my own hands while working as a daily wage labourer with Lafarge. I worked there in the job for 25 years. I started at 17 years age and worked until 42. I couldn't work later because my joints have become loose and I was not unable to take the physical strain anymore.

So analyzing the timeline, Ozzy had joined Canada Cements in 1957 at the age of 17 years. Canada Cements was acquired by Lafarge in the year 1970. He had worked for a total of 25 years doing the same work every single day, but first half of the time that he had worked, it was Canada Cements and second half the time it became Lafarge. According to Ozzy and also in my observation, there is only one Fish and Chips store, one gas pump, and one liquor store in the WRFN community in Birch Island, apart from a huge gated Lafarge Cements Terminal. The Fish and Chips business is owned by a settler white family from Scotland, who had denied to talk to me, gas pump and liquor store subsidized and run by the Federal Government and Lafarge. This is to describe that even for a sick person, the nearest dispensary is 35 kilometres away in Little Current and no fire services whatsoever. All the community members either eat all the meals of the day at the Fish and Chips or go hunting. Hunting here is not only chickens and goat, the community members eat and savour all animals meat. Ozzy said he was too old and weak to go hunting anymore so he eats at Fish and Chips.

I also spoke to him about the corporate activities of Lafarge. Ozzy was my only source to procure information about Lafarge activities because the workmen at Lafarge site had denied entry for me when I showed up at their door and requested to get in to observe, and take interviews. Ozzy said many things about Lafarge like

When it was still Canada Cement until some 40 years ago, they would give provident fund to all their workers upon retirement. Ever since the Lafarge took over, they don't even care about the age of their labourers. Especially because the Vale Mining who is a customer to Lafarge works deep in the mines where nobody has access to observe and report what's going on there. Those guys are just behind big money. If not the labourers from Manitoulin Island, they would bring in labourers from elsewhere to work here. They are too big a corporation to ask any questions on their operations.

This answer from Ozzy hinted me of child labour inside the mining site and I had seen young men come out from the site one day. I tried to start a conversation with one of the boys and he yelled at me “keep going you Indian Nigger!” I did not try further to hold any talks with the group anymore. I would also not loiter outside their site during the morning and evening hours for all the time I was there for my own safety. According to Ozzy, the daily wage in today’s date is about 50 Canadian dollars per day. I would see a huge line outside the liquor store around 5pm daily and tried talking to people in the lines. On a bad day, the same group of boys confronted me at the Liquor store. It was confirmed for me that people come to blow away that 50 dollars they earn in the day at the liquor store. In logic, why would the Government continue to have a Liquor store if the business is not roaring in the first place. I never ever visited the liquor store to observe people coming there from that evening’s experience. Ozzy is a really cool person. I asked him what the Lafarge gave back to his community in kind for operating on their Indigenous traditional land for which he answered

They had signed a contract that they would not excavate though our burial sites. They had given funding for the construction of Shawanasowe School. They had built a Catholic Church on Birch Island and that’s about it as far as I know in last 40 years.

Primary School, a church and signing the contract to respect their burial sights is all the corporate social responsibility Lafarge cared for. It is not justifiable for a company as big as LafargeHolcim Inc. When I had asked Ozzy about higher order positions on site where he worked, he said

You've gotta have a college degree to work as a manager. Our community members only work in hard labour or seek a better life in the city far away. Managers are hired by their head office and they are all white people, nobody from our community as far as I've seen.

*Tammy Madabee*

While Ozzy's story gave me a clear picture about the past and present lives of people in Whitefish River First Nation, I had met Ozzy's daughter in law Tammy Madabee who studied at Laurentian University, is originally from Whitefish Falls community about 70 kilometres from Whitefish River First Nation and married to Scott Madabee, Ozzy's son. Tammy had vibrant perspectives to share about the lifestyle in a First Nations Community. When I asked her what she thought about moving into a city, she replied

I would like to say that, just because I am an indigenous woman, I never aspired to immigrate to the city, because you might already know how indigenous people are viewed and treated in the city.

I said I did not clearly understand what she was trying to convey so I had asked her to give me an elaborated answer about the same question, being a University graduate, why did you not choose to move into a city for a better life with access to services and better schools for her kids to attend and she replied

Well, I do not intend to live in a city, ever since I was a child I was dearly guarded by family and now I am protected by my husband. We may be living in a forest like you see, but there is more happiness in living the way you are born rather than try something new and get terribly hurt, especially when you know that just by the way you look, talk and eat, poplin the cities judge and deem you lower than themselves. Why should I choose to be humiliated when I can be free here in the forest.

In her words, she is clearly saying that Indigenous people are not made to feel welcome in the cities to be very clear, simple and straight forward. That is racial discrimination and social exclusion in crude form. She is educated and knows her background and knows how the world works and not trying to change it in anyway. Tammy is a woman with high clarity and knows what she wants in life. Having that clarity had kept her safe from not making any wrong choices or taking everything too emotionally to heart like Meggie's sister Sonya. Tammy did not know Sonya in person because she got married to Scott and moved to Birch Island after Sonya left home and was living in London already and this is what her opinion is about Sonya Cywink, Meggie sister who went missing and later found dead in the woods

Meggie made a fuss about finding her hooker sister's murderers who has been murdered 25 years ago in London ON. Now, there is no way to prove and validate anything because what we know is not enough to substantiate anything at all. Scott mentioned that he remember watching Sonya take injections by herself and behave weirdly after. Now you and I can clearly understand what that weirdness was all about. But according to Meggie, Sonya was raped, later her hands and feet tied up to the back and shot dead. Isn't that description, even if it may not be true completely 100%, it is not difficult to comprehend under what circumstances might she had been raped and murdered..

In my observation, Meggie & Tammy made rational choices in their lives where as Sonya followed her heart. Their lives if placed on a meter, Meggie and Tammy are too successful on average and Sonya led a too miserable life on average. These two are clearly two diverging examples of lives of people in first nations, especially women. From my analysis, I interpret that a person coming from the Indigenous background need to be extra determined to fight the social exclusion they are born into by virtue and strive harder to earn a dignified life elsewhere in the cities. For a person born in the cities in Canada, regardless of their background, there is more access to social services and a clear motivation to not lose whatever they have got. On the other

hand, if somebody is born into a community that is stereotyped and heavily stigmatized, it takes extra effort to break free from the stigmas they are not responsible for. If that motivation to break free and compete is lacking, they need to find solace in staying socially excluded all their lives. To cope up and have something to do, the majority resort to things that give a feeling of instant gratification.

*Scott Madabee*

Scott Madabee works in Child Welfare Dept. and rescues children who are going through abuses in the first nations communities around Birch Island. He too confirmed the Meth abuse in their community, he said

About 3 years back, we found that a Meth addict a woman had been abusing her stepson. Her husband was an alcoholic and more often than not, these families live on Federal welfare and have no jobs whatsoever. When we bought the kid to our foster care, the very night his stepmother broke in and tried to snatch away the child from there. One of our workers at the foster care tried to stop her and call police, while the worker was trying to reach her phone, the woman pulled out a hunting dagger and stabbed our worker and ran away with her son as well as two other kids. We usually have 2-3 workers watching over the kids at night in the foster home and that night, the other two workers as they mentioned drove to a nearby fish and chips to fetch themselves some dinner. By the time they have comeback, the joker who was stabbed was lying unconscious in a pool of blood and our higher ups were immediately alarmed. But by the time we reached, there was very little we could do but take the wounded worker to the hospital in Little Current.”

In the above statement, it can be seen how the drug abuse is negatively affecting the choices of people and also the lives of their loved ones. Scott had something to say about Lafarge as well and said

That’s a story going on since 40 years now. You must have seen the billboards on Highway 6. Lafarge and Vale plunder the earth and forests to exact whatever they are looking for.

Cobalt, Manganese, gold, platinum, silver and many more minerals are extensively available in the area due to a meteorite collision that occurred many years ago on the Sudbury area. And that is why Sudbury is one of the largest mining complexes in the world..

In the wake of a forest, it is difficult to track the movement and activities of people and animals around. This makes it easier for companies like Lafarge and Vale to continue their mining and cement production which is their primary business. It causes social exclusion among the first nation community because the nature of these corporations and their activities thrive better in communities that are socially excluded. This is shown and understood from Scott's and Meggie's take on Lafarge when combined together. On the other hand, Scott said similar things what the policeman had said about the social exclusion, choices and vulnerability faced by people in the first nation like his. He said

Scattered, unskilled, nomadic, not possessing higher family values, these are some of the factors that pop up in my mind right away. The population is in the hundreds and you can see that there is no strength in the numbers there. The people are naturally more violent than the people in the cities because they can pretty much get away with any crime here unless you are caught and convicted.

At the same time he was critical of the Police and noted that the indigenous groups did not trust them:

Now, being in Ontario, we are supposedly governed by the Federal Police. They are very slow and lazy to respond to be very honest. If you see them patrolling or working in their office, you will more likely get a feeling as though they are on a vacation in the woods rather than working as police to protect the communities they are posted in. The RCMP does not register missing cases unless it had been three weeks since someone's gone missing, and they don't issue a death certificate in the name of the missing person until about 5 years. If a person goes missing from the indigenous community, the family members themselves do not wish to report the file at the RCMP due to a sense of mistrust.

According to him, the indigenous groups do not always want to accept the death of a relative and would often prefer to live in hope: According to Scott:

Another reason behind not reporting according to what I had observed is that people in our community do not want to lose hope, so even if someone from their family is missing, they will strangely convince themselves that the missing might be somewhere safe and sound and left because they couldn't live in the community on the reserve anymore. And lastly, people do not report they missing family members because of the fear of what might they have to listen and learn about their missing family members. So they don't report.

He spoke strongly about the stigmatisation experienced by the indigenous communities by the wider society.

First Nation Communities are know to be violent in themselves and that is true to an extent and rest has been stigmatized. Our indigenous culture and our way of life is not considered modern and civilized by the western colonizers, the residential school were themselves run under the church and government due to that. So if we report in the RCMP stating we belong to Indian status, the behaviour, language and perseverance level strikingly changes or attest it has been exclaimed by the community members to have observed the difference. So the banks don't meet. We don't prefer to report to the RCMP (Meggie is an exception) and they are prejudiced and don't care to investigate.

He noted that, as an exception had taken upon her to bring justice to Sonya by finding her murderers and bringing them to court with the help of police. This has given her a special position of respect and the opportunity to spread awareness on the situation of these groups and also get involved in politics:

Now that's why the Federal Govt has chosen Meggie to be the special advisor on the MMIWG. And Meggie is a very socially and politically active person. She knows communities and have influence among the Chiefs across Canada, now that's big time activism. Now Meggie has found out long before that Sonya was murdered as they had

found her dead body and identified her as Sonya. Meggie tries to raise awareness through her work on how the social and family relations in our communities are destructive to each other because, people don't have anything else also to do and spend time therefore they resort to drugs and alcohol.

He was also clearly aware of the differences between their surroundings and that associated with the cities and capitalism, as well as the value of the indigenous culture.

In the cities, people are accountable for their job and time schedule. Here the unemployment is so high and opportunities for work low, cutting many communities like us from the hustle and bustle of Canada's famous cities. Canada is very rich in natural resources with our number #1 and the only customer to our country is the United States. So what they take advantage of is through keeping the market as it always is and seek pleasure in consumption, not in seeking God through spirituality, only ask forgiveness for their sins. Land is God to us in Annishnabe, Cree and in many other cultures. Isn't it in your religion too!? But in Abrahamic religions Earth is a commodity, but see spirituality is individualistic and never a commodity, and whatever is deemed culture by the westerners is the real, and superior culture, all the cultures are satanic and infidel. Anybody who doesn't abide by these standards are hated and treated with force to assimilate."

It is sad to note, but the things are just the way they are explained in the First Nation Communities and several factors play a key role in defining the lives of local people. So if they stay back in the reserves, they've got to stay physically and socially excluded. If they travel to the urban centres, the indigenous people fear and face discrimination in almost every aspect of their daily lives. With the interviews and narratives I portrayed what it means to live in a reserve as an indigenous person and what it is like to (try to) immigrate to the city seeking a better life as an indigenous woman. In my argument, I am saying that the proximity and mineral richness makes reserve lands a hot bowl for Lafarge and Vale Mining and the very proximity makes it inaccessible by emergency services which maybe needed on time and other social services like schools for education, employment opportunities etc severely lack due to the same proximity.

The Govt is doing very little as compared to the magnitude pf the social exclusion and denial of rights faced by the Indigenous people. The Govt needs to take into account, the trauma which is still lingering in the memories of Indigenous people into consideration to come up with better policies that address the injustices faced by them from past to the present day.

## **Chapter VII: Conclusion**

The study has used available research and narratives of key individuals to highlight the different and cumulative forms of social exclusion that were experienced by members of the Whitefish River First Nation community in Birch Island. Such exclusion was enforced through physical, cultural and structural violence, and reflected in different forms and spaces. Even though these structures were established during the colonial times, the specific policies and practices in the system, which have been historically and inherently discriminative towards these marginalized groups, have been incorporated into their everyday lives denying them their social citizenship and human rights.

Some of the key methods used to promote these violations were analysed. The paper showed how the establishment and operation of the Indian residential school combined cultural and physical violence, and led to violation of their human rights, including their right to self-determination. In addition, social exclusion is also notable in the geography of the society in Birch Island, where the location, size and the density of population, compiled with the lack of basic amenities like a proper cell phone network, street lights, and transportation etc. contributes in an effective manner to result in social exclusion of people, lower standards of living and facilities, reflecting a denial of their social citizenship. Structural Violence was particularly experienced due to mining and extraction activity; Mining and extraction activities are a major source of income to the Federal Government, which supported and given permission for companies like Lafarge and Vale to mine these resources for their own profit,.Though indigenous people claim the ownership of their native land, it was the Government, under the First Canadian Prime Minister, that build reserves for Indigenous people, keeping them confined within the

borders of their reserves.. Funding from the federal government is inadequate towards healing and reconciliation programs, and that these services do not reach the communities that are living so far away from the cities. Thus this situation makes it next to impossible to track the implementation and check if the Government services are reaching the indigenous people or not in the first place.

The narratives have the power to show how these different forms of social exclusion and violence were combined and influenced the daily lives of the indigenous groups, influencing both their present and future prospects and esteem. Such cumulative experiences of marginalization and disadvantage were built into the structure, resulting in a continuation of discrimination and social injustice and a violation of their human rights. While some have managed to break out of this mould, the majority remain trapped by the lack of adequate policies and support by the government, as well as the wider society.

## **Recommendations for Reconciliation and Further Research**

Social reforms and practices undertaken by the Government and civil society organizations should focus on lifting the stigma and assumptions about Indigenous People at the country level. When the Indigenous people feel welcome to join the mainstream Canadian society, the fear of discrimination and a lack of self esteem will start to fade. Without marginalizing further and breaking the trust of indigenous people, if everybody in the urban society willingly accepts to create room for the inclusion of the Indigenous people, then I think there is going to be a positive change in some years from the time its implementation.

Schools and Colleges need to include Indigenous History and draw sustainable solutions to world problems in contemporary time from Indigenous teachings. In this way, the Indigenous communities may feel worthy and included. If such love and respect and confidence be shown in all acts and practices from all the people, inclusion of Indigenous people into the mainstream Canadian society maybe possible.

The Government needs to incentivize inclusion of Indigenous people. If an annual prize or award is given to individuals and communities for showing care and helping indigenous people towards positive inclusion, this idea can inspire many other organizations and a proliferation of social reforms in favour of Indigenous people will help speed up their healing and reconciliation process.

The Government needs to demand more socially responsible and inclusive reforms be undertaken by the Multi National Corporations, whichever ones they are, that are operating on or near the reserve lands across Canada.

Incentives should be attached for Indigenous communities for coming to school, not dropping out etc and vocational training of skills needs to speed up for the indigenous people, so

that as soon as they are equipped with skills, they can find an employment or open a small business for their own subsistence, rather than wait for welfare money.

Welfare money should be given only to the elderly and not young people registered as Indians. Welfare money is hindering the motivation among indigenous people to even give it a try and make it to the cities. Therefore, welfare not be given as compensation for the past, but if skills are developed and with acting healing programs, the past trauma and future prospects can both be effectively dealt.

It seems as though a disharmony was created long ago in the society and made sure that it stays intact for centuries of time to come. Therefore, it needs an equal effort from the Government, civil society organizations and people to strike the right balance in their respective works to solve this social problem I researched on.

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