

**Achieving Reconciliation: An Analysis on Policies Affecting the Indigenous Peoples of
Canada**

By

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A Major Research Paper
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of Political Science
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2023

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January 19th, 2023

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ABSTRACT

Although there has been an increased focus on the importance of the Canada federal government's use of policy to achieve reconciliation, studies show that they failed to produce meaningful change for the Indigenous population. This exploratory paper aims to analyze the Canadian governments use of policy and its framework to evaluate its efficacy and uncover what factors have potentially caused past policies to fail. A detailed examination on past and current statistics on key indicators for the Indigenous population is used to define the problem. A detailed policy analysis is then utilized to evaluate the efficacy of the policy, identify potential flaws within the framework, and provide potential solutions. The results from the policy analysis argue that the main variables that currently function as an obstacle to achieving reconciliation are a lack of political will, the absence of Indigenous methodologies, and a lack of transparency. It is suggested that to improve the outcomes of these policies and achieve reconciliation; the Canadian government must prioritize the Indigenous population and work to integrate their methodologies within the Western Framework and develop transparent plans.

Keywords: *reconciliation, policy analysis, political will*

DEDICATION

I would like to thank my parents and brother for their constant support and encouragement throughout my academic career. I am eternally grateful for their love and guidance over the past few years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Major for being a major inspiration in dedicating my work to this topic. I am extremely grateful for her guidance, support and contributions to this research project and the knowledge she has passed down to me. I would also like to thank my faculty reader Dr. Miljan for her help and valuable feedback in strengthening this paper.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

When looking at Canada's dark history regarding its relationship with Indigenous Peoples, it is alarming to see the slow rate at which the government is working towards achieving reconciliation. Though the country has done an exceptional job in hiding the atrocities it has unleashed upon Indigenous Peoples for years, the truth has been released to the international public via the power of protest and mass media. The decades of discrimination, abuse, and racism have become more apparent in recent years through the discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves at abandoned residential schools across Canada (Jewel & Mosby 2021). Following the findings of the unmarked graves at the former Marieval (Cowessess) Residential School in Saskatchewan, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued a statement recognizing the pain and trauma that the Indian Residential Schools had on the Indigenous, and Canada's responsibility to bring these horrors to light (Trudeau, 2021). However, these words were not reflected in the Prime Minister's actions when he took a vacation shortly after the findings were publicized (Jewel & Mosby, 2021) Although the federal government has publicly acknowledged these findings and the harm the residential schools have inflicted on Indigenous Peoples, it is unclear whether or not they have prioritized taking meaningful action, and if these actions have made a significant impact on Indigenous Peoples quality of life.

As the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) states, to achieve meaningful reconciliation, along with recognizing and acknowledging the harm that has been done, there must also be meaningful action that produces visible change for the well-being of Indigenous Peoples. In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Committee released 94 calls to action, which are policy recommendations that can aid in the progression of reconciliation and help to heal the

wounds that have marked Indigenous communities (Reconciliation Education, 2022). However, a study completed by the Yellow Head Institute on the progression of the calls to action demonstrates that since 2015, only 11 calls to action have been completed, with only 3 of these completed in the year 2021 (Jewel & Mosby, 2021). In addition, most of the completed calls to action are the easier and more symbolic tasks that the government could choose from (Jewel & Mosby, 2021). While the government acknowledges the harm and has acted in some respects, the question of if these actions have produced meaningful change, remains.

What has become increasingly clear over the years is the methods used by the Canadian government to achieve reconciliation. The Trudeau government utilizes public policy as their tool to operationalize reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. It is acknowledged that there have been increased efforts toward reconciliation and achievements in meeting some calls to action. Additionally, there have been various success stories such as improvements in some areas of Indigenous Housing (Statistics Canada, 2022). However, the results for several major indicator in the 2021 Census (housing, employment, education, discrimination) display that there are still numerous issues that remain unsolved (Statistics Canada, 2022). Additionally, the original 2015 mandate letters also outline various commitments made to Indigenous Peoples that have not yet been met (Privy Council Office 2021).

This exploratory research paper aims to thoroughly analyze the actions, responses, and policies between the Canadian government and Indigenous Peoples to evaluate the efficacy of the current political framework and identify potential flaws and obstacles within them. To do so, the paper first discusses the existing literature on both the topic of meaningful engagement in the policy development process as well as the efficiency of implemented policies. The paper

will then conduct an examination of recent statistics on Indigenous Peoples to further confirm the claim that policy is in fact used as a response to Indigenous issues as well as identify the level of impact that recent policy proposals have had thus far. The paper then performs a policy analysis on the Indigenous housing crisis as the method to identify if the Canadian government participates in meaningful engagement, if the use of policy has produced significant change, and uncover potential factors that are currently causing policies to fail in order to propose solutions for the future. The primary focus of the analysis will be the housing crisis as it remains a major issue in the present day, despite the policies and strategies implemented by the government as a response. It will also be the primary focus of the analysis because the on-going housing crisis negatively impacts several other indicators for Indigenous Peoples such as health, well-being, and employment.

Literature Review

Reconciliation has become one of the most important topics discussed within contemporary Canadian politics—precisely, the federal government's inability to achieve meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples of Canada. In response to the inequality gap between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous, an array of academic literature has analyzed past policy frameworks that have been developed by the Canadian government. In particular, many of these articles have focused on the development of policy and what meaningful engagement with the Indigenous Population should look like. Previous research has also focused on examining the Canadian governments use of public policy as an instrument for achieving reconciliation. A common method used to assess the development and implementation of policies is with the use of a policy analysis.

This section will review the findings from various articles on the use of policy to achieve reconciliation in order to uncover what meaningful engagement looks like and what the government has achieved in the past through policy reform. The review will focus on existing literature that analyze the development and implementation of previous policies that affect Indigenous Peoples to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the government's response and identify whether there are any common themes from case to case. The review also focuses on the policy decisions made towards the Indigenous housing crisis in the past and the benefits and drawbacks related to it. A Practical Guide to Policy Analysis by Eugene Bardach will be used to assess the literature as well as analyze specific policies throughout the research paper (2019). The framework within Bardach's writing include defining the problem, proposing alternatives, outweighing the benefits and drawbacks, and finally, presenting a complete evaluation (2019). Two key questions that will frame this discussion are: has the federal government committed to making a change within the policy framework? Furthermore, have these policies resulted in meaningful change for Indigenous People?

To achieve meaningful reconciliation, a thorough analysis and change in government policy are of critical importance. This is because the government of Canada asserts that it is committed to achieving reconciliation with a renewed nation-to nation, government-to-government and Inuit Crown relationship which includes the recognition of rights, cooperation, and partnership as the base for change (Canada, 2021). It is also stated that in order to achieve reconciliation, existing laws and policies must be reviewed to develop responses to key initiatives and actions (Canada, 2021). This exploratory paper will review the governments

approach in which the main goal is reconciliation, the setting is Trudeau's elected government, and the instrument used to achieve this goal is through policy.

A key theme that is evident when researching government policy regarding Indigenous Peoples is the right to self-determination. It is widely recognized that the reconciliation process has been unsuccessful since most existing policies fail to recognize or support self-determination. The United Nations defines *self-Determination* as "the right of a people to determine its destiny. In particular, the principles allow a people to choose its own political status and to determine its own form of economic, cultural, and social development" (UNPO, 2017). This is important in the Canadian context because self-government and self-determination for Indigenous People is a crucial part of reconciliation that must be both acknowledged and respected.

Meaningful Engagement

Many academic studies examine the problems within the existing policy framework. The dominant theme is the lack of consideration for self-determination and self-government for Indigenous People. The literature highlights the importance of Indigenous Peoples asserting their right to self-determination and the urgency for the Canadian government to realize Indigenous self-determination in a way that Indigenous Peoples would consider satisfactory (De Loe & Von Der Porten, 2016). To investigate this claim, with the use of empirical research, a case study was reviewed on water policy reform in British Columbia. The reform included a method in which a mix of 24 Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals were interviewed on the matter. The findings concluded that a significant problem within the policy framework was

the government's assumptions on the role of Indigenous People (De Loe & Von Der Porten, 2016).

In De Loe and Von Der Porten's case study, the use of a public participation approach was used as a method to modernize and improve the efficacy of the existing BC Water Act which was originally developed in 1996. The results from the interview showed that the strategy applied to the water reform act led to a response of dissatisfaction from both First Nations and Provincial officials (De Loe & Von Der Porten, 2016). In addition, another major drawback identified was the province's tendency to view and treat Indigenous Peoples as stakeholders or interest groups rather than view them as holding sui generis rights. (De Loe & Von Der Porten, 2016). The study's results therefore assert that the chosen methodology proved to be problematic.

The article suggests that the main obstacle within the reform process is the government's lack of consideration for the views of Indigenous People, in which the majority did not find the public participation process to be an appropriate fit for decision-making (De Loe & Von Der Porten, 2016). The attempt to modify the decision-making process within policy acts as evidence that the government is actively working toward making a positive shift toward reconciliation. However, at the same time, they failed to thoroughly research and understand what Indigenous Peoples consider to be meaningful and fair participation. The literature supports the claim that a significant barrier within the reconciliation process is due to failure in revising the policy.

Fridkin, Browne, and Stout used a similar methodology as De Loe & Von Der Porten to examine the framework for the meaningful involvement of Indigenous People in Health Policy Decision Making. The article argues that the inequalities regarding health and social policies are not coincidental and are a direct result of the historic colonial policies imposed on Indigenous Peoples for decades (Fridkin, Browne & Stout 2019). Though Indigenous People have become more vocal regarding public policy, they are still largely excluded from the decision-making process (Fridkin, Browne & Stout, 2019). There have been increased efforts to involve Indigenous People in the decision-making process in recent years. However, it is still unsure whether Indigenous leaders believe this level of involvement is meaningful and impactful (Fridkin, Browne & Stoute, 2019).

To conceptualize meaningful involvement in the policy-making decision process, the authors developed a research design in which 20 in-depth and open-ended interview questions were asked to select leaders and decision-makers who are involved in the Indigenous Health and other health policy areas of Canada (Fridkin, Browne & Stout, 2019). Some of the significant findings extracted from the interview include the challenge of having fair Indigenous representation within the decision-making process as well as the challenge of creating an environment in which Indigenous and Non-Indigenous People can work together within a colonial context to achieve policy goals (Fridkin, Browne & Stout, 2019). Furthermore, it asserts that when there is some form of Indigenous representation in the decision-making process, it tends to involve them in a tokenizing way rather than a meaningful one (Fridkin, Browne & Stout, 2019). The study confirms that there are significant problems with achieving meaningful and effective involvement of Indigenous Peoples within the decision-making process.

In an analysis of the use of policy for improving Indigenous health, Kerry Black and Edward McBean also stressed the importance of these frameworks, including recognition of Indigenous knowledge, recognition of the inherent right to self-determination, the use of an inclusive knowledge system, the use of community-based participatory approaches, and the use of holistic and circular viewpoints (2016). Black and McBean assert that within the decision-making process, there must be recognition of Indigenous Peoples rights to govern themselves, recognition of their right to self-determination, as well as exercise their rights to control on their traditional lands (2016). The literature continues to support the claim that Indigenous knowledge must be understood and recognized in successful policy decision-making (Black & McBean, 2016).

It is crucial to bear in mind that while De Loe and Von Der Porten's study concluded that there was a response of dissatisfaction for the use of the participatory approach within policy-decision making, Black and McBean, on the other hand, assert that by using this type of approach, it stems away from the typically Westernized Structure. Furthermore, they maintain that using a community-based participatory approach allows Indigenous communities to have a voice and the power of decision-making throughout the entire policy-making process (Black & McBean, 2016). Overall, the study concludes that for policy to trigger meaningful change within these communities, there must be an increase in Indigenous decision-making power as well as acknowledgment of the ongoing effects of colonization (Black & McBean, 2016).

In addition to the focus on access to water and health services, the policy within the school system and the response to the aftermath of Indian residential schools provide insight on the priorities of the Canadian government. Terry Wotherspoon and Emily Milne sought to

uncover what the Indigenous education policy frameworks reveal about commitment to reconciliation within the Canadian school system (2020). The study's results revealed significant progress toward increasing acknowledgment of the Indigenous knowledge system. However, these changes continue to follow Western approaches (Milne & Wotherspoon, 2020). By heavily focusing on the TRC's call to action, it is recognized that all provinces had committed to these mandates and have strived to improve the quality of education of Indigenous students. However, it is important to note that many of these policy changes occurred before the calls to action (Milne & Wotherspoon, 2020). Milne and Wotherspoon's research suggest that while there are past efforts, they occurred well before 2015 and failed to incorporate an Indigenous approach. Although the policy revisions have acknowledged the importance of considering Indigenous knowledge and perspectives, Witherspoon and Milne emphasize the Westernized structure upon which these changes are built (2020)—leading too little to no progression toward reconciliation. The article overall follows the common theme of discovering flaws within the development and implementation stages of policy.

Robert P. Shepard and Katherine A. H. Graham built upon the discussion of the Western approach to reform mentioned by Wotherspoon and Milne by suggesting that the Canadian government fails to evaluate programs developed in an Indigenous community in ways that both serve their interests in accountability and quality assurance, while still meeting Indigenous needs and interests for the program (2020). A significant problem with this Western approach is that these policy evaluations tend to be viewed as something done to them rather than for them (Shepard & Graham, 2020). As a response, the TRC called on the Canadian government to shift its focus from the Western Style approach and instead apply Indigenous ways of knowing

(Shepard & Graham, 2020). The literature acknowledges that since 2016 there has been a greater acceptance in the realm of government policy in understanding that Indigenous People differ in their understanding and way of knowing. The literature concludes by maintaining that these differences must be understood for reconciliation to succeed within policymaking (Shepard & Graham, 2020).

The existing literature on the Canadian governments policy approach for Indigenous issues share two common themes. The first theme is the importance of analyzing the development process in regard to creating policies to determine if meaningful engagement is being practiced. As asserted by Eugene Bardach, when analysing policy, it is important to identify and define the problem. The cases reviewed in the literature display that a major problem that leads to policy failure is the Canadian governments idea of meaningful engagement. In one case the use of a public participation approach attempted to include Indigenous voices and concerns which can be viewed as a step forward in practicing co-development. However, this approach does not include involving Indigenous Peoples within the decision-making process. Additionally, although in most cases, Indigenous representatives are included in the policy-making phase, they are largely underrepresented, which as a result, fails to recognize and respect Indigenous rights to self-determination and self-government. The findings suggest that an alternative for meaningful engagement is crucial for achieving reconciliation.

The second theme identified within the literature is the use of a Western-styled approach within policy to achieve reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. When achieving reconciliation, it is important to acknowledge and understand that Indigenous Peoples have

different methodologies and ways of knowing, being, and understanding. Because of this, it is highly unlikely that policies built upon a Western framework will succeed within Indigenous context. Instead, a modified framework must be developed that include the methodologies of both parties involved. While it is acknowledged within the literature that there have been increased efforts in revising the current framework, the dissatisfaction from the Indigenous population suggests that there are major gaps that must be addressed.

The literature thus far asserts that on one hand, the government has made efforts in modifying the approach to decision-making within policy to acknowledge and include Indigenous representatives, while on the other hand there are key issues within the current strategies to achieve this level of cooperation. In continuation, it is crucial to review existing literature on specific policies to solidify whether or not policy is successfully used as a tool to achieve reconciliation. The Indigenous housing crisis is a significant indicator to review as it remains a major problem for Indigenous People in the present day. Although the government has worked toward co-developing a plan, it is important to examine the change it has produced over the past years.

The Canadian Governments Approach to the Indigenous Housing Crisis

In addition to the existing literature focused on meaningful engagement and appropriate approaches to developing policy, there is a wide array of literature on the Indigenous housing crisis and the governments use of policy as a response. A study done on Indigenous housing and health in Northern Canada asserts that colonialism has severely disrupted Indigenous home-making practices by displacing Indigenous Peoples from their land,

implementing exclusionary socio-spatial structures, and separating children from their families (Christensen, 2016). These results ultimately caused for much of the population to experience “spiritual homelessness,” which refers to the disconnection from culturally rooted knowledge, identity, and spirituality in regard to Indigenous homelessness (Christensen, 2016). The article continues by analysing the use of housing policy as a response in which it is concluded that these policies often collide with Indigenous Cultural practices (Christensen, 2016).

The author confirms this by investigating the two-week limit that was imposed for guests staying with friends or family who lived in public housing in Inuvik and Yellowknife (Christensen, 2016). The policy was meant to prevent people from using this tactic to avoid making rent contributions when they had the means to and also prevent people with a bad record with the NWT HC from staying in public housing (Christensen, 2016). While on the other hand it left many who could not afford rent without any options for housing which often led to homelessness (Christensen, 2016). The policy also prevented the ability and cultural obligation of any given household to care for family members that are in need (Christensen, 2016). It is important that this specific case also connects to the themes in the previous section, as it relates to the issue of using a Westernized framework.

A more recent study conducted by the Community Housing Transformation Centre (CHTC) analyzes the current housing issues that the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples face. In addition to the insufficient housing quality, culturally inappropriate homes, crowded housing, and unreliable electricity and drinking water, the article asserts that the most pressing issues that the three major centres in the territories (Whitehorse, Yellowknife, and Iqaluit) face is affordability challenges (Community Housing Transformation Centre, 2020). For instance, in the

case of Iqaluit, Nunavut, the average rent for a 2-bedroom apartment is \$2736, while at the same time 18.1% of households are in core housing needs (Community Housing Transformation Centre, 2020). In response to this crisis, the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association's Indigenous Caucus developed a call to action for urban, rural, and northern Indigenous housing strategies (Community Housing Transformation Centre, 2020). Within this call to action, it is proposed that federal funding must reflect the higher transportation and construction costs (Community Housing Transformation Centre, 2020). In addition, it is also proposed that any future strategy to be developed must include the large percentage of the homeless Indigenous population and provide a transparent Federal commitment to provide self-governing First Nations with adequate housing funds (Community Housing Transformation Centre, 2020).

This section of the literature review also shares two key themes, the first one being the use of policy to respond to Indigenous Issues. In the first case, the study analyzes the policies that are used in attempt to solve the housing crisis, in which the findings concluded that while the policy is meant to produce positive change and strengthen the system it is built upon, it instead causes new problems for Indigenous communities because it is based on a Westernized approach rather than one that strives to achieve cultural match and integrates the values, beliefs and financial needs of both parties. In addition, the second case analyzes the problems that still exist even after the implementation of various housing strategies. Similar to the first case, the second article finds that while the existing approach to respond to the crisis solved problems for some communities, it left many Northern Indigenous communities without a solution. The second theme extracted from the studies is the importance of including Indigenous input, methodologies, and ways of knowing within implemented policies in order to

produce advantageous results. The need for cultural match is extremely important in the second theme as well. This is because “cultural norms form the glue that holds a society’s formal and informal institutions of social control and organization together” (Cornell & Kalt, 2000). The government cannot rely solely on funds as a solution. Both studies exhibited the underwhelming results when taking a Western approach toward reconciliation.

Overall, the literature review acts as a base for this analysis by outlining the governments use of policy to achieve reconciliation and highlighting several common themes as to why this relationship remains tense with little to no signs of improvement. The literature maintains the importance of examining both the development and implementation process when conducting a policy analysis. It also provides various reoccurring themes within the policy frameworks such as the use of policy to achieve reconciliation, the importance of meaningful engagement, and the difference between a Western approach and a modified alternative. The findings from the literature review will serve as a base in the paper when exploring the Canadian governments use of policy and the results it has managed to produce.

Research Objectives

The literature review provides insight into the Canadian governments approach to meet the calls to action and achieve reconciliation with the Indigenous Population with the use of policy. It emphasizes some of the flaws within the policy frameworks that have occurred in past years and the importance of adequate policy reform in the reconciliation process. In addition, the case studies express the importance of creating a development process that includes meaningful engagement with Indigenous Peoples. The literature also provides evidence on the

inefficacy of previous policies for Indigenous People due to the absence of an efficient development process and framework.

This exploratory paper aims to further build on this information by analyzing recent policies to determine if meaningful engagement is being practiced in the present, the efficacy of the implemented policies, and if there are potential common factors that have caused policies to fail in more recent years. Another objective of this paper will be to reveal possible solutions that could theoretically be used to address these problems in the future. To do so, the following chapter will use recent action and statistics on Indigenous issues to assert that policy is used as an instrument to achieve reconciliation. It will also evaluate if these policies have produced meaningful change. Chapter three will perform a policy analysis on the Indigenous housing crisis as the methodology to establish the accomplishments and downfalls that come from them and also identify if there are potential variables that negatively impact the policies outcome. These causes will be further discussed and examined to emphasize its impact on Indigenous People in Canada. The analysis results are then used in Chapter four to propose solutions and identify limitations to the research to provide a roadmap for future research.

CHAPTER 2: DEFINING THE PROBLEM

The evidence exhibited in the existing literature supports the claim that the Canadian government's framework for developing and implementing policy include potential problems that are affecting the reconciliation process. To build on this statement, the next step that is taken is to compare the most recent statistics from the 2021 Census on key indicators for Indigenous Peoples compared with the 2016 Census. The differences identified will aid in identifying the policies' impact and emphasize the importance of a proper framework and development process. The statistics cover issues such as discrimination, education, employment, and housing. Identifying the governments use of policy to achieve reconciliation and its efficacy will then act as a basis for a policy analysis in Chapter Three to evaluate what kind of impact the policy framework has and identify any existing barriers preventing its success.

A LOOK INTO THE DATA ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA

It is evident that a potential problem in achieving reconciliation with Indigenous People's is the governments flawed policy framework, but this issue, in reality, is much more complex. While the initial need for reconciliation is due to the colonization, discrimination, and abuse of Indigenous Peoples, it is suggested by numerous authors that the root cause of the failure to *achieve* reconciliation is primarily due to issues within policy reform. When reviewing the previously proposed policies, many of these problems exist within the policies and the policy-making process itself. A major drawback in the reconciliation process is the need for more government cooperation with both Indigenous communities and representatives. Many of these policies have been developed without considering Indigenous representatives'

proposals and concerns. As a result, this ineffective method for policy development creates a chain reaction of problems within the framework due to the ignorance and failure to recognize the importance of self-governance and self-determination, as well as a lack of understanding and inclusion of the differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous ideologies.

Additionally, the literature emphasizes the impact that a lack of political will from government institutions has on addressing Indigenous concerns properly. “Political Will” is defined as “the commitment of actors to undertake actions to achieve a set of objectives...and to sustain the costs of those actions over time” (Brinkerhoff, 2010). Policy proposals are more likely to fail if there is not a firm commitment from the government to develop a framework to produce the highest quality of results for Indigenous Peoples. To further explore the severity of this problem, the following section aims to uncover and evaluate the impact that the previous policy frameworks and strategies have had on Indigenous Peoples in Canada by comparing the results on key indicators from the 2016 and 2021 Census and various other sources.

Discrimination

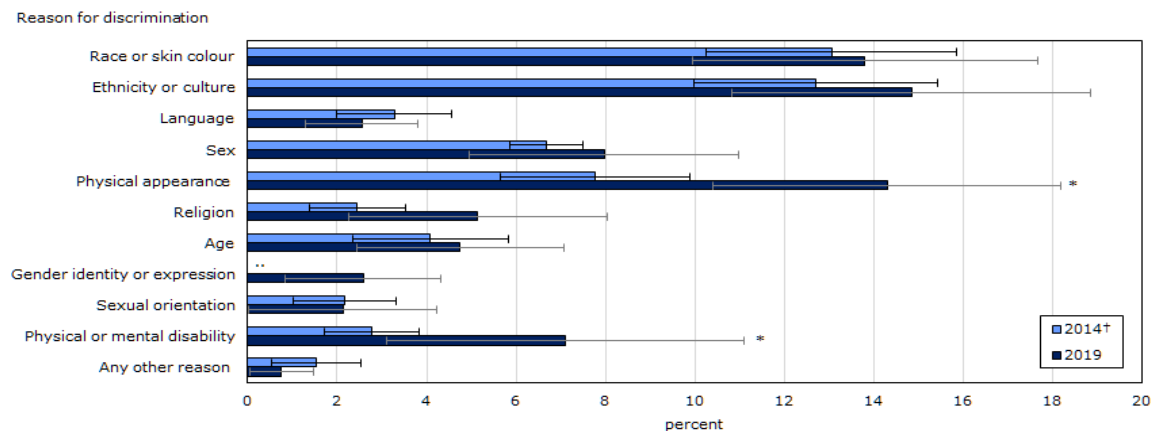
Recent statistics between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Canadians emphasize the impact colonization and residential schools have had on discrimination towards Indigenous Peoples and how little Canadian policymakers have done to respond to the issues outlined by the TRC’s calls to action and the MMIWG’s calls to justice. Most Indigenous Peoples continue to experience various forms of discrimination in their daily lives. For example, Statistics Canada released data in 2019 in which it was determined that 33% of Indigenous Peoples experienced discrimination compared to the 16% of non-Indigenous Peoples and non-visible minorities who have faced discrimination (Cotter, 2022). It is also important to mention that in 2014, these

rates for Indigenous Peoples were recorded to be 10% lower than in 2019 (Cotter, 2022). Looking at Figure 1, it is evident that over the span of 5 years, the issue of discrimination for Indigenous Peoples has only worsened in almost all regards (Cotter, 2022). These statistics support the claim that any actions taken by the Canadian government on the topic of discrimination have not only failed but have allowed the problem to escalate. It can also be asserted that the Trudeau government has done little in developing an effective solution since coming into power. The statistics act as a potential explanation as to why the housing crisis is substantially worse for Indigenous Peoples. The increase in discrimination may act as a possible variable as to why minimal improvements have been made on the housing crisis. However, while the results portray an increase in discrimination, it is also important to bear in mind that the study relies on self-reporting, meaning that there could be other possible variables effecting these results, such as an increased willingness to report discrimination over the years.

Figure 1: Statistics on Discrimination Between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Canadians

Chart 4

Experiences of discrimination in the past 5 years among the Indigenous population, by reason for discrimination, Canada, 2014 and 2019



.. not applicable for a specific reference period

* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

† reference category

Note: Error bars represent the 95% confidence intervals and can be interpreted as such: if the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the interval would cover the true population value.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization), 2014 and 2019.

Source: Cotter, A. Experiences of discrimination among the Black and Indigenous population in Canada (Statistics Canada)

Housing Crisis

In addition to the topic of discrimination, the most recent study on Indigenous housing showed that many continue to face poor housing conditions. The mandates released in 2015 committed to improving housing for Indigenous communities (Privy Council Office, 2021). This commitment was later met with the reveal of Budget 2017 and 2018 in which the government proposed to dedicate 600 million dollars over three years for the 10-year First Nations Housing Strategy, 400 million dollars over 10 years to support the Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy, and 500 million dollars over 10 years to support to the Métis Housing Strategy (Privy Council Office, 2021). As of June 2022, it is noted that there have been 3374 housing infrastructure projects, in which 1219 are incomplete, and 1.24 billion dollars have been invested to support Indigenous housing projects (Indigenous Services Canada, 2022). This paper also aimed to compare the housing budgets proposed to the cost-per home dedicated to Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, however, a detailed and specific report on the National Housing Strategy's funding structures has yet to be developed.

While there have been increased efforts and investments to solve the Indigenous housing crisis over the years, the most recent statistics released in 2021 exhibit the efficacy of these proposals. The data notes that Indigenous Peoples were almost twice as likely to live in a crowded household in comparison to non-Indigenous Peoples (Statistics Canada, 2022). The data also showed that in 2021, 19.7% of First Nations, 10% of Métis, and 26.2% of Inuit People were living in a dwelling needing significant repairs (Statistics Canada, 2022). The results display that Indigenous Peoples altogether were nearly three times more likely to live in homes that needed major repairs in comparison to non-Indigenous Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2022). The

discomfort of inadequate housing is not the only concern that should be addressed with the housing crisis. In addition, the lack of sufficient housing for the rapidly growing Indigenous population can also potentially escalate even more issues, such as health problems and an increase in being unhoused. The data results on the housing crisis demonstrate that the lack of an adequate institutional response has allowed for Indigenous living standards to worsen and allowed for the inequality gap to widen.

Education and Employment

The education and employment statistics shed light on how large the inequality gap truly is between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. These two variables are important to mention because they go hand in hand. Without proper access to education, finding suitable work that will provide them with the financial ability to sustain themselves becomes challenging. To tackle the issue of education for Indigenous Peoples, Budget 2016 committed a 2.6 billion dollar increase for First Nations K-12 Education. Additionally, Indigenous Services Canada developed a new policy framework to improve First Nations elementary and secondary education on reserve beginning in 2019-2020. “The Department is implementing a new formula-based funding approach aimed at ensuring students attending First Nations schools are supported by predictable base funding that is more directly comparable to funding in provincial education systems” (Privy Council Office, 2021). The new approach attempts to provide a financially stable environment for First Nations education by increasing its quality and support (Privy Council Office, 2021).

In order to evaluate the efficacy of this framework, it is important to analyze the change that has occurred over the years. Figure 2 presents data before these commitments from 2016

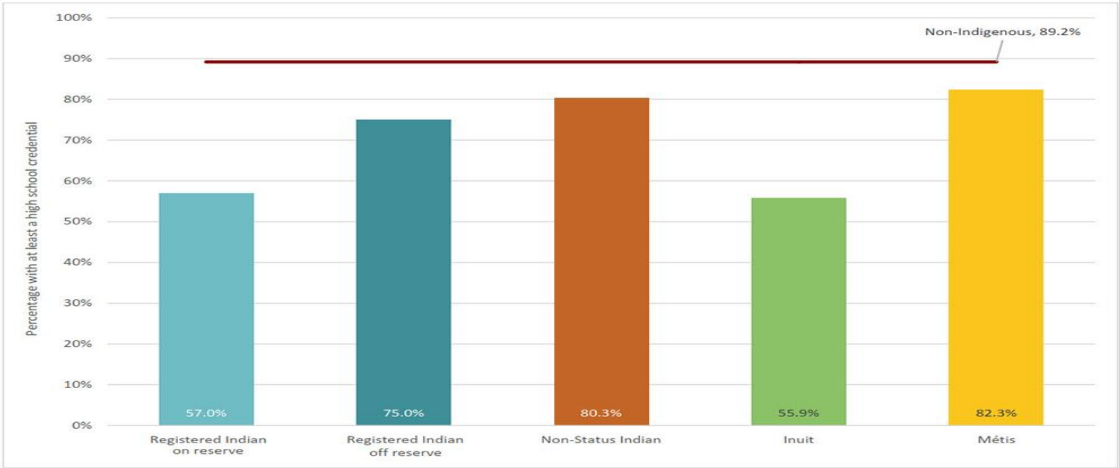
on the percentage of people with at least high school credentials. It shows that all five Indigenous groups included in the study fall below the rate of non-Indigenous Peoples with at least secondary school credentials (Canada, 2020). However, the most recent data analyzed in the 2021 Census present similar patterns. It will be noted that the 2021 data does not present statistics on people with *at least* high school credentials. The results show that 26% of First Nations, 14.8% of Métis, and 43.7% of Inuit Peoples between the ages of 25 and 64 do not have certificate, diploma, or degree, while only 9.3% of non-Indigenous Peoples fall in this category (Statistics Canada, 2022).

The data presented before and after the developed goals on education display that a large number of Indigenous Peoples do not have a certificate, diploma, or degree in comparison to non-Indigenous Peoples (Statistics Canada, 2022). When comparing the results between Indigenous groups, in 2016, it is evident that non-status Indian and the Métis had the highest rate of high school credentials, and similarly in 2021, the Métis people (non-status Indians were not included in the study) had the lowest rate of people without a certificate, diploma or degree. The difference in rates between Indigenous groups are important to review because these results may suggest other variables that affect the results such as the location or remoteness of the communities in which these people live. Although it is too soon to assess the efficacy of the new policy framework, the comparison of data acts as a lagging indicator to identify what has been achieved over time. It is evident that there is still much work to be done for improving the quality and accessibility of education for the Indigenous population.

Furthermore, the studies regarding employment rates provide comparable results as the data displayed on education. In Budget 2018, the Canadian government committed 2 billion

dollars over five years, and 408.2 million dollars each year on going, in order to develop an Indigenous Skills and Employment Training program (ISET), which include four distinctive labour market strategies for First Nations, Métis Nations, Inuit, and Urban/Non-affiliated Indigenous Peoples (Privy Council Office, 2021). Prior to these commitments, the data results collected by Statistics Canada in 2016, present that non-Indigenous Peoples experienced employment rates of 72.7% in comparison to the Indigenous Population who experienced an employment rate of 60.7% (Statistics Canada, 2022). In contrast, the results in 2021 exhibit that non-Indigenous Peoples experienced employment rates of 73.5%, while the Indigenous Populations rate grew to 63.9% (Statistics Canada, 2022). On one hand, both groups employment rates have grown over the course of 5 years, with the Indigenous growth rate being higher in comparison to that of the non-Indigenous, while on the other hand, a large gap remains between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population.

Figure 2: Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Statistics on High School Credentials



Source: Canada: Annual Report to Parliament 2020

The statistics comparing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples are a direct reflection of the efficacy of the efforts and policies developed by the government to achieve reconciliation. In regard to education, the results show that there continue to be significant rates of Indigenous Peoples without a degree, diploma, or certificate. In addition, the most recent data on employment rates continue to present a major gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. However, over the course of five years, it is noted that Indigenous employment rates grew by 3.2%. The major differences between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations presented in the data results suggest that there are several unsolved problems with the government's actions thus far. These barriers, if left unsolved, will only lead to a widened socioeconomic gap in future years. For meaningful reconciliation to occur, the current policy framework must be re-evaluated and modified to produce meaningful change toward achieving reconciliation. In order to pinpoint how to produce a positive change for Indigenous communities, recent government actions and responses from the Indigenous community must be analyzed to uncover where they went wrong.

Discussion

As stated previously, the main objective of this paper is to analyze the governments use of policy and what has been done to achieve reconciliation in order to determine its efficacy and the potential causes that have slowed down the reconciliation process. The existing literature eliminates the potential claim that the lack of progress is due to the absence of a response from government representatives and policymakers since there is evidence of increased efforts within policymaking. However, the literature does infer that the problem lies within the efficacy of current policies. The recent statistics on key indicators such as,

discrimination, education, employment, and housing, strengthen this claim by displaying the lack of meaningful change that existing policies that were implemented at the time have produced for the Indigenous population. The findings further maintain that to achieve reconciliation, it is essential that the current policy frameworks are analysed and re-evaluated in order to uncover the existing issues and determine what changes must be made to produce meaningful change for Indigenous People.

CHAPTER 3: THE CASE OF THE INDIGENOUS HOUSING CRISIS

After examining the existing data and literature on reconciliation in Canada, it is evident that many of these articles share common themes. Firstly, it is clear that the government uses policy as its tool to achieve reconciliation. Secondly, the evidence asserts that there are major problems and gaps within the policy framework which have prevented meaningful change to occur. This paper will use a policy analysis on the Indigenous housing crisis as the methodology in order to determine the efficacy of the current policy framework and identify which variables have prevented the successful implementation and results of policies proposals. The analysis will focus on the government response on the housing crisis to evaluate the governments use of policy as a mechanism to operationalize reconciliation.

The analysis uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative data to examine the outcomes and results of the Canadian governments use of policy. This report will also aim to identify areas that continue to lack attention and meaningful action from the government even following the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's Calls to Action. The analysis will aim to build on the themes uncovered within the literature review by considering variables such as political will, the level of awareness and understanding of Indigenous culture and way of knowing, as well as the level of meaningful engagement within the decision-making and implementation process. The potential obstacles that are identified in the policy analysis will assist in developing and proposing solutions in the following chapter. The Practical Guide to Policy Analysis by Eugene Bardach will be utilized as a framework for this section.

Policy Analysis: The Indigenous Housing Crisis

The policy analysis will focus on the Indigenous housing crisis in Canada and the governments response. Prime Minister Trudeau's ultimate goal is reconciliation, his setting is his newly elected government, and policy is the instrument he uses to achieve this goal. This analysis will specifically focus on the problem and solutions proposed between 2015 and 2021. While using the framework from Bardach's Guide, this section aims to examine the policy solutions proposed by the Trudeau government. To do so, the data results on Indigenous housing over the years will be compared to determine whether or not it has produced meaningful change as well as propose alternative if the results prove the policy framework to be ineffective.

The first step in analyzing this policy is to define the problem. The issue is the lack of quality housing and deplorable housing conditions that Indigenous Peoples are provided with and potentially the government's response for solution. Additionally, this problem is gradually worsening due to the rising Indigenous population and the difficulty to act on remote communities. It is evident that this problem has persisted in Canada long before Trudeau came into power. a study done in 2012 on the impact of mould growth in homes on reserve confirms that the housing crisis in question has not been adequately assessed (Optis et al., 2012). It also confirms that nearly half of the homes on reserve contain mould at levels so high that it contributes to the growing rates of respiratory illnesses in the residents (Optis et al., 2012). The article states that to see an effective long-term reduction of mould growth, there must be increased activity within various research and policy areas (Optis et al., 2012). In addition, the government must "make a renewed and lasting commitment to improve the socio-economic

conditions on reserves that perpetuate mould growth in homes. Without such improvement, the mould crisis will surely persist and likely worsen" (Optis et al., 2012). What is important about these findings is the emphasis on the need for increased government effort long before Prime Minister Justin Trudeau came into power.

When looking at the data provided on Indigenous housing from the 2016 Census (one year into Trudeau's term), the results display that there is still a major need of a policy response to solve the issue. In 2016, the reports show that 19.4% of Indigenous Peoples lived in a dwelling that needed major repairs, and 18.3% lived in a crowded household setting (Statistics Canada, 2017). It is also noted that the on-reserve population is much more likely to live in a dwelling in need of major repairs (Statistics Canada, 2017). When compared to the previous Census in 2011, the data shows that the proportion of Indigenous Peoples living in dwellings in need of major repairs has decreased (Statistics Canada, 2017). However, the 2016 Census results display that there is still much to be done.

The 2021 Census on Indigenous housing shows related results. Firstly, it will be acknowledged that in comparison to the 2016 Census, the number of Indigenous peoples living in crowded households decreased for the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples, with the exception of the Inuit population living in Nunavut, which increased since 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2022). Additionally, the First Nations and Métis Peoples were less likely to be living in dwellings in need of major repairs in comparison to 2016, while for the Inuit, the results in 2021 remained similar to the results in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2022). While there have been minor improvements over time, the 2021 Census also showed that 17.1% of Indigenous Peoples were living in crowded housing that is not suitable for the number of people residing within it

(Statistics Canada, 2022). It also states that the Inuit Peoples living in Nunavut were more likely to live in either crowded households or households in need of major repairs in comparison to 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2022). The results from the study overall concluded that Indigenous Peoples were almost three times more likely to live in dwellings in need of major repairs in comparison to the non-Indigenous population. While the comparison of data between the 2016 and 2021 census present that there have been improvements on the Indigenous housing crisis, it still remains a significant problem in the present day.

After defining the problem, the second step of the analysis is to assemble some evidence to consolidate the problem. The section of the analysis that focused on defining the problem provides evidence that although there have been improvements on Indigenous housing in 2021 in comparison to 2016, there are still high rates of Indigenous Peoples who are affected by the housing crisis. To further solidify that housing remains a major issue, a scientific study was published in 2022 on the housing conditions and respiratory morbidity in Indigenous children in remote Northwestern Ontario communities (Kovesi et al. 2022). The findings showed that participants had a mean age of 1.6 years, and 21% of these participants were admitted to the hospital for respiratory infections before reaching the age of two (Kovesi et al., 2022). The interpretations from this study show that the poor housing conditions correlated with endotoxins and wheezing in young Indigenous children living in these regions (Kovesi et al., 2022). The study also confirms that the problem persists even after the 2021 Census was performed.

In addition to defining the housing crisis as the base problem, and providing evidence to support this claim, it is important to gather evidence and assess the policies developed by the

Trudeau government between 2016 and 2021 in order to determine if the current policy framework is the main issue that is preventing meaningful and significant change to occur. One of the most notable proposals made by the government was the First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy. The strategy is developed over a 10-year implementation plan that intends to achieve innovative housing governance systems that can support First Nations housing and infrastructure (Assembly of First Nations, 2022). A Key component of the strategy is the government's commitment to working with First Nations to *co-develop* the policy reform framework. The ultimate goal within the framework is to (1) ensure First Nations perspective and Aboriginal and Treaty rights are recognized and respected, (2) build an environment for First Nations care, (3) control and management over housing, (4) provide a long-term approach for First Nations housing and related infrastructure, (5) implement Assembly of First Nations (AFN) resolutions that support the transfer of authority to First Nations, (6) and build on the feedback from engagement with the First Nations (Assembly of First Nations, 2022). To support these goals, throughout the 2017 and 2018 Budget, the federal government proposed dedicated funding which included \$600 million over 3 years to support housing on reserves for the 10-year First Nations Housing Strategy, \$400 million over 10 years to support the Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy, and \$500 million over 10 years to support the Métis Nation's housing strategy (Privy Council Office, 2021).

The 2021 Census results suggests that the steps that the federal government has taken towards policy reform have produced some positive results, especially for the First Nations and Métis Peoples. The strategy and funding commitments exhibit efforts being put toward Indigenous self-governance as well as a commitment toward reconciliation. However, the

strategies failed to resolve the overall high rates of Indigenous Peoples living in crowded households and dwellings in need of major repairs. In the present day they are much more vulnerable to these living conditions in comparison to the non-Indigenous population. Additionally, the AFN brought other concerns on the housing strategy to light regarding both the governments cooperation and their level of transparency (Assembly of First Nations, 2019). In 2019 the federal government reduced funds for the CMHC renovation program and launched the Federal Deep Dive review of First Nations housing without the prior knowledge of the First Nations (Assembly of First Nations, 2019). Furthermore, the AFN assert that the federal government is not completely transparent on the emergency housing funds committed and if those funds diminish the existing budgets of the First Nations housing program (Assembly of First Nations, 2019).

Additionally, it must be noted that while some Indigenous communities have seen improvements over the past years, the conditions for the Inuit Peoples residing in Nunavut have worsened since 2016. It is acknowledged that a major obstacle for delivering many services is the remoteness of many Indigenous communities. However, there has been little to no efforts to solve this issue. For instance, in the 2021 Annual Report to Parliament, it was asserted that the remote nature of many Indigenous communities' act as a barrier to delivering many services (Canada, 2022). While the Minister asserts that this issue must be addressed, there is an enormous lack of transparency as to what actions will be taken to solve the problem (Canada, 2022). Overall, the evidence provided assert that while there have been improvements in regard to addressing the housing crisis, there are still major gaps within the

policy framework developed as a response, and there are still significant rates of Indigenous Peoples suffering as a result.

There have been major concerns on the inclusivity of the National Housing Strategies on specific Indigenous groups. The manager for the Indigenous Caucus of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association stated that there are several non-status Indigenous Peoples as well as many others who are not included within the strategies (Community Housing Transformation Centre, 2021). In the case of the First Nations strategy, it is only applied to on-reserve housing. While it is the on-reserve housing that is most in need, it is believed that Indigenous Peoples not covered under the distinct based strategies should be included as well (Community Housing Transformation Centre, 2021). Additionally, the Inuit Housing strategy is specific to only Inuit Nunangat (Community Housing Transformation Centre, 2021). As a result, the current framework for the housing strategies tends to exclude various Indigenous groups from accessing the support. While some communities may benefit from the co-developed strategies, others will see no change in their standard of living.

Finally, what is perhaps most concerning with the policy is the lack of available data on funding that can measure if the federal investments have produced any meaningful change, and little to no accessible data on where the funds are specifically sent, how much is sent at a time, and the cost to build and repair the houses in comparison to the non-Indigenous peoples. Federal funding for the First Nations housing includes various sources including the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) (Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD, 2021). While the CMHC's metrics are not available since it is a crown corporation, the ISC's available metrics were input focused and did not consider the

context factors that influence First Nations Housing (IFSD, 2021). The Auditor General stated in the 2022 report to Parliament that even though 5 years has passed since the commencement of the National Housing Strategy, there is no organization within the federal government that knows for certain if their efforts and fundings have improved housing outcomes (Auditor General of Canada, 2022). In the case of the CMHC (who is the leader of the National Housing Strategy), after spending about \$9 billion in funding, they failed to measure the changes on housing outcomes for priority vulnerable groups (Auditor General of Canada, 2022). Publicly available data on federal expenditures are aggregated to the program level which means that the funding that is dedicated to First Nations Housing cannot be Identified (IFSD, 2021). The data also fails to provide the details needed to review actual expenditures in housing for First Nations (IFSD,2021).

The absence of accurate and specific data shows a lack of transparency to both Indigenous Peoples and the general public, making it almost impossible to identify how much funds are required and provided, and what kind of change it produced. Furthermore, the failure to track the progress since the commencement of the housing strategy makes it difficult for future policymakers to determine what changes must be made, as there are no indicators that can determine which parts of the strategy are successful and what must be changed. The absence of this crucial data also makes it difficult to determine why some Indigenous communities have seen improvements, while others remains stagnant or have worsened. Overall, the lack of research tracking on the housing policy acts as an obstacle for developing accurate and specific alternatives in the future.

The third step in this analysis is constructing the alternatives (a policy option or an alternative course of action). A substantial change that must be implemented into Trudeau's plan is changing the government's perspective on co-development. Rather than predominately providing funds while throwing all responsibilities onto the hands of Indigenous Peoples to construct a housing plan; the government must also work alongside and perform sufficient studies on the current housing situation and the safety of it in order to determine what will be the most effective course of action as well as take part in the actions proposed by the First Nations. As emphasized in the existing literature, a significant reason these policies continue to fail is the government's inability to understand and consider Indigenous ways of knowing and the failure to use a modified approach rather than a Westernized one. Additionally, the government must commit to full transparency when co-developing policy frameworks and providing funds. Finally, they must increase the level of political will in approaching unsolved issues such as the difficulty to improve housing in remote locations and ensuring that all Indigenous Peoples are included in the strategy. This can be achieved by committing to research across Indigenous reserves to identify what strategies work, and which communities need more funding than others.

Overall, the most suitable alternative to this policy is to develop a modified approach that connects Indigenous and Western methodologies to produce a mutually beneficial solution, specifically addresses and states the government's plans regarding federal funding and commit to developing solutions to unsolved problems rather than solely supporting the notion to work towards a response to the issue. This means that the proposed alternative will allow Indigenous groups to develop housing plans that they believe is best, while the

government allocates immediate funding and requested aid as a response, rather than releasing major funds over a large period of time. A major issue is that while the government aims to respect self-determination and self-government, their tendency to not deliver on their promises made acts as a major obstacle to Indigenous communities that are working towards improvements. This alternative also means that the government will commit to producing accurate research on the crisis in order to track improvements, which strategies work and do not for each community, and which reserves need more funding than others.

The fourth step is to select the criteria to evaluate these alternatives with respect to philosophy and values. This analysis will use the criteria "political acceptability" and "efficiency" in this case. Beginning with efficiency, this measurement analyzes whether these alternatives "maximize net benefit" and "maximize the public interest" (Bardach, 2019). When reviewing the proposed route for alternative actions, one can infer that this would maximize the public interest (of Indigenous Peoples) as well as maximize the overall benefit for the population because it would be acknowledging the values and beliefs of Indigenous People and would generally address some of the concerns that they have expressed with the government's methodology for creating policy change.

In the case of political acceptability, a feasible policy must contain little to no opposition. It is believed that there would be no opposition from Indigenous representatives because the alternative is a direct response to their concerns. On the other hand, it is likely that the Canadian government's absence in the original plan to solve the housing crisis with the exception to providing funds signifies a lack of political will. That does not necessarily mean that there is opposition, but rather for many government officials, even with a change in policy, it

may not be a political priority on their agendas. However, when looking at this alternative from a moral standpoint, it does pass the level of political acceptability because it is a vital method for strengthening the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the government of Canada, which is a large part of reconciliation.

The fifth step, often the most difficult for policy analysts, is projecting the outcomes of the suggested alternatives (Bardach, 2015). Though it is impossible to predict whether the outcome will be an overall success or failure, it can be inferred that it will result in major improvement in comparison to the previous framework. This alternative would address one of the main problems that repeatedly occurs in the Canadian policy-making process and a problem that Indigenous representatives have emphasized in the past. At the same time, the policy change is an opportunity for the Canadian government to ensure that Indigenous voices are heard and taken into consideration and that their right to self-determination and self-government is not halted by their failure to deliver what has been promised. Many past policies have failed due to the use of a highly Westernized approach and the neglect of Indigenous methodology and way of knowing as well as a lack of transparency. Nevertheless, by working towards finding a middle ground between the two sides, it is more likely than not that future policies will have a much more favourable outcome and will lead to greater satisfaction from Indigenous communities in Canada.

For this specific analysis, the sixth step of confronting the trade-offs will be skipped as there is only one suggestion in the fifth step. The seventh step is to decide what to do. In order to do so, the policy alternative is put through the 20-dollar bill test, which forces policymakers to question, “if your favorite policy alternative is such a great idea, how come it is not

happening already?" (Bardach, 2015). In the case of the housing crisis for Indigenous Peoples in Canada, the fact that it has not already happened does not speak of the quality of the policy alternative. Instead, it emphasizes the ignorance of the government and its inability to replace a Westernized approach with one co-developed fairly. Over the past years, the government has made several attempts at policy reform. It has made multiple promises to the Indigenous population in the past but failed to recognize and listen to the critiques made by Indigenous Peoples on numerous occasions. This policy alternative is a sufficient suggestion because it would change the usual approach made by policymakers and, at the same time, would acknowledge the voices and opinions of Indigenous People. As a result, this would not only introduce policymakers to a new ideology but also reveal if there is a difference in outcome between a Westernized approach and a modified approach which would ultimately aid in policy reform in future years.

The policy analysis's eighth and final step is to "tell your story" (Bardach, 2015). Overall, this examination of the Indigenous housing crisis confirms a problem within its development and implementation process. Firstly, the plan lacks sufficient commitments for cooperation and co-planning between the government and Indigenous Peoples. While the First Nations work toward co-developing a solution, they are faced with vague funding promises which ultimately makes it difficult for them to make improvements within their communities. Secondly, although years have passed since the commencement of the plan, there are little to no studies from any major institution that tracks whether or not there have been improvements for Indigenous peoples. The analysis ultimately exhibits a lack of transparency within the framework, a lack of political will from the Canadian government, and the inefficacy of Western-dominated

approaches. It is suggesting that these variables are likely a cause of Canada's recent policy failures to reconcile with Indigenous Peoples.

Areas that Lack Federal Attention

Inadequate Research Methods

While a policy analysis is sufficient method to discover what is missing in public policy, it is also important to review the areas where national attention is absent. Firstly, a problem pointed out by Ethan Guthro (2021) is the flawed method used to measure Indigenous well-being in Canada. The Community Well-being Index (CWB) is a method that focuses on four subdivisions which include education, labour force activity, housing, and income (Guthro, 2021). The Index highlighted that between 1981 and 2016, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities have improved in score; however, the gap between the two remains, leaving Indigenous communities far behind in comparison to others (Guthro, 2021). Furthermore, the Index points out that the level of well-being that Indigenous Peoples now receive is equivalent to what non-Indigenous communities had in 1981 (Guthro, 2021).

While this on its own is an enormous problem, an even bigger issue is the method used to measure these statistics. Firstly, the system that measures CWB is highly unreliable for the purpose of comparison (Guthro, 2021). In addition, the Canadian census subdivisions also have the potential to produce inconsistencies due to the varying sizes of the CSDs, which can ultimately lead to the inclusion of non-Indigenous residents in the consensus (Guthro, 2021). The lack of attention and commitment to proper research and data collection on Indigenous matters ultimately leads to poorly developed policies in response because the policies rely on data that does not accurately reflect the well-being of Indigenous communities. To avoid

inaccurate data results being used for decision making, there must be increased efforts in improving the data collection methods.

The policy analysis on Prime Minister Trudeau's response to the Indigenous housing crisis emphasizes the current problems that Indigenous Peoples continue to face and the policies' inability to create significant change as a response. Therefore, the analysis results support the claim that reoccurring policy failure is a major obstacle toward reconciliation. The evidence suggests that the main factors causing these failures are a lack of political will, failure to acknowledge Indigenous methodologies and ways of knowing, and a lack of transparency. In addition to the policy analysis, the examination of the areas that lack federal attention, which include inadequate research methods further strengthens the claim that a lack of political will is a significant factor causing policies to fail. The lack of quality research is exemplified within the policy analysis on housing due to the fact that the government and other major institutions have failed to track the progress made for Indigenous Peoples. Overall, the analysis uncovers the main variables potentially affecting the success of current policies implemented by the Canadian government.

CHAPTER 4: LOOKING FORWARD

The policy analysis emphasized three main variables that affect public policy performance and the Indigenous populations' satisfaction with the outcomes. These three variables are as follows; lack of political will, failure to understand and adapt to Indigenous methodology and way of knowing, and a lack of transparency within the political framework. The public responses and data results within the analysis further assert that the three variables act as significant obstacles for developing successful policies. Alongside the analysis, the inadequate research methods were examined as areas that lack federal attention. This chapter examines and discusses how each variable has negatively affected the reconciliation process in recent years. The section regarding the absence of federal attention will further emphasize the impact of these variables. Furthermore, the paper continues by proposing potential solutions to counteract the main problems discussed and identifies the limitation of the current research to provide a path for future research.

Lack of Political Will

When identifying whether a government lacks political will, it is extremely easy to mistake a careless decision or action for a reasonable attempt to make meaningful change. This is highly evident in the case of the Canadian government because although the evidence displays that they have actively worked on improving their relationship with Indigenous Peoples while working towards responding to their calls to action, many of the socio-economic problems remain unresolved or have major gaps within the policy framework. This is apparent when analyzing which calls to action the government has responded to thus far. The majority of the completed actions served as a symbol to acknowledge the pain and suffering inflicted on

Indigenous People. Although acknowledgment is a large part of reconciliation, it fails to improve the quality of life for the Indigenous population. It does not serve as a permanent solution in solving the critical problem of inequality and inequities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

The policy analysis regarding part of Trudeau's 10-year plan displays unambiguous evidence of a lack of political will. Although the Canadian government provided funding to some degree, they were still unwilling to participate in fair cooperation with Indigenous representatives in taking action to resolve the housing crisis. The failure to inform the First Nations on government actions such as a decrease in funding exemplify its lack of will for complete cooperation and its failure to recognize Indigenous self-government. Additionally, while there is a willingness to provide funds for the developed housing strategies, the government fails to address outlying issues that the current framework has been unable to solve such as delivering to remote communities. In order for the Canadian government to exert meaningful political will, it is important that the policy framework is not only reviewed, but also reformed in order to close the existing gaps.

The areas that lack federal attention in chapter three further strengthen the argument that the lack of political will is one of the main causes for policy failure. Firstly, instead of recognizing the importance of reliable research methods, the Canadian government chooses to rely on the already established and inaccurate methods to address Indigenous issues, which inevitably results in the development of ineffective policies. There are other areas that need federal attention but are ignored due to a lack of political will, which as a result, worsens the living conditions for Indigenous Peoples, such as healthcare. Although in the case of healthcare,

there were increased efforts to deliver quality service to Indigenous Peoples, the government response to tackle problems that still existed within the policy framework were insufficient.

In addition to the evidence provided in chapter three, the lack of political will from the Canadian government is apparent in the hypocrisy within Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's ten principles released in 2017. For example, the sixth principle asserts that the government of Canada recognizes that meaningful engagement with Indigenous People includes the objective of securing their free, prior, and informed consent when a proposed action by the Canadian government could potentially have an impact on their rights (Department of Justice Canada, 2017). While the principle recognizes Indigenous rights in decision-making matters, the criticisms against the government actions towards the housing strategy directly contradict the pledge made by Prime Minister Trudeau. The government failed to inform the First Nations on their decisions and actions ahead of time, even though the main principle of the strategy is co-development between the two parties.

Principle eight follows a similar pattern in that it states that the government of Canada recognizes that in order to achieve reconciliation and self-government, the development of a renewed fiscal relationship with Indigenous Nations is necessary. The relationship would create a mutually supportive environment for economic partnership and resource development (Department of Justice Canada, 2017). Meaningful actions to consistently uphold this promise is again absent within the policy framework toward solving the housing crisis. As stated in the analysis, many commitments to provide federal funding for the purpose of improving the quality of housing for Indigenous communities were either decreased or lacked transparency as to how the funds would be distributed. In order to have political will, the government must

prioritize developing transparent plans toward funding because without it, many actions taken by Indigenous Peoples cannot be completed.

While the analysis gives plausible evidence that a lack of political will acts as a significant barrier toward reconciliation, it is also important to see what does and does not drive change. Institutional change and globalization by John Campbell look at this issue through a lens that attempts to recognize the diverse types of institutional change and how to better understand the forces that make institutional change happen or not. In Campbell's book, he highly emphasizes the problem of ideas, in which many institutionalists have become preoccupied recently with figuring out how normative and cognitive ideas affect institutional change (2004). He argues that ideas have the ability to both constrain and facilitate institutional change (Campbell, 2004). In addition, "scholars have criticized interest-based or realistic theories of organizations, politics, political economy, and economics for neglecting how ideas such as worldviews, norms, identities and values, and other beliefs affect decision making and institutional change (Campbell, 2004)." Campbell believes that interests are a particular and significant type of idea among many, in which actors have interests and other ideas that are socially constructed and based on the individual or group's personal interpretation of a given situation (2004). The reasoning he provided will aid in understanding why there is a lack of political will.

By looking through the lens that Campbell provides, he further confirms the idea that the widespread problem of policy failure is due to differing ideologies and methodologies between the Canadian government and Indigenous Peoples. More specifically, the lack of intent to consider and include Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing as well as the overbearing

amount of Western ideology in the policy-making process. In addition, a dominating criticism of the actions of the Canadian government is that they tend to choose the most straightforward tasks to cross off the list. As stated by Campbell, many ideas are driven by the interests of an individual or group and their interpretation of a problem. By using this ideology, it is possible that the lack of political will is such a common obstacle in Canadian policy because the government remain unaffected by Indigenous problems, and the completion of the calls to action is not in their best interest as they gain no personal benefits. Instead, the government strategically addresses the more “symbolic” calls to action which allows for them to repair their public image with minimal effort. Overall, Campbells theoretical approach provides an explanation for the governments behavior and also emphasizes the argument that the lack of political will is a reoccurring issue in policy that allows for Indigenous communities to suffer, while major government institutions prosper.

Indigenous Methodologies and Ways of Knowing

The government's failure to acknowledge the differences between Western and Indigenous methodologies and ideologies in policymaking and reform is another sign of their lack of political will in their attempt to reconcile. Many of the policies noted in both the literature and analysis demonstrate that a potential cause for these policies' failures is the government's reluctance to incorporate both methodologies. The first case on the Indigenous housing crisis analyzed in the literature review is a key example of this because many of the policies implemented were developed without considering Indigenous ways of knowing, which ultimately resulted in even more problems arising. Instead of an inclusive alternative, the government attempted to implement Westernized policies which fail to meet the expectations

of Indigenous communities. However, when comparing the study in the literature review from 2015, to the progress made up until the present day with the National First Nations Housing Strategy, the minor improvements and commitments to co-development, act as a sign of hope for housing improvements for Indigenous communities in the future.

Shawn Wilson explains the importance of understanding the differences of Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing in his book "Research is Ceremony." He asserts that the Indigenous research paradigm differs highly from the already established Western framework (Wilson, 2008). In addition, he states that the research paradigm includes ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology (Wilson, 2008). He adds that these four ideas must not be viewed as separate ideas but rather as a full circle, in which these ideas blend from one into the next (Wilson, 2008). Regarding Indigenous research, ontology and epistemology focus on a process of relationships that come together to form a mutual reality, while the axiology and methodology are focused on maintaining the accountability of these relationships (Wilson, 2008). Within the Indigenous context, ontology is viewed in a way in which it is possible for there to be multiple realities and these realities are in the relationship that one has with the truth (Wilson, 2008). While epistemology focuses heavily on relationships, it highlights the importance of a relationship with a thing, such as a person, idea, or object, rather than the importance of the thing itself (Wilson, 2008). In continuation, axiology focuses on the concept of relational accountability, such as fulfilling an obligation within a research relationship. At the same time, a methodology is viewed as a process that "adheres to relational accountability," which refers to respect and responsibility within a relationship (Wilson, 2008). Wilson's description emphasizes the major differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous

methodologies which further supports the idea that Westernized approach are not effective when applied to Indigenous Peoples.

As stated previously by several scholars, a significant problem within the Canadian policy framework is the lack of understanding of the Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Wilson's description of the Indigenous research paradigm emphasizes how much it differs from a Western ideology. Overall, it gives merit to the claim that a big reason for these policy failures is a lack of compromise in the policymaking and implementation stages. The absence of an effective strategy that serves the interest of both parties negatively affects not only a policy's outcome but also the accuracy of results in the research stages.

John Campbell further solidifies this idea. He emphasized the importance of worldviews, identities, norms, and values regarding decision-making and institutional change, which many institutional actors often neglect the importance of (Campbell, 2004). In the case of the Canadian government, the analysis demonstrated that on multiple occasions, policymakers failed to consider the possibility that their worldview may not align with that of Indigenous Peoples and underestimated the effect that this could have on the outcome of a given policy or legislation. Because of this, policy failure in the future is unavoidable until these differences are recognized.

Finally, Stephen Cornell and Joseph P. Kalt study on the institutional and cultural foundations of American Indian economic development add to this discussion. The study found that there is little evidence that confirms that resources and human capital are the key to launching economic development (2000). Instead, it is suggested that development occurs when a separation of power is provided and when the structures match Indigenous norms of

political legitimacy (Cornell & Kalt, 2000). One of the study's major conclusions is that resources endowments, human capital, and access to financial capital will be useless if tribes are not capable of making collective decisions and sustaining collective action, and if they lack the institutional structures that are needed to uphold an adequate environment for human and financial investment (Cornell & Kalt, 2000). In the policy development process, the idea of cultural norms is forgotten about. When analysing the case of the indigenous housing crisis, the Indigenous way of knowing is neglected due to the unreliable funding promises that are made by the government. While the government is encouraging self-determination and self-government for Indigenous Peoples, at the same time, they fail to provide adequate funds in a timely manner which ultimately becomes a major obstacle for many communities who have developed plans and timelines to work towards ending the housing crisis.

Lack of Transparency in the Political Framework

A major theme within the policy analysis is a lack of transparency within the policy framework. Many of these policies are strategically developed to allow the rules/law to be open for interpretation. Additionally, it grants the Canadian government flexibility when responding to these calls to action and calls to justice. It also allows them to respond formally without committing to a specific plan or timeline that does not fit their political agenda. While on the other hand, Indigenous People are left questioning when and if their concerns will be resolved.

With respect to the housing crisis, the government had promised to provide federal funding to work towards improving the housing situation for Indigenous People but did not provide any specific commitment to being a part of the implementation plan. Instead, they

proposed vague federal funding in the National Housing Strategies in which funds were decreased without informing Indigenous representatives prior to making the decision. There are also major complaints as to the vagueness of the allocation and limitations to the provided funds. Finally, the lack of research and data collected on the housing strategy further add to the lack of transparency as a major issue within the policy because it becomes impossible for the government and Indigenous communities to track progress over the years. It also becomes difficult for researchers to compare the efforts made toward Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities because of the lack of data provided by the governments database. The results and public response from the policy analysis confirm that the lack of transparency acted as a major barrier to achieving reconciliation.

Previous legislative frameworks, such as the Canadian government's proposal of Bill C-33 in 2013, emphasize the importance of complete transparency within the political framework. The Bill was initially developed to enable First Nation control of First Nation education (Simeone, 2014). However, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) rejected the proposal because of the lack of transparency on clear funding commitments to support the development and implementation of a new education system that would include funds for language and culture, a top-down approach, and an increased federal oversight role (Simeone, 2014). As a response, the AFN outlined five conditions regarding the education system and its funding that are essential for making significant improvements (Simeone, 2014). The Initial rejection highlights the impact that a level of transparency has on a policy's ability to succeed.

Without transparency, it will be impossible for Indigenous People to have confidence and trust in Canadian policymakers. This is because it enables the government to interpret the

conditions of these policies in a way that they believe is best and is also most beneficial for themselves, without any regard to Indigenous knowledge and beliefs. In addition, the absence of transparency is also a significant obstacle to meeting deadlines which leaves Indigenous communities in Canada waiting for years, unsure if these policies will even produce meaningful change. Without increased clarity in the framework, future policies will inevitably fail, and it is the Indigenous population that will suffer as a result.

Solutions to the Problem

This section will take the information that has been developed throughout the research report to explore which solution could prove to be the most effective in improving the performance of public policy relating to Indigenous population. After a thorough analysis of existing policies and the results that they have produced, it is clear that the most common issues within the policies are caused by differing ideologies, a lack of political will, and vague government responses. Therefore, this section will focus on incorporating Indigenous methodologies and ways of knowing, as well as increasing transparency within the political framework as a potential solution. It is predicted that these alternatives will produce the most effective results in the future.

Incorporate Indigenous Methodologies

A big part of producing a solution to the problem is to recognize the difference in beliefs, systems, and ways of knowing between the government and Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Robert P. Shepherd and Katherine A.H Graham assert this by emphasizing the importance of evaluating government policy and programs to make a meaningful change

(2020). Throughout their analysis, they find that any sign of improvement is limited due to the dominance of the “Westernized post-positivist approach” (Shepherd & Graham, 2020). If successful reconciliation were to happen, non-Indigenous evaluators must understand the difference between ontology and epistemology in Indigenous contexts and other contexts (Shepherd & Graham, 2020). For instance, in the Western context of ontology and epistemology, there is a core belief that knowledge is understood individually and is considered superior. The conveyance of this knowledge is also on an individual basis (Shepherd & Graham, 2020). While in contrast, in the Indigenous context, “knowledge is relational,” and most Indigenous ontologies value multiple understandings as reality (Shepherd & Graham, 2020). The major differences that are highlighted in the comparison supports the claim that it is nearly impossible for a Westernized policy proposal to succeed when implemented upon Indigenous Peoples.

Shawn Wilsons also highlights the importance of understanding the differences in research and evaluation between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous. He asserts that Indigenous researchers are knowledge seekers who work to progress indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing in a modern and constantly evolving context (2008). In addition, he describes the research paradigm shared by Indigenous scholars of Canada and Australia. He demonstrates how these paradigms are used in practice with respect to ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology (Wilson, 2008). Aligning with the statements of Shepherd and Graham, Wilson believes that in the Indigenous context, ontology and epistemology are based on a process of relationships that form a mutual reality, and the axiology and methodology are based on maintaining accountability to these relationships

(Wilson, 2008). Wilson's description on Indigenous research and evaluation further asserts the need for a modified approach in policy development that will accommodate to Indigenous People.

The impact that a lack of consideration for Indigenous methodologies and ways of knowing can be seen in both the section of the literature review focused on the Indigenous housing crisis, as well as in the policy analysis in Chapter 3. As stated by Wilson, the Indigenous research paradigm focuses on relationships that form mutual realities and maintaining accountability to those relationships. These differences are the exact reason as to why a Western approach is not suitable for Indigenous issues. The failure to co-develop policies with Northern Indigenous communities are the exact reason as to why the policies do not produce positive results. It is no coincidence that Christensen's article analyzes the impact of Western policies on Northern remote communities who are also the exact communities who's housing conditions worsened in the 2021 Census (Statistics Canada, 2022).

The statements by Shepherd, Graham, and Wilson lead us to believe that a solution that can improve future results with reconciliation is to find a middle ground within policy-making strategies. To do so, the federal government must collaborate with Indigenous Peoples from all communities to develop a research and development strategy that can be satisfactory for both parties. This includes conducting specific research to keep track of the improvements made in the National Housing Strategy, as well as ensuring that enough funds are received as originally planned in order to allow Indigenous communities to exercise their right to self-government when tackling the housing crisis. This alternative has the potential to make an enormous impact on future policies because it is Indigenous Peoples that strive to develop and establish a

research design and plan of action that contributes to and highlights their self-determination. A major reason for this is that Indigenous Peoples think and interpret the world in a vastly different way due to their differing experiences, culture, and values in comparison to non-Indigenous Peoples (Wilson, 2008)

On the other hand, it is also warned that within this process of indigenizing Western methodologies, many researchers were careful to ensure they maintained a Western stream of influence to some degree in the development process to avoid any form of marginalization towards the Indigenous paradigm (Wilson, 2008). In addition, alternative methodologies should be used not only within policy reform but also when reviewing a policy's performance. Since many issues within the policy resulted from a lack of cooperation with Indigenous representatives in the policy-making process, this solution could potentially create meaningful change.

A fair and cooperative framework that could potentially aid in developing an approach that includes the methodologies of both parties is the idea proposed in the 1996 Final Report of the Canadian Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. The proposal called for the development of an Aboriginal House of Representatives that would work alongside Parliament (Canada, 1996). In addition, it was proposed that the House of Representatives could have the power to initiate legislation and veto any government legislation that could potentially affect Indigenous People (Canada, 1996). The proposal was not implemented or seriously debated at the time (Canada 1996). However, by re-evaluating and reconsidering implementing it into the current political framework, it could potentially prevent any aspects of a policy from passing that can be deemed unfavorable or unsatisfactory to the Indigenous population. Focusing on an

alternative approach to the development of policies and law concerning Indigenous Peoples could create a solution for numerous issues that have been left unaddressed for years. With proper and respected Indigenous representation and involvement, it would ultimately allow for their voices and concerns to be met with revisions that they believe would produce meaningful change. Instead of a modified version of this that is dominated by the decisions of policymakers who are unaffected by these problems to remain paramount.

Reform on Policies that Lack Transparency

While the proposal to develop an integrated framework for policy development and implementation has the potential to make momentous change in various policies, this paper proposes that in addition to the revisions, there must be increased transparency in both future policies and research. The policy analysis suggests that a lack of transparency was one of the main reasons that the already-developed plans failed. This ultimately resulted in broken promises and widespread uncertainty for the future of Indigenous Peoples and their communities. The absence of a clear and concise plan partnered with reliable data led to disorganization in the process of achieving the goals, longer timelines than anticipated, and gave ability to the Canadian government to interpret laws affecting Indigenous communities in a way *they* think is best. In order to improve the performance of these policies and achieve reconciliation, there must be a commitment to complete transparency.

Limitations to the Research

Although the problem has been identified and thoroughly examined, it is essential to mention the visible limitations of the research that has been done up until this point. A policy

analysis was used as the methodology to support the research objectives. The results successfully confirm that government policy failure is the main problem and identifies three variables that cause these failures. However, the sample size of the analysis is problematic. On the one hand, the policies examined in the study on the housing crisis are recent, confirming that these variables continue to affect policy outcomes in the present day. It also provided substantial evidence to support the main findings of this paper. However, on the other hand, the use of a larger sample size within the policy analysis section in future studies will be able to further strengthen the evidence that while the Canadian government uses policy to achieve reconciliation, it has failed to create meaningful change within an appropriate timeline. A larger sample size will also be able to potentially uncover additional variables that act as an obstacle for a policy's success.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

In the present day, reconciliation is a duty that must become a top priority for the Canadian government to accomplish. The decades of discrimination and abuse have resulted in long-lasting effects of inter-generational trauma, inequality, and injustice that Indigenous Peoples of Canada have been living with for years. Over the past years, the Canadian government has utilized public policy as a mechanism for achieving reconciliation. However, the evidence provided within the literature review and policy analysis suggest that there are major gaps within the development and implementation process. The literature review and policy analysis both suggest that there are numerous flaws that the Canadian government must address within its policy framework. The literature review suggested that the absence of meaningful engagement and an inclusive alternative approach has negatively impacted policies results in the past. The literature also suggests that while policy was used to address the housing crisis, there is still much to be done in order to produce significant results. The inefficacy of the governments use of policy is additionally confirmed through the responses from Indigenous communities and the statistical data provided by Statistics Canada on a range of factors such as discrimination, violence, employment, and education. These sources also assert that there is still a major inequality gap between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population.

By using the literature review and recent data on the Indigenous housing crisis and the governments use of policy, the policy analysis in chapter 3 confirms that while the government has shown increased efforts in achieving reconciliation, there are major issues within the policy framework that cause for these policies to fail. The potential causes discovered throughout the

policy analysis are a lack of political will, the Canadian government's failure to understand the Indigenous ways of knowing and methodologies, and finally, a lack of transparency within the policy framework. While there are significant flaws within the governments framework, it is important to acknowledge the progress that has been made on participating in meaningful engagement and co-developing policies that include Indigenous methodologies and ways of knowing. However, the existing policies developed to address the housing crisis suggests that there is still a lack of political will in addressing ongoing problems and reforming certain aspects of policies. There were also flaws within the government's efforts in co-developing and including Indigenous methodologies since it acted on multiple occasions without informing Indigenous representatives. The government also left many Indigenous communities without a solution or adequate housing strategy. Finally, the analysis confirms that the government has no intentions in developing a transparent plan that will produce a positive outcome and will hold them accountable to their responsibilities in reconciling with Indigenous Peoples. Although the government continues to make massive promises, they manage to avoid most responsibility by creating a vague outline for timelines, goals, and funding, which ultimately results in most plans remaining unfinished. Overall, the research asserts that there are major issues within the policy framework, and these problems are mostly caused by the three variables that have been identified.

While there are existing limitations to the research, such as a small sample size for the policy analysis, this report developed potential solutions to these policy failures. One of them is modifying the current Westernized strategies and methodologies to includes the methods and worldviews of Indigenous Peoples. An essential part of reconciliation is forming a relationship

with mutual respect and cooperation. By creating a compromise to the current developmental process, there is increased potential for Indigenous Peoples to see meaningful change in the coming years. The other suggestion states that there must be an increased effort to revise and develop policies with full transparency to ensure that there is both equality and justice for Indigenous Peoples. In conclusion, although the use of public policy has produced positive outcomes in some aspects, the variables identified act as a massive barrier towards effective policymaking and implementation. It is believed that in order for the Indigenous housing conditions to improve and for meaningful reconciliation to occur, the next step for the government is to re-evaluate its approach toward its policymaking and implementation process in accordance with the recommendations and critiques from the Indigenous Population.

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