Indigenous Genocide by Shame:

A Path to Indigenous Self Determination and Success

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Introduction

Closing the economic gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada is an issue, not only for Indigenous people, but for all Canadians. Fiscal Realities Economists prepared an economic analysis titled "Reconciliation: Growing Canada's Economy by $27.7 Billion" for the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board which outlines these economic gaps.[1] These gaps include, but are not limited to, employment rate ("9.1% below the non-Indigenous rate"), labour force participation ("4.9% [...] below the rate among non-Indigenous people"), annual income ("27.5% below that of non-Indigenous people") and high school ("18.5% [...] below the non-Indigenous rate") and university completion rates ("15.6% [...] [below] non-Indigenous Canadians").[2] The authors of this analysis indicated that Indigenous people need equivalent "education and training as non-Indigenous people," and that, once this is accomplished, the gaps that exist would diminish.[3] The authors acknowledge they did not "take into account additional barriers potentially faced by Indigenous Canadians such as systemic racism and different social and cultural norms."[4]

A common form of systemic racism that exists for ethno-cultural minority groups (i.e. immigrants, etc.) is the racial exclusion from the labour-market.[5] Yet in the UK, ethno-cultural minorities make "up 5.8% of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)," and "contribute at

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[1] Fiscal Realities Economists, "Reconciliation: Growing Canada's Economy of $27.7 Billion," Prepared For *The National Aboriginal Economic Development Board,* (2016): 5.

[2] Fiscal Realities Economists, "Reconciliation," 3.

[3] Ibid., 5.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Monder Ram and Trevor Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK: a review of research and policy developments," *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 26. (2008): 355-356; Catherine L. Wang and Levent Altinay, "Social embeddedness, entrepreneurial orientation and firm growth in ethnic minority small businesses in the UK," *International Small Business Journal* 30, no. 1, (2010): 4; Ken Clark and Stephen Drinkwater, "Recent trends in minority ethnic entrepreneurship in Britain," *International Small Business Journal* 28, no.2, (2010): 136.

least £15 billion to the UK economy per year."[6] This paper explores the strategies non-Indigenous ethno-cultural minority groups utilize in order to cope with this racial exclusion, and the barriers that prevent Indigenous nations from employing such coping strategies.

The Impact of Social Capital onto Entrepreneurship

At least three studies suggest that non-Indigenous ethno-cultural minority groups in neoliberal and anglosphere countries are inclined to embrace entrepreneurship in order to boost themselves into professional tiers of the society.[7] Ethno-cultural minorities in the UK get this boost into entrepreneurship through a concept known as social capital.[8] Social capital is a form of capital that offers "the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations."[9] These relationships, in turn, provide resources that help these groups cope with their exclusion from the labour market.[10] These resources of social capital typically involve a "network of trusted individuals [...] information sharing, recognition and role modelling."[11] Social capital is a concept heavily researched, and in particular, Francis Fukuyama explains that social capital thrives under conditions in which there is high trust within the nation.[12]

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[6] Ram and Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK: a review of research and policy developments," 352; Ken Clark, "Recent trends in minority ethnic entrepreneurship in Britain," *International Small Business Journal* 28, no.2, (2010): 136.

[7] Ram and Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK: a review of research and policy developments," 355-357; Wang, "Social embeddedness, entrepreneurial orientation and firm growth in ethnic minority small businesses in the UK," 4; Clark, "Recent trends in Minority ethnic entrepreneurship in Britain," 137.

[8] Wang, "Social embeddedness, entrepreneurial orientation and firm growth in ethnic minority small businesses in the UK," 3, 14; Ram and Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK: a review of research and policy developments," 355.

[9] James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988), quoted in Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues & the Creation of Prosperity*, (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 10.

[10] Ram and Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK: a review of research and policy developments," 355.

[11] Ram and Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK," 355.

[12] Fukuyama, *Trust*, 26-27.

Christian Welzel, Ronald Inglehard and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, authoring "The theory of human development: A cross-cultural analysis," posits that there are three key events that bring about democracy within a nation: (1) socioeconomic development which can help facilitate (2) societal value change, which can then help stabilize or promote: (3) democratic institutions within that nation.[13] The second event, societal value changes, are of particular importance to this paper because they are interpersonal in nature (as is social capital) and will help make sense of where Indigenous people are experiencing roadblocks in accumulating social capital. The societal values are oriented toward one of two modes: emancipative orientation, or conformity orientation.[14]

The authors describe conformity value orientation to be a societal condition in which the citizens are distrustful of each other due to a competitive environment created by poor socioeconomic conditions.[15] "Conformity" is used because the theory suggests an environment where "group discipline [rules, protocols, etc.], social control, hierarchy, moral rigidity and strong authority" spur due to a survival need to conform to a group or authority that can provide resources.[16] When socioeconomic conditions are favourable, there is more human choice and human autonomy, and when this happens, it is suggested that the cultural zone will experience a value change from conformity value orientation to emancipative value orientation.[17]

When citizens have more wealth they will begin to value the feeling of choice and autonomy that wealth accumulation brings.[18] "Trust in people" as a value is found often with

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[13]" Christian Welzel, Inglehart, Ronald, Klingemann, Hans-Dieter, "The Theory of Human Development: a cross cultural analysis," *European Journal of Political Research* 42, (2003): 341-342.

[14] Welzel et al, "The Theory of Human Development, 342.

[15] Ibid., 347.

[16] Ibid., 348.

[17] Ibid., 341-342.

[18] Ibid.

societies that are oriented towards emancipation value orientation.[19] Another strong value is "inclination to civic protest" and "liberty aspirations" which help motivate a people to disrupt any institution within their society that hinders their ability to continue to experience choice and autonomy in their lives.[20] In a larger context, this can bring about "law abiding elite behavior" from those in power, thus dismantling authoritarian tendencies because that reliance on authority and hierarchy for resources is no longer present.[21] UK ethno-cultural minority groups do not have the power to effectively alter the political institutions they reside under (much like Indigenous peoples in Canada) due to the nature of being a minority group and the limited power that this condition brings, and so the third piece of Human Development Theory (the establishment of democratic institutions through collective pressure onto political elites) does not apply to minority groups within these countries. However, when that prosperity exists, non-Indigenous ethno-cultural minority groups will instead coordinate in another way: through social capital and entrepreneurship to boost themselves into professional tiers of society, all of which require "trust in people" (which helps with the development of social capital) and desires for continued feelings of autonomy (which is dependent on the prosperity that entrepreneurship brings).[22]

The above discussion gives ethno-cultural minority groups context for the successes they experience. These groups are leaders in entrepreneurship, using social capital as their key to

[19] Ibid., 354.
[20] Ibid., 348, 354.
[21] Ibid., 344, 348.
[22] Ram and Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK," 355; Welzel et al, "The Theory of Human Development, 354.

success.[23] This social capital is successful when the group (or cultural zone) has high levels of trust.[24] Trust, according to Human Development Theory, is present when the cultural zone is oriented towards emancipation values, which is dependent on having high socioeconomic conditions.[25] In conclusion, in order to be successful in entrepreneurship, the socioeconomic conditions need to be high enough in order to increase trust within the community, thus supplementing entrepreneurship. This conclusion almost creates a "chicken or the egg" paradox: Indigenous people, in order to raise their socioeconomic conditions, must engage in entrepreneurship, but successful entrepreneurship first demands high socioeconomic conditions in order to be successful (because of its ability to increase trust and therefore social capital).

The implications of Historical Trauma onto Social Capital

The next area of exploration will focus on the impact that Historical Trauma has had on the socioeconomic conditions of Indigenous communities through its direct impact on the trust and social capital of these communities. This concept of Historical Trauma caused by subjugation was originally idealized from the Holocaust Survivors and those close to them.[26] Successful subjugation of a group, particularly Indigenous groups, requires four actions according to Michelle Sotero: "(1) overwhelming physical and psychological violence, (2) segregation and/or displacement, (3) economic deprivation, and (4) cultural dispossession."[27] It can be speculated that Historical Trauma altered trust for Indigenous peoples by orienting

[23] Wang, "Social embeddedness, entrepreneurial orientation and firm growth in ethnic minority small businesses in the UK," 3, 14; Ram and Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK: a review of research and policy developments," 355.

[24] Ram and Jones, "Ethnic-minority businesses in the UK: a review of research and policy developments," 355; Fukuyama, *Trust*, 26-27.

[25] Welzel et al, "The Theory of Human Development, 341-342, 354.

[26] Sotereo, "A Concept Model of Historical Trauma," 95-96.

[27] Sotereo, "A Concept Model of Historical Trauma," 99.

Indigenous cultural zones towards conformity value orientation through the "economic deprivation" piece, and although that is a part of it, researchers Steven Thibodeau and Faye North Peigan bring another element to the discussion. These researchers do not indicate that this lack of trust is due to poor socioeconomic conditions; they indicate that this lack of trust is due to *trauma*.[28]

This trauma is said to have stemmed from the residential school system.[29] In the context of Indigenous people, not only were traditional norms, customs, beliefs and practices dismantled as part of the subjugation process (i.e. cultural dispossession), but, as part of that same process, psychological and physical violence were introduced to the cultural zone in the form of shame messaging.[30] Thibodeau and Faye indicate that students learned to "build walls" as part of their experience while in the Residential School system.[31] In the "What We Have Learned" section of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Final Report, the development of distrust and shame is clearly documented through the stories that the commission collected; there are numerous testimonies of how the schools perpetuated psychological and physical violence onto the children through the way in which it socialized the children, and this process altered their relationship with trust.[32] Teasing, love withdrawal, conditional approval through the use of "treats" and other methods, using shaming language and actions to humiliate the child, etc. has

[28] Thibodeau and North Peigan, "Loss of Trust Among First Nation People," 53; Welzel et al, "The Theory of Human Development," 341-342, 348.

[29] Thibodeau and North Peigan, "Loss of Trust Among First Nation People," 53.

[30] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *What We Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation*, (Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015), 103.

[31] Thibodeau and North Peigan, "Loss of Trust Among First Nation People," 53.

[32] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *What We Have Learned,* 14, 79-80, 119, 120, 121.

left intergenerational effects of shame on indigenous communities which have altered the way in which social capital (as well as connection and relationships) is built and maintained.[33]

In literature by June Price Tangney and Ronda L. Dearing (2002) shame and guilt are "distinct emotional experiences that differ substantially along cognitive, affective and motivational dimensions."[34] Shame and guilt are "moral," "self-conscious, self referential emotions," that "are typically experienced in interpersonal contexts," and arise in "negative events that [...] are highly similar [to each other] (frequently involving moral failures or transgressions)."[35] The experience of shame is when the focus is on the self or ego of a person, whereas guilt is when the focus is on the behavior of a person.[36] The experience of shame is threatening to the ego, which then creates feelings of danger and emotional pain, events considered to be especially distressing.[37] This feeling of shame brings about a painful experience; in order to attempt to stop a painful feeling of shame, people tend to withdraw and "[blame] others (instead of the self) [which] can serve an ego-protective function."[38] This in itself is harmful to the development of relationships and the cultivation of social capital. Guilt is not a painful emotion because it does not threaten the ego, it questions the behavior that was employed, creating a sense of cognitive dissonance which is not associated with pain.[39]

The tendencies, or proneness, to use either shame or guilt during experiences of transgressions is believed to stem from early childhood development through the disciplinary

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[33] Ibid., 14, 52, 53, 59, 74, 78, 80, 100, 103, 104.
[34] June Tangney and Ronda Dearing, *Shame and Guilt*, (New York: Guildford Press, 2002), 24.
[35] Tangney and Dearing, *Shame and Guilt*, 25.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid., 5.
[38] Ibid., 18, 92.
[39] Ibid., 19.

styles.[40] These styles are employed by parental figures attempting to change behavior in the child (i.e. to discipline).[41] "Behavioral-focused" disciplinary styles, associated with the development of guilt-proneness, involve the parental figures "[accentuating] the behavior, not the person," such as criticizing the child's behavior as opposed to criticizing the child themselves (i.e. "'John you're a bad boy,'" versus "John, you did a bad thing there when you…'").[42] This style "[focuses] on the consequences for others" and "[helps] children develop reparative skills."[43]

"Person-focused disciplinary messages," associated with the development of shame-proneness, involve messaging towards children that "express disgust, tease, communicate conditional approval, and use love-withdrawal techniques."[44] This person-focused disciplinary style mirrors the disciplinary style experienced by Indigenous Residential School students as outlined by the TRC, whereby shame messaging was used to facilitate assimilation to the eurocentric dominant culture. This creates an intergenerational effect where shame-prone parents will pass that shame-proneness onto their children through the mode of "person-focused disciplinary" styles. Shame-proneness is correlated to many behavioral problems found in Indigenous communities: anxiety, depression, addictions, suicides, anger, aggression, blame, domestic violence, and issues arising in education and in the criminal justice system.[45]

The relationship between shame and relationships are well documented by these authors on shame, they explain that the "deterioration or dissolution" of relationships is linked with shame and shame experiences.[46] A concept these authors introduce is "self-oriented empathic"

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[40] Ibid., 152.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., 184.
[43] Ibid., 184.
[44] Ibid., 156.
[45] Ibid., 120, 134-137, 165.
[46] Ibid., 86.

responses which disrupts a relationship building experience called empathy.[47] Empathy is a key aspect of developing strong relationships and cooperative mindsets.[48] Empathy is the process whereby an individual is able to "take the other person's perspective," the capability to "recognize and discriminate another person's affective experience," as well as to be able to feel "a range of emotions (since empathy involves sharing another person's emotional experience)."[49] During a "self-oriented empathic" response, shame-prone individuals tend to "focus on the negative characteristics of the self" as well as how others' perceive them.[50]

Guilt, on the other hand, is understood to foster positive relationships because of how it fosters "other-oriented empathic" responses.[51] Instead of being self-conscious of how others' perceive oneself, or focusing on negative personal traits during interpersonal interactions, "other-oriented empathic" responses focus on the *other* person which then helps to effectively engage empathy, and therefore achieve positive relationship outcomes.[52]

Putting this all together, it would appear that the cultural zones of Indigenous communities struggle with employing social capital as a coping method to racial labour force exclusion because of mass self-oriented empathic responses which is a condition manifested by shame-proneness. Social capital relies heavily on relationships, and those relationships supplement entrepreneurial activity, which then increases socioeconomic conditions (as previously discussed). Historical trauma altered parental disciplinary styles in Indigenous communities by creating a mass shame-proneness in their cultural zones through modes like the

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[47] Ibid., 83-84.
[48] Ibid., 94, 79, 85-87.
[49] Norma Feshbach, "Empathy in children: Some theoretical and empirical considerations," *Counseling Psychologist* 5, no. 2 (1975) quoted in Tangney and Dearing, *Shame and Guilt*, 80.
[50] Tangney and Dearing, *Shame and Guilt*, 83.
[51] Ibid., 82.
[52] Ibid.

Residential Schools, which then created chronic self-oriented empathic responses that disrupts empathy (which is the process that helps create relationships, relationships that social capital relies on). If a person is unable to develop relationships then there is no trust that can be developed which is, again, necessary for the cultivation of social capital.

Shame-proneness must be addressed in order to rid Indigenous communities of self-oriented empathic responses. Once the intergenerational continuity of shame through person focused disciplinary style is disrupted, and guilt-proneness is established, other-oriented empathic responses will be the outcome which will then develop strong relationships within Indigenous communities, trust can be built, thereby facilitating social capital, which will then spur entrepreneurial activity. That entrepreneurial activity will then raise the socioeconomic conditions of the Indigenous community, as how other ethno-cultural minorities cope.

Conclusion

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls outlined how "colonial structures [...][in the form of] the Indian Act, the Sixties Scoop, residential schools and breaches of human and Indigenous rights, [lead] directly to the current increased rates of violence, death, and suicide in Indigenous Populations" which perpetuate the ongoing genocide that Indigenous peoples are currently experiencing in Canada.[53] This paper has demonstrated how, at the very least, mass shame-proneness, a cultural phenomenon introduced through these colonial structures, has perpetuated ongoing suffering, pain and limitations on Indigenous community prosperity and self-determination. There are two modes to explore when considering

[53] National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, "Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report," 50, National Inquiry in Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019, https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a.pdf.

how to address mass shame-proneness: (1) find a way of replacing the shame-proneness with guilt-proneness in individuals, and (2) find a way of replacing "person-focused disciplinary styles" with "behavior-focused disciplinary styles." Innovative approaches are welcomed when it comes to these two areas of addressing mass shame-proneness in Indigenous communities. This paper considers one key realm of exploration: education.

For the first mode, concerning Individual Indigenous persons who are already shame-prone, one theory of addressing this condition is proposed by researcher Dr. Brene Brown through her "Shame Resilience Theory." This theory is based on a continuum that Brown created: the continuum uses a scale from zero (0) to twelve (12).[54] To better explain the nature of this continuum, Brown breaks up the concept into four continuums with the following designations: Acknowledge Personal Vulnerability, Critical Awareness, Reaching Out, and Speaking Shame.[55] All four of these continuums are on a scale from zero (0) to three (3), with all four continuums adding up and matching the twelve (12) points of the Shame Resilience continuum.[56] In theory, as an individual raises a point on one of the explanatory continua, the overall Shame Resilience continuum raises by one point as well.[57] Brown's paper on this theory explains each scale more in depth. This theory draws from previous research done on the Relational Cultural Theory (RCT), a theory that emphasizes the importance of growing relationships as part of psychological well being.[58]

For the second mode, concerning parents who are using "person-focused disciplinary styles" with their children, one means of addressing this condition is through having parents

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[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 48.
[58] Ibid., 49.

intentionally change their parenting style to "behavior-focused disciplinary styles." Tangney and Dearing offers a few tips: (1) "accentuate the behavior, not the person," (2) "focus on the consequences for others," (3) "Help children develop reparative skills," (4) "avoid public humiliation," (5) "avoid teaching, derisive humor," and (6) "place discipline in a nurturing context."[59] These authors also go in deeper details in their research about what these look like in depth.

Regardless, both strategies are going to need to be taught, learned and employed in order to undo the effects of historical trauma in Indigenous communities. Once Indigenous communities are more guilt-prone, the ability to build trust will be available, which can then promote the cultivation of social capital within reserves and other Indigenous communities. That social capital will spur entrepreneurship and the betterment of socioeconomic conditions. Finally, the societal values will change to those which will help enhance trust and the continued building of relationships. This will create healthy nations, healthy individuals, and a new era in Indigenous self-determination and culture, all while boosting the Canadian economy at the same time.

[59] Shame and guilt 184-185.

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