STAKEHOLDER'S ROLE IN PROMOTING INCLUSION FOR MULTICULTURAL

LEARNERS: TOWARDS A MODEL FOR ONLINE EDUCATION

By

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Abstract

In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, the goal of inclusive education is to include all diverse learners in a respectful and welcoming school culture, and to provide a continuum of support and services for learners. Inclusion is a top priority for education stakeholders since the province is experiencing an increase of diverse learners. To promote inclusion, stakeholders play varied roles as they collectively function towards a common goal. This qualitative study explored specific roles of stakeholders in promoting inclusion in schools. The study also investigated how leadership promotes culturally responsive pedagogy, and then analyzed successful interventions that promote inclusion for online multicultural learners. The study was guided by critical multiculturalism and the transformative multiculturalism theoretical frameworks. My study did not aim to critique existing practices but to explore opportunities to promote inclusiveness for others to emulate. The thematic analysis of secondary data (NL policy documents) suggests that collaborative efforts are a potential way of promoting inclusion. Reviewed empirical studies showed that focusing on andragogy, learning styles, professional development of educators, and using culturally responsive pedagogies may promote inclusion in online education. These imply that collaborative efforts and use of these strategies may promote inclusive online education for multicultural learners.

Keywords: stakeholders, multiculturalism, inclusion, online education, culturally responsive pedagogy, Newfoundland and Labrador

General Summary

In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), it is necessary to include diverse learners in a respectful, welcoming, and supportive learning environment. To promote inclusion, concerned parties (stakeholders) play different roles as they work towards their goals. My qualitative study explored stakeholder roles and how academic leadership supports teaching methods that promote inclusion. I further analyzed strategies that have worked for others as they promote inclusion for online learners with different backgrounds. The study was guided by critical multiculturalism and the transformative multiculturalism theories. My study's aim was to highlight important roles and strategies that work as an example for others. My analysis of NL policy documents suggests that collaborative efforts are a potential way of promoting inclusion. Thus, collaborative roles and inclusion-based teaching and learning methods, coupled with training for educators (based on my review of some studies) can promote inclusion in online education.

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1.1 Background

Formal education plays a central role in personal growth and the socio-economic development of nations (Thomas, Rose, & Pojanapunya, 2019). Making education universally accessible is further proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26) and is consequently fostered by the Department of Education and Early Childhood, Newfoundland, and Labrador. Also, globalization has made the world a village where people with different racial and cultural identifies interact (Salavatova, Bauer, & Istrofilova, 2020). Communities, religious organizations, commercial organizations, and schools are, therefore, increasingly diverse (Burke & Hughes, 2018; Schrum, Burbank & Capps, 2007). Since one of the goals of globalization is to bridge the gap between countries and cultures (Eras, 2016), the ability of stakeholders to manage diversity for success in different spheres of life, such as education, is imperative. Diversity, in this context, is defined as having different people with different cultural, racial, tribal, and religious identities in a group involved in social activity (Goold, Craig & Coldwell, 2007). A class of students, for example, is said to be diverse when it contains individuals from different countries, ethnic groups, and tribes. Even so, cultural differences between people are the core of diversity because what makes people from different countries and ethnic groups different is their respective cultures (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2019; Pritchard & Hughes, 2017).

Differences in behavior and worldview are the defining attribute of diversity in social groups such as a class of multiculturally diverse students (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2019). As such, teachers and academic institutions require the ability to coordinate different views and behaviors of learners to manage diversity and to meet learner needs effectively. The ability of teachers and academic institutions to educate diverse learners is now more crucial for a couple of reasons.

First, diversity of learners has increased significantly as many countries implement policies for knowledge exchange with other countries and make it easier for students from other countries to benefit from their unique educational system (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2019; Liu, Baker, Milman & George, 2014). Canada, the United States (US), and the United Kingdom (UK) are some of the many countries that annually admit international students into their universities. Second, online education has become the ideal option for working professionals across the world, owing mainly to the reluctance of employers to grant their employees study leave with pay (Vonderwell & Zachariah, 2005). Thirdly, many working professionals try to keep their jobs whiles enrolled in an online program (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2019).. Last but not least, pandemics like COVID-19 has caused many schools to close down and offer some form of online or remote learning.

A global increase in demand for online education over the years is a significant cause of the diversity of online classes (Vonderwell & Zachariah, 2005). While the diversity of campus-based classes continues to increase for the above reasons, online classes are more diverse because students from different jurisdictions and cultures are getting enrolled. Baltes (2010) corroborates this view and confirms that online classes are increasingly more culturally diverse than campus-based classes. With growing increases in the number of diverse learners taking online courses, it is critical to promote inclusiveness in learning environments, especially in North America (Rapp, Gülbahar & Adnan, 2016).

Effective online education requires the right pedagogy developed by the schools and applied by educators. Currently, many schools around the world are pioneering the application of innovative pedagogies that promote the inclusiveness of students or learners (Pritchard & Hughes, 2017; Shead, 2019). More so, there is much that researchers, educators, and academic leadership can learn from such innovative, inclusive interventions.

Hinton's (2007) view that online education may be inclusive from an instructional point of view, but the pedagogies applied may be limited in bridging cultural differences between learners. Several researchers (Mitchell, 2015; Royal & Gibson, 2019) have commended Canadian educational institutions for aligning existing instructional strategies with the increasing diversity of their classes. Thus, it is necessary to explore interventions that promote inclusion and to investigate what others have successfully used to modify existing instructional approaches into culturally inclusive pedagogies.

The province of Newfoundland and Labrador is a relatively small multicultural province in Canada with diverse online and on-campus learners. Diversity is notably a key concern to stakeholders. In this and similar settings, analyzing policy documents would play a key role in influencing a change in educational pedagogies for online higher education. As such, my study explored pedagogical considerations from policy documents for leadership and empirical findings from related literature. This study did not aim to critique existing practices but to explore opportunities for enhancing the inclusiveness of existing pedagogies for other jurisdictions to emulate.

Newfoundland and Labrador is a province in Canada with diverse learners in schools; and statistical data available suggests that these trends will continue to increase. There are several agencies and individuals responsible for promoting inclusiveness in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. For this study, I referred to those responsible for making education inclusive as 'stakeholders.' An understanding of the various roles of these stakeholders will reveal how they function so that others can emulate their endeavors. Conceptualizing the implementation of strategies to make education more inclusive serves as the foundational basis for developing a probable model for inclusion in online education. It was prudent to explore

provincial-wide policy documentation that is guiding strategies used in making education in Newfoundland and Labrador more inclusive. Furthermore, appreciating the policy documentation from a leadership point of view was instrumental in identifying how leadership functioned with other stakeholders to promote inclusion in schools.

As such, my study explored the role of stakeholders in promoting inclusiveness in schools and then examined inclusive pedagogical strategies for multicultural online learners.

1.2 Problem Statement

The goal of inclusive education in Newfoundland and Labrador is to include all diverse learners into a respectful and welcoming school culture and to provide a continuum of support and services to learners (EECD, 2020). To ensure the attainment of these goals, the Premier's Task Force (made up of academic leadership as well as other stakeholders) drew up policies to promote inclusiveness in schools among other core priorities. Inclusive education is essential because the province has increasing numbers of diverse learners in schools. For instance, the number of immigrants arriving each year is growing and almost doubling in number - from 546 in 2007 to 1,190 in 2016 (AESL-GOV. NL, 2020). Consequently, there will be increasing numbers of children in early childhood programs and K-12 schools, who come from different countries and cultures, and these students will require much support from the province's education system (AESL-GOV NL, 2020). More so, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused schools to close and adapt remote and online learning for diverse learners. With these underlying conditions and accompanying policies to make face-to-face education more inclusive, it was essential to translate them for multicultural learners in online learning environments.

In emulating the current efforts to make education more inclusive and then translate them to online learning environments, my study first explored the roles of stakeholders and how they

function to promote inclusion. It was because places that are beginning to adopt inclusive strategies may not clearly understand the role of stakeholders. Such a situation results in their limitations in efficiently using pedagogic strategies to promote inclusion (Young, 2017). Second, this study explored specific roles of academic leadership in making education more culturally responsive to multicultural learners. The second objective supports the claim that academic leadership influences successes in implementing educational policies (Viennet & Pont, 2017). More so, it is grounded in the reasoning that pedagogic strategies are appropriate in promoting inclusion in schools (Bigatti et al., 2012). Third, the study identified lessons and interventions that help the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies among online educators. I investigated the third objective with support from research findings suggesting that merely identifying interventions is not sufficient alone to achieve success in working cross-culturally with diverse students or their parents (Bottiani et al., 2018). Thus, the need to focus on successful interventions that emerged from empirical studies.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

In addressing the above research problem, the study specifically investigated the following objectives:

i. To identify stakeholders responsible for making education inclusive and their various roles.

ii. To investigate how academic leadership can make education more culturally responsive to multicultural learners.

iii. To explore lessons and interventions that promote the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies among online educators.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study:

i.   Who is responsible for making education inclusive for multicultural learners?

ii.   How can academic leadership make education more culturally responsive to multicultural learners?

iii.   What are lessons and interventions that promote the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies among online educators?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Research findings from this study may ultimately promote a learner's success in and outside the school, since multicultural teaching prepares students for working and living in an increasingly diverse environment (Bigatti et al., 2012; Gaff, 1992; Morey & Kitano, 1997). Subsequently, learning in an inclusive learning environment can enhance the learning experience in a 'safe classroom' since it increases a learner's sense of connection with other learners (Gay, 2000). Furthermore, inclusive classrooms, where educators handle multiculturalism well, tend to promote a sense of belonging for learners with diverse backgrounds (Hausmann, Schoefield, & Woods, 2007). Wlodkowski (1995) predicted that colleges of education would evolve to mini-models of cultural diversity on their own, where teachers pursuing professional development (PD) should be allowed to acquire multicultural experiences on their own. The author describes this as 'making fish aware of the water.'

The pedagogical focus of this study is crucial since research shows that some faculty only rely on strategies that involve the careful selection of readings with different contexts for their students. The selected content may duly highlight examples from diverse backgrounds; however, a robust pedagogical approach is necessary to successfully implement such strategies (Bigatti et

al., 2012). This study, through its unique literature review, extends literature, and serves as a source of information for future researchers and policymakers as they develop policies for online multicultural learners.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The specific objectives of the study included identifying academic leadership and agencies involved promoting inclusiveness in schools. It also consists of exploring lessons and interventions that contribute to promoting culturally responsive pedagogies among online educators.

The geographical setting of the study is the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, because of increasing levels of enrolments by multicultural learners.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study has five chapters. The first chapter comprises a background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, the scope of the study, and limitations. The second chapter presents a review of related studies and the study's conceptual and theoretical frameworks. The third chapter is the research methodology comprising the research design, study setting, population, sampling method and sample size, instrumentation, data collection procedure, research ethics, and data analysis technique. In the fourth chapter, I present and discuss the findings of the study. The fifth chapter presents conclusions, recommendations, and future research directions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

My study explored the role of stakeholders in promoting inclusiveness in schools and then examined inclusive pedagogical strategies for multicultural online learners. In this chapter, I provide a review of the literature on this topic. The chapter comprises three main parts. The first part presents the definition of critical concepts in line with the research objectives, namely multiculturalism and inclusiveness in education. The second part contains the study's theoretical framework, whereas the third part includes the conceptual model developed for the study.

2.1 The Concept of Multicultural Education

Human societies are increasingly diverse in terms of beliefs and the general way of life (Ramos et al., 2019). For instance, people often put on different identities in a typical society that reflects which religious principles and ideologies they uphold. It is rightly so because of racial, tribal, and religious affiliations influence individual aspirations, interests, and preferences. The pluralistic nature of society and the desire of every individual to live in harmony with their identity relates to the concept of multiculturalism (Childs, 2020). In this context, a pluralistic society refers to a group of people characterized by different races, tribes, beliefs, and ways of life (Graham, Cagiltay, Lim, Craner & Duffy, 2001).

In contrast, one's identity refers to their race, tribe, or religious affiliation that the individual publicly declares (Karatas & Oral, 2015). The concept of cultural pluralism is relevant in promoting inclusiveness in schools. Cultural pluralism suggests that people do not choose their ancestry and that everyone is valuable in society; thus, it is appropriate to perceive individuals in an egalitarian view rather than an inferior or superior view (Kallen & Chapman, 1956; Larke, 2013). Along similar lines, educators should acknowledge that multicultural learners in a classroom did not choose their ancestry. With educators appreciating the concept of

cultural pluralism, they are a step closer to making their classes more inclusive to diverse learners (Larke, 2013).

Multiculturalism is the process or phenomenon whereby a society or social organization deals with and manages the cultural diversity of its members (Hinton, 2007). Jan, Lacina, and Sowa (2005) define multiculturalism as the process by which people deal with the diversity of their cultures at the national and community levels. Given the above definitions, it is understandable that multiculturalism concerns a system of mechanisms by which society manages the successful coexistence of its various cultures. As such, the process focuses on ensuring that peace, mutual benefit, and cohesion exist between people and sub-groups despite their different cultural affiliations and identities. This assertion is consistent with the thinking of Mccalman (2014) that multiculturalism progresses on the assumption that society benefits from diversity through the cohesive coexistence of different cultures.

From another perspective, multiculturalism is a concept that refers to a situation in which all the different cultural or racial groups in a society have equal rights and opportunities, and none of them is ignored and marginalized (du Plessis & Bisschoff, 2007). In an educational environment, therefore, multiculturalism refers to a situation in which students and educators have equal rights and opportunities. Raţă (2015) reasoned that multicultural education means giving equal privileges and rights to students and teachers from different cultures and ensuring that services provided by the academic institution satisfy all and do not marginalize any culture or race. Being able to manage and teach multicultural classes to the satisfaction of those involved (e.g., students) is consequently a hallmark of an effective educational system.

At the institutional level, multiculturalism may serve as a necessary way to succeed or realize the goals of a social organization characterized by different cultures. Researchers opine

that an educational establishment that typically provides educational services to people from different cultural backgrounds. 'Educational multiculturalism,' a term increasingly conceptualized among educational researchers (Kim, 2011), is a derivative of the original concepts of multiculturalism referring to how educational institutions ensure cohesion and mutual benefit (of institutional systems and processes) between people having different cultural identities (Keith, Mancera, Mendoza & Bennett, 2003, p. 63). The concept also concerns a system of principles and strategies by which an educational institution ensures cultural equity as well as cohesion between students regardless of their cultural identities (Kim, 2011). This terminology provides a basis for understanding what multicultural education is.

Researchers widely define multiculturalism as a form of education and teaching that recognizes the values, beliefs, and perspectives of students from different cultures (Mccalman, 2014). In this regard, 'different cultures' refer to having students or people from different countries, tribes, races, and jurisdictions that have a unique way of life (Kim, 2011). Other commentators (Vita, 2001; Yılmaz, 2016) agree that 'multicultural education' is an adjectival phrase describing how well an educational institution develops its pedagogy and administrative process to ensure that it harmonizes and equally benefit students from different cultural backgrounds. A multicultural educational institution thus refers to an academic institution that succeeds in providing the full inclusion of students with diverse cultural backgrounds in its traditional processes of teaching and learning. Similarly, the term refers to an academic institution that avoids or at least minimizes cultural stereotyping and marginalization in its different ways of engaging with students, including teaching, provision of learning opportunities and resources, admission and recruitment, awards, and titles allocation (Young, 2017).

Multicultural education is not only important because of its role in avoiding racial discrimination but also because it has become a way to maximize the effectiveness of teaching and learning (Kim, 2011). Research has shown that educational institutions that apply effective multicultural instructional procedures produce more productive graduates than those who do not apply such methods (Childs, 2020; Hinton, 2007; Young, 2017). The evidence is supported by the idea that 'effective management of international students' (a group assumed to be multicultural) is a criterion applied by all reputable university ranking organizations such as Time Higher Education and QS University Ranking to rank the world's best universities (Barber & Barber, 2012). So, the delivery of multicultural education is a way the university can enhance its global reputation.

As a highly multicultural society, Canada has the opportunity to advance its educational system by ensuring that its education is culturally inclusive. Canada had done well in making education inclusive for multicultural learners; and, other countries can learn from their successes (Miled, 2019). I expand on this assertion in the next section, where I discuss multicultural education in the Canadian context.

2.2 Multicultural Education in the Canadian Context

A policy framework called *EDST 647 Critical Multicultural Education in Canada* embodies Canada's multicultural education system (Childs, 2020; Miled, 2019). Put in place in 1971 (Miled, 2019), this system of education is recognized and accepted by Canadians as a de facto way to allow the cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity of the new approach to teaching and learning. The policy was developed and introduced because of Canada's growing multicultural communities and increasing demand for online (distance) education (Mccalman, 2014). Within the framework, all individuals have the freedom to preserve the diversity of their cultural

heritage and secure their cultural identity as learners or students. To this end, an expectation of educational institutions is to design their inclusive strategies to incorporate all cultures. Educational institutions and their governing bodies administer the preceding policy in several ways.

The implementation of the above policy begins with the design of national curricula, whereby the curricula at all levels cover all cultures (Kim, 2011). As the case is in every country, they design different curricula for varying levels of education. For the tertiary level, curricula bridges theory and practice as a way to prepare individuals for employment and job markets (Childs, 2020; Kim, 2011). To make curricula inclusive of all cultures, educators could pay attention to classroom participation by all students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds. This approach makes classroom participation impartial, free, and fair. That is, students from different cultural backgrounds can participate in classroom activities without being barred by the educator or the nature of the teaching process. Moreover, they design lessons and modules to cover every cultural heritage in Canada, with different designated parts of a curriculum designed to reflect the significance of one or more cultures known to characterize Canada's population (Miled, 2019).

Furthermore, multicultural education in the Canadian context draws primarily on teaching styles in the sense that teaching pedagogies are the literal ways educators interpret multicultural curricula. Pedagogy is the method and practice of teaching an academic subject or theoretical concept (Baltes, 2010, p. 294). Thus, a multicultural pedagogy is well-equipped to bridge cultures in the teaching and learning process. In the context of Canada and possibly other countries, a multicultural pedagogy is a subset of a multicultural curriculum whereby the latter is a direct translation of the former (Baltes, 2010; Childs, 2020; Dewsbury & Brame, 2019). It is rightly so because pedagogies are developed based on curricula, whereas classroom lessons and

coursework are designed based on the pedagogy. As such, the role of pedagogy within the context of Canada's multicultural education system is recognizing a class of learners as a heterogeneous group of people that have the same knowledge needs (Miled, 2019). With this understanding, institutions design pedagogies in such a way as to encourage all students to participate in classroom activities.

Another feature of multicultural education in Canada is the alignment of conducts with relevant policies (Childs, 2020), which means that stakeholders should uphold the principles of multicultural education as enshrined in the preceding policy. Educators should adhere to codes of conduct in teaching multicultural classes while students should also be culturally intelligent. Typically, teachers are provided with PD to understand the scope and nature of Canada's multicultural education landscape as a way of enabling them to carry out their duties in harmony with multicultural educational policy provisions (Han et al., 2014). The codes and conducts of students, which focus on cultural, racial, and tribal tolerance (Dewsbury & Brame, 2019), are often disseminated through prospectuses and admission letters (Miled, 2019). Thus, students could desist from any act of racial or cultural stereotyping.

A growing aspect of multicultural education in Canada is online teaching and learning. According to Miled (2019), online education is either partial or complete. Per Canada's multicultural education policy, partial online education is necessary and requires some credit hours of online learning (Pritchard & Hughes, 2017). In this regard, students should complete some assignments (including participation in group discussions) in an online learning environment. This exercise contributes 20% of the total number of credits associated with the online module (Miled, 2019).

On the other hand, a complete online education requires most or all learning activities are completed online. While online education was promoted in Canada primarily to increase access to formal education (Miled, 2019), it has become a central way to facilitate multiculturalism logically owing to the multicultural nature of online classes. Within the context of Canada's multicultural education system; therefore, online education is a platform or stage for implementing underlying policies and principles towards the inclusiveness of all cultures.

2.3 Review of Related Studies on Multiculturalism

2.3.1 Meta-Ethnographic Review of Multicultural Education Professional Development (PD)

In a study by Parkhouse, Lu, and Massaro (2019), the researchers conducted a meta-ethnographic and systematic literature review of 40 articles related to multicultural education-focused PD. The purpose is to gain a deeper understanding of the forms and characteristics of these PD initiatives that leverages the teachers' self-efficacy and success whiles working with multicultural students.

The findings from Parkhouse, Lu, and Massaro's (2019) meta-ethnographic literature review show that there was an inconsistency among the approaches used by researchers and PD developers for successful PD programs.

The researchers came up with two sets of questions, which prior research did not address. These are as follows:

> First, how can ME PD both challenge teachers to reflect on inequities within education while also recognizing that some teachers may meet such discussions with defensiveness, reluctance to change, or skepticism about the importance of ME? Second, how can providers strike a balance between providing specific knowledge

about students' cultures—for instance, through partnering with community

members—and guarding against promoting stereotypes or broad generalizations?

(Parkhouse, Lu & Massoaro, 2019, p. 451).

Parkhouse, Lu, and Massaro (2019) further revealed that findings from other researchers

caution against the assumption that raising the awareness of diversity and other inequities will

naturally lead to transformed teaching practices. Nevertheless, that assumption goes without

specific guidance on how teachers can establish relationships with cultural assets in their

curriculum (Brown & Crippen, 2016; Parkhouse, Lu, & Massaro, 2019).

The researchers suggest that future research should explore how PD providers navigate

tensions or challenges that stem from resistance to discussing difficult topics related to social

justice.

2.4 Definition and Background of Leadership

Leadership has been around ever since people started to interact (Gegoire & Arendt,

2004). Although leadership is a human quality, biologists also found it in many animal species –

from low-level vertebrates to higher-level primates (Bass, 1990). Shifting the lens to social

institutions, leadership is a well-researched phenomenon in the behavioral sciences for the past

50 years (Parris & Peachey, 2013; Yahaya & Ebrahim, 2016). In these 50 years, researchers

sometimes attribute leadership to the success of organizations. My review of the literature shows

that three core factors may influence a learner's achievement. These are pedagogic practices,

guardian involvement, and academic leadership. As such, leadership is tied to school

performance, even though there may be limited empirical evidence to support this claim

(Sebastian et al., 2019). In a study by Sebastian et al. (2019), researchers used a principal's self-

rating to construct typologies of effectiveness and then compared these relationships to student

achievement. Their research findings showed that principals perceive their strengths (or weaknesses) that may impact student performance. Thus, their findings join the call to focus on leadership and place it high among the list of school reform priorities.

Before I define leadership for my study, I duly acknowledge that there are many definitions of leadership. One such definition of leadership emerged from a consensus committee of representatives from 62 countries. They defined leadership as the "ability to influence, motivate, and enable others as they contribute to the effectiveness and success of their respective organizations" (House et al., 2004, p. 4). In that definition, the authors provide functional expectations and consequential outcomes for leadership. Other researchers (Barrow 1977; Plsek & Wilson, 2001) towed a slightly different path by defining leadership as a skill used to influence others in an organizational setting, to work towards common goals enthusiastically. I appreciate that the authors highlight the extrinsic motivation in their definition of leadership, regardless of the limited nature of how leaders create these goals. In addressing this concern, BanutuGomez and BanutuGomez (2007) believe leaders create and share a vision for their organization to work together towards this vision. In all these definitions, the authors emphasize the interrelationship between leadership and organizational effectiveness, as well as how relationships occur through individual interactions with others. These underlying themes influenced my definition of leadership as it pertains to this study.

For this study, my research adopts an integrative approach to defining leadership. As per my review of different perspectives and definitions of leadership, I define leadership as people (or a group of people) who develop, equip, and influence their following, pursuing common goals that advance a vision for the organization. My definition influenced my discussions on

leadership roles for promoting inclusion in schools. Even though, my definition of leadership emerges from a comparatively general approach, I mainly make reference to academic leadership in the learning environment. I use 'leadership' and 'academic leadership' interchangeable, however, my subsequent discussions specifically reflect academic leadership roles, which is in line with my study's context.

In the next subsection, I describe leadership theories and explain an ideal theory for my study.

2.4.1 Leadership Theories

My review of literature revealed different leadership theories that researchers used in various contexts. I selected the constructivist leadership theory to guide my discussions on leadership. Subsequently, I describe the theories that I came across and eventually justified my choice of constructivist leadership.

2.4.1.1 Trait (Great Man) Theory

Early theorists opined that 'born leaders' had specific physical and personality traits that set them apart from non-leaders. Recent researchers have revived interests in trait theory and focused mostly on personality and biological traits (Judge & Bono, 2000).

Trait theorists identified two key traits in identifying leaders (Ekvall & Arvonen, 1991). The first emergent trait relied on hereditary characteristics like height, attractiveness, and intelligence, popular in political leadership discourse (Caprara & Silvester, 2018). In the 2016 U.S. presidential election campaign, the electorates profiled candidates based on their physical characteristics, including their stature and physical appearance (Visser, Book & Volk, 2016). The second trait for this theory relates to self-confidence and the overall effectiveness of an individual. Such theories are suitable for research that seeks the biological origins or patterning

of individuals in leadership. It remains popular in politics and seen when voters in the United

Kingdom characterized candidates with characteristics like 'decisive,' 'robotic' and 'intelligent.'

The trait theory is inapplicable to my study since I am not interested in exploring leaders'

traits in promoting inclusion in schools. Furthermore, I did not gather data primary data from NL

leaders who promote inclusion in schools.

2.4.1.2 Transactional Theory of Leadership

In 1947, Max Weber was among the first to describe transactional leadership. In the

1970s and early 1980s, leadership theorists diverged from the trait theory to a perspective where

leadership is value based on the exchanges between leaders and non-leaders in an organization

(Nawaz & Khan, 2016). Researchers further describe the transactional theory as leader-non and

leader associations entrenched in a series of agreements. As such, a transactional leader values

order, structure, and organization. Transactional leaders are more concerned with results and

conformance to laid down structures and measures of their organization. These leaders often set

out criteria for others per predetermined requirements and measure performance with

performance reviews.

The transactional theory of leadership thrives in contexts related to crisis management or

linear management processes. For instance, Hewlett-Packard, the military, CEOs of

multinational companies, and sporting coaches rely on transactional leadership. It is possible to

trace a transactional leader's authority to their ascribed responsibility and formal authority in the

organization.

Researchers were mainly concerned with assessing interactions between leaders and non-

leaders to establish critical relationships for success for studies guided by the transactional

theory. I did not find the transactional theory relatable to my research objectives.

2.4.1.3 Behavioral Theory of Leadership

The behavioral theory of leadership is a significant leap from the trait theory because its scientific development is from behavior-focused studies. Behavioral theorists are primarily concerned with how specific behaviors affect the performance and satisfaction of non-leaders in an organization (Roundy, 2020). Behavioral theorists tend to focus on what leaders do and how they act. The various definitions stem from an understanding of human behavior, emphasizing the influence of attitudes, culture, ethics, authority, coercion, and emotions on behaviors (Wada, 2020). Behavioral theorists assert that behaviors are either innate or learned. Also, researchers assumed that successful leadership is grounded in definable and learnable behavior.

Behavioral theory is the umbrella theory, and there are variants of the behavioral theory of leadership that include the following:

1. People-oriented leadership

2. Country club leadership

3. Task-oriented leadership

4. Indifferent leadership

5. Opportunistic style leadership

6. Dictatorial leadership

7. Participative leadership

Behavioral theories suit studies that focus on leadership styles of leadership in social institutions and affords the researcher a chance to investigate a leader's behavior. If I centered my study on analyzing leaders' behaviors as they promote inclusion in schools, the behavioral theory would have come in handy. However, I was only interested in exploring stakeholder roles in promoting inclusion for multicultural learners.

2.4.1.4 Constructivist Leadership Theory

According to this school of thought, constructivist leadership is a reciprocal process that enables actors in an educational setting to construct meaningful understandings of what it is to be human (Lambert, 2003). These theorists state that learning and leading are interrelated since they stem from being human. Learning is a human activity that involves the construction of knowledge about our world to act purposely. Over the years, we have appreciated that individuals bring their schemas of learning to the learning environment. Such schemas include prior experiences, culture, beliefs, values, and sociocultural histories (Eğriboyun, 2015; Lambert, 2003).

Constructivist leadership applies to my study as I explore leadership's roles in promoting inclusion in schools in several ways. First, I acknowledge the critical similarities between the constructivist way of learning and the constructivist leadership theory, which resonate with my epistemological perspective. For instance, I subscribe to the school of thought that both personal and professional learning involves processes of meaning-making and knowledge construction through inquiry, participation, and reflection. Second, as per my study's objectives, the common goal of constructing mutual understandings is to promote inclusion in schools for multicultural learners. Thus, I appreciate the 'learning process' by which stakeholders pursue inclusion in schools and find it directly applicable to academic leadership discussions.

2.4.2 Critical Perspectives on Academic Leadership

I have identified several critical perspectives on academic leadership from my review of literature. These perspectives influence my understanding of academic leadership and underline critical approaches to exploring how leaders promote inclusion. In this section, I discuss perspectives that I have noticed and others worth mentioning.

My leadership notion assumes that leadership recognizes the need to have a unified workforce in achieving goals regardless of diversity. Leadership may achieve such objectives through education, professional development, and support in an inclusive workplace environment (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Diversity needs are on the increase in the community and the learning environment for residents and multicultural learners in recent times. In my perspective, it becomes imperative to have leaders, educators, and other stakeholders on the same page regarding forming a unified workforce to promote inclusion in schools. Robinson (2007) states that more leadership focuses on developing professional relationships and gaining a deeper understanding of teaching and learning. There may be a greater chance of influencing student outcomes.

Subsequently, I discuss perspectives based on related studies that examine academic leadership's promotion of inclusion in schools.

In a qualitative study by Miled (2019), the researchers (from British Columbia) explored educational leaders' perspectives and appreciation of multiculturalism. The researchers also sought to determine how educational leaders implement multicultural education initiatives in their school district for teachers' PD. The researchers acknowledge various models and conceptualizations integrated into teacher PD design for the past three decades. Yet, they argue that 'surprisingly little has been published about what is actually done' (Sleeter, 2012, p. 34) in PD for in-service educators. They perceived their study through the critical multicultural theoretical lens, which is informed by Paulo Freire's 'conscientization.' Conscientization is considered a necessary revolutionary postulation by Freire and is also considered a foundational theory for researching social justice (Miled, 2019). This transformative theoretical framework is appropriate for teachers to comprehend, ask, contest, change the status quo of multiculturalism,

and ensure 'the proclamation of a new reality' (Freire, 1985). Research findings from Miled (2019) show a disconnect between in-service education PD and the reality these educators handle. More so, there is a gap between current achievements and opportunities in making educator PD programs more successful. The researchers suggest that future teacher in-service PD initiatives should include schools' educational leadership, making them rethink their responsibilities when addressing multiculturalism and diversity in schools.

In New Zealand, the rapid increase in schools' diversity has created a challenge for school leaders to foster ethnic inclusion (Cardno, Handjani & Howse, 2018). In a qualitative case study, Cardno, Handjani, and Howse (2018) investigated the nature and challenges of diversity in two New Zealand multi-ethnic secondary schools. Through interviews with senior leaders and pastoral care leaders, the researchers probed how well leaders understood ethnic inclusion. Their research findings showed that leaders were committed to improving students' learning outcomes, but there was limited evidence to establish effective practices. This leadership perspective highlights the 'remediation' approach that researchers and leaders adopt in meeting students' diverse needs. In the remediation approach, researchers assume that leaders can perform better once they overcome existing challenges. Niesche (2014) confirms my deduction and states that school leaders may not be committed to achieving ethnic inclusion due to their challenges.

In a qualitative study by Santamaria (2014), the researcher examined the connections between educational leadership and multicultural education. The researcher investigated the perspectives of leaders who worked towards addressing culturally and linguistically diverse concerns in education. In the research, the Santamaria (2014) specifically examined leaders' behaviors through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT). The researcher selected participants through self-proclamation data-gathering instruments for information on how leaders promote

social justice and educational equity. The research findings established relationships between leadership behaviors and successes in promoting inclusion in schools.

I took an interest in the emphasis that Santamaria (2014) placed on the CRT and critical multiculturalism for their study. Through these theoretical lenses, the researcher aligned their research findings in relatable and theoretically grounded forms. For instance, the Santamaria (2014) established a connection between knowledge, power, reflection, and transformation, tied to critical multiculturalism. On the other hand, Santamaria (2014) showed that educational leaders and stakeholders from historically underserved and underrepresented backgrounds could promote multicultural learners' inclusion. I appreciate the use of relevant theoretical frameworks in carrying out research that promotes inclusion in schools.

The perspectives that I have mentioned above are relevant to developing a broader understanding of leadership and approaching research related to promoting inclusion in schools.

2.5 An Exploration of Academic Leadership Roles

Academic leadership plays a critical role in promoting teaching and learning in education. In my literature review, I came across salient roles that academic leadership plays in advancing their organizations' goals. In this section, I examine and discuss leadership roles.

A school's critical function falls on how leadership creates an accommodating teaching environment for faculty and provides learners with the quality of education they deserve (Fahimirad, Idris, & Kotamjani, 2016). Thus, there is a need for academic leaders to possess comparatively newer knowledge, abilities, and skills to cope with constant organizational changes effectively.

Fahimirad, Idris, and Kotamjani (2016) point out that a necessary aspect of effective and efficient teaching and learning process is the presence of 'strong academic leadership.' It implies

that a leader can lead a school to the success or failure by their initiatives and practices. Academic leaders may be accountable for their organizations' fate, which in turn has an impact on their academic programs. Researchers may access this significant impact in terms of the leaders' effectiveness in promoting and safeguarding the different school stakeholders' welfare.

Leadership experiences cannot be simply categorized into one or more styles since a leader's experience is multidimensional and has different layers. These experiences drive the leader's abilities through environmental, economic, sociopolitical, personal, and professional elements. Schools are also largely influenced by external factors such as changing expectations and demands from students and stakeholders, a more globally competitive, and multicultural learners' multicultural needs. In terms of internal factors, some procedures negatively influence the delivery of teaching and learning. Schools face a winding process of managerial controls and the need to demonstrate relevance, accountability, and benefit for society (Scott, Coates, & Anderson, 2008).

Academic leaders' layout policies that would enable educators to be better prepared in providing quality learning outcomes and then collaborate to solve real-world problems. Furthermore, leaders can ensure that there are practical applications of new knowledge to solve societal problems. It is worth noting that changes such as those expressed above do not just occur spontaneously - they must be presented and led by leaders (Bryman, 2007). Effective academic leaders play a critical role in causing certain changes to occur. They achieve these by including people in institutional and professional development programs. Their role is to reform their schools' operational processes to become more acceptable of changes, efficient, and become agile. A study by Scott, Coates, and Anderson (2008) in Australia found that academic leaders must come up with prompt responses to changes. Additionally, the nature of the responses that

leaders provide should be of high quality. If leadership does not ensure these, schools may not contribute their quota to the nation's development.

Academic leaders empathize with various stakeholders. They should also be flexible and conversant with diagnostic skills for their institutions. There will inevitably be various indicators that may judge the performance of academic leadership, including. These indicators include achieving high-quality learning outcomes, producing significant teaching and learning improvements, establishing a collegial working environment, and delivering agreed-upon tasks on time and specification (Anderson & Dexter, 2000).

Additionally, academic leaders may also ensure they pursue collective and sustainable goals (Scott et al., 2008). According to Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009), academic leaderships' developmental requirements should always consider the institutions' primary concerns. Thus, schools' expectation is for them to invest in specific developments that allow for targeted support.

Spendlove (2007) posited that over the past ten years, research in academic leadership and its effectiveness has moved towards identifying the leadership competencies such as knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors. Researchers define these as sets of behaviors that are instrumental in the delivery of desired results or outcomes. Even though some competencies are comparatively more difficult to acquire than others, there are some specific competencies that, when mastered, can guide strategic human resource management practices in areas such as in recruitment and succession planning. For top-notch leadership, competencies are not a prescription, but they rather show an attempt to capture the lessons learned and experiences and knowledge of experienced leaders, which provides an exemplary guiding framework (Spendlove, 2007).

Gonzalez (2004) studies the competencies of senior Mexican administrators in schools. The researcher found that some trends and social forces in these Mexican schools required academic leadership with a broad understanding of the national perspectives, with the resources to support a national development initiative. Schools in these contexts play an important role in any nation's economic and social development, as posited by Yang (2005). Gonzalez (2004) also noted that future academic leaders in schools need requisite personal skills, administrative competencies, social responsibility competencies, and institutional competencies. Competencies of social responsibility for academic leaders should then include sensitivity to cultural diversity, social commitment, analysis of demands, and knowledge of economic situations and economic environment in society.

In my literature review, I discovered several essential roles for academic leaders that emerged from different contexts, research methodologies, and research. This knowledge is critical as it is foundational to investigating academic leadership as they promote inclusion in schools. Also, knowledge of academic leadership roles is relevant in carrying out the required changes to establish a supportive environment that encourages productivity (Leaders & International, 2005).

2.5 Conceptualization of the Inclusiveness of Education

Other researchers have conceptualized the inclusiveness of education according to different contexts. When defining inclusive education, researchers tend to define the word 'inclusiveness.' Mosalagae and Lukusa (2016) described inclusiveness as a situation, whereby an individual or a group of people are involved in a process to play relevant roles and make the most of what might be the benefits of the process. Miled (2019, p. 91) defines inclusiveness as "the impartial participation of people with different social, cultural, financial, and educational

statuses in a process." With these definitions, it is clear that inclusiveness is a situation whereby an event or process allows some target groups to be involved in it. In the context of education, inclusiveness is the condition of enabling students with different socio-economic and psychological statuses to experience the same level and quality of education (DeMatthews & Mawhinney, 2014, p. 846). That is, inclusive education gives students from different backgrounds (including those with special needs) the opportunity to experience the same teaching and learning processes and utilize the same resources (Miled, 2019; Mosalagae & Lukusa, 2016).

More recently, Childs (2020) argued that the core of inclusive education is multiculturalism, suggesting that inclusive education brings together individuals from different cultural backgrounds to utilize the same instructional resources. The definition is consistent with the view of Miled (2019) that inclusive education occurs when all students, regardless of any physical, psychological and social limitations they may have, are placed in age-appropriate general (or multicultural) learning environments. The above definitions unfold key facts about inclusive education. Firstly, an inclusive education does not only allow students to be involved in the learning and teaching process but also ensures that those involved make up a heterogeneous group. Members of the group must vary in terms of physical and psychological limitations and socio-economic status. Secondly, inclusive education ensures that all members of the said heterogeneous group (i.e., a general class) have the same chance of receiving quality education.

Given the above definitions, it is understandable why Miled (2019) considers multiculturalism as the vehicle that drives an inclusive educational process. With multiculturalism having an essential place in this study, it is necessary to understand factors that make education inclusive in a multicultural setting. According to Murray (2014), the most

important factor is recognizing the remarkable ways conservative communities are opening up their doors to foreign cultures in support of globalization and understanding that every community is multicultural. With this thinking, authorities can tailor curricula and infrastructure to meet the needs of multicultural classes. Also, in a setting where inclusive education is a priority, multiculturalism is high and cultural pluralism seems comparatively more acceptable. Of course, it is challenging to make education inclusive if cultural diversity is not considered a significant aspect of community evolution, especially in Canada (Childs, 2020; Miled, 2019).

A second dominant factor that determines inclusive education is a growing demand for online education in the working population (Dewsbury & Brame, 2019). Online learning is an ever-changing model of education that provides a conventional virtual classroom for students in different geographical areas (Goold et al., 2007). In recent years, the demand for online education is increasing by employment conditions, including the fact that many employees prefer pursuing higher education while on the job (Baltes, 2010). Interestingly, online eduaction can be highly multicultural since students from all walks of life can participate in them. For this reason, increasing demand for distance or online learning in a region can encourage the adoption of an inclusive educational model. With many online courses running in many Canadian universities (Holt et al., 2014; Mild, 2019), there is an increasing demand for online education. Finally, the preparedness of individual institutions and educators is another factor influencing the inclusiveness of education (Childs, 2020; Mosalagae & Lukusa, 2016). The readiness of these stakeholders means the availability of a policy that guides and encourages inclusive education, the commitment of individual institutions and faculties, sufficiency of relevant capacity at the faculty and institutional levels, and availability of faculty PD and development programs (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2019; Miled, 2019). Logically speaking, it is critical for schools to meet

these requirements since they impact an inclusive education process together. For instance, the commitment of individual faculty members is essential to administering a policy of inclusive education, utilizing PD resources, and building capacity to meet increasing needs. The above illustration points to the place of educators, leadership, institutions, and regulators, hereby referred to as actors, in an inclusive education system. In the next section, the roles of these actors are discussed and contextualized.

2.6 Community Stakeholders Influencing the Inclusiveness of Culturally Inclusive Education

Over the years, the development and modification of educational policies by the authorities is based on needs, resources, and lessons learned from previous or existing systems (Dewsbury, 2019). Moreover, the policy basis of an educational system determines the composition or nature of that system (Hinton, 2007). As such, the inclusiveness of an educational system is mainly influenced by its underlying policy provisions. Interestingly, several stakeholders in the educational system influence the development of such a policy. Subsequently, I discuss stakeholders and their roles in progressing an inclusive educational system.

Stakeholders influencing the inclusiveness of education in Canada and any other region are the students to be educated or being educated (Holt et al., 2014; Miled, 2019). Students are considered the ultimate drivers of an inclusive education system for a couple of reasons. Firstly, as individuals receiving education, they have a better chance to indicate how they should be engaged in the development of pedagogies, curricula, campuses, and classrooms (Han et al., 2014). This reasoning draws on a customer-centric marketing principle whereby the student is considered an essential stakeholder of an educational enterprise whose needs must be well understood and addressed. Consequently, the inclusiveness of education could improve when students and pupils are engaged to describe their educational needs and interests. Of course, it is

this engagement that reveals students' cultural backgrounds and preferences and thus sets the foundation for understanding the nature of the ideal inclusive education.

Miled (2019) describes teachers as essential stakeholders, who influence the nature of education in Canada. Teachers are often subject to an educational system, pedagogy, and curriculum that have been designed based on the needs of students and the capacity of the educational institution involved. As professionals implementing policies developed by the educational institutions (King, 2011), educators play central roles in the development of pedagogies and curricula, ensuring that teaching pedagogies, physical or online classrooms, and curricula are consistent with student needs and their expertise. Educators apply their knowledge of the cultural composition of their classes, their expertise, institutional capacity, and student interest to coordinate stakeholders and design pedagogies and curricula that are culturally inclusive (DeMatthews & Mawhinney, 2014; Eras, 2016). To play this role effectively, however, educators should receive ample PD and should have worked in the educational institution to understand its cultural and philosophical landscape (Eras, 2016). It is to say that having sufficient experience as a professional educator in the relevant educational institution is a factor that determines the ability of the educator to play a role in designing an inclusive education.

With the discussion so far, it is understandable that the educational institution is an actor in making an educational setting culturally inclusive. The role of the institution is delineated by some researchers (Hinton et al., 2007; Jacobs et al., 2014) who identified the institution's role as primarily coordination of stakeholders, the provision of resources, and the enforcement of lessons from any stakeholder engagement. Students and educators, based on their needs and experience, respectively contribute to developing a model of culturally inclusive education. Still, it is the responsibility of the institution to dedicate funds and time towards the development and

implementation of such a model. Moreover, the institution is the ideal stakeholder to initiate stakeholder engagements towards the development or modification of an inclusive educational system (Mild, 2019). If so, I can argue that the initiation and progression of programs aimed at enhancing the inclusiveness of education depend on the institution.

Parents also play a role in the development of an inclusive educational program (Kim, 2011; Miled, 2019), though their part is more visible at the primary and secondary levels of education (Miled, 2019). Fish (2020) states that while the role of parents is said to be elusive, its central tenets are affirming the cultural identities of their children, providing moral support to institutions, and, in some instances, providing resources and guiding institutions to implement proposed programs. The provision of resources by philanthropic parents for implementing innovative educational projects in the US and Canada is relatively limited in the reviewed literature (Clench & King, 2014; Miled, 2019). That being the case, there is no doubt that parents play an essential role in the development or enhancement of culturally inclusive education.

For the purposes of my study, I collectively refer to students, educators, and parents (guardians) as community stakeholders.

In the next section, I explore the perspectives of academic leadership about PD and vital programs relevant to enhancing the inclusiveness of education.

2.7 Providing Culturally Responsive Pedagogies: The Role of Academic Leadership

Several studies have explored the role of academic leadership, faculties, and teachers on providing culturally inclusive education. One such study is the research of Mujawamariya and Mahrouse (2004) carried out in Canada as a qualitative phenomenological study. The study aimed at exploring the general perceptions of teachers on culturally inclusive education, including aspects of PD. The study revealed four attitudes relating to PD on multicultural

education. The first one concerned the role of PD and the means of communication to educators.

Two participants who served as leaders in their departments agreed to the fact that

comprehensive PD has its root in a clear explanation of the purpose and nature of expertise to be

imparted in PD. One of the two leaders mentioned that "a training program may look at the usual

on-the-job training if trainees do not understand its purpose, significance, and nature." If so, a

PD program aimed to prepare teachers to enhance cultural inclusiveness may not serve its

purpose.

Another notion expressed by participants was the need for designing PD based on an

identified need (Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004). This view is consistent with the assertion of

Goold et al. (2007) that the PD of educators is initiated, planned, and executed when the cultural

diversity of classes and faculty groups has increased from a previous level. In this regard, a new

PD program builds on previous ones and aligns teaching and learning with the current

multicultural characteristics of the classes and faculties. Because the cultural composition of

online classes is ever-changing (Miled, 2019), educators must pursue PD regularly to enable

them to adapt to the evolving cultural environment and classroom settings. Yet, as another

academic leader opined, the effectiveness of a new PD program would depend on whether the

new PD program can improve the ability of educators to use new technologies and pedagogies

that were not previously in use (Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004). It is another way of saying

that a PD program should not only explain the practical relevance of a change in pedagogies and

curricula but should also enable educators to apply technologies and pedagogies that any cultural

change would bring.

Also mentioned is the commitment of the institution (Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004).

One lead educator was of the view that the effectiveness of PD to a more significant extent

depends on the commitment of the institution and whether resources are made available. Further to this, lead educators and department chairs are not responsible for driving PD aimed at enhancing cultural inclusiveness in teaching and learning. Instead, administrative executives often weigh their priorities and determine the viability of expending resources on PD. However, it is the responsibility of lead educators and departmental chairs to advocate a change by proposing new PD programs based on the cultural dynamics of teaching and learning. This reasoning was substantiated by Childs (2020), who argued that academic leaders are often in a better position to know changes in the cultural composition of classes; hence they are the ultimate advocates for a paradigm shift towards a more multicultural method of teaching and learning.

Miled's (2019) study revealed similar opinions. For example, the author perceived PD as a continuous process because multiculturalism keeps evolving. The continuous change further suggests the regular modification of existing pedagogies, teacher skills, and curricula. PD, thus, makes it possible for the institution to align the skills of educators with changes in pedagogy and curricula. Unique to Miled's study is an opinion regarding the content of a PD program. That is, stakeholders should design PD programs to ensure that educators get new skills necessary for the implementation of a new multicultural model of education. For instance, if a class has new students from specific jurisdictions, then a PD program must incorporate aspects bothering on the cultures of these jurisdictions.

Damgaci and Aydin (2014) in Turkey produced some findings that may be of interest to this study. Outstanding in their results is the idea that a PD model may overly favor a particular culture. When this happens, there may be a misinterpretation of PD programs and the institution's effort to enhance cultural inclusion. At worst, some minority students and educators

may think that the PD program targets the majority of cultural groups. This situation seems to defeat the purpose of PD and rather portrays cultural stereotypes and inequity in planning and implementing teaching and learning activities. As a result, a PD program should free of cultural marginalization and ensure that it impartially incorporates new cultures into teaching and learning by enabling teachers and their leaders to adopt a new approach to teaching. In line with this view, Hinton (2007) contended that PD programs aimed at enhancing cultural inclusiveness of online education should not be an avenue for the institution or its leaders to marginalize any minority group. If that happens, PD programs may do more harm than good.

With these in mind, I will proceed to the next section that discusses interventions that promote the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies in schools.

2.8 Interventions Promoting the Implementation of Culturally Responsive Pedagogies

Globally, there are several interventions implemented to promote the implementation of culturally inclusive pedagogies. Since how governments and educational institutions are doing this differ from country to country, it is vital to understand approaches unique to Canada. At the federal level, the government has created opportunities for pedagogies to be modified and aligned with the ever-changing cultural landscape of Canada (Damgaci & Aydin, 2014). An assumption suggests that Canada, as a growing multicultural society, would need to keep aligning the inclusiveness of its education in the face of its increasing cultural diversity (Childs, 2020). With this assumption, a federal policy framework that empowered educational institutions to increase the inclusiveness of their pedagogies regularly was adopted in 1971 (Childs, 2020; Miled, 2019). Since then, various efforts have been made at the institutional, provincial, and federal levels to increase the inclusiveness of education as Canada's multicultural societies grow.

The government and individual institutions have, over the years, changed the infrastructural base of online teaching and learning (Holt et al., 2014). In this vein, the creation and advancement of online campuses, a gradual alignment of online classroom structures with emerging cultures, and the empowerment of students and educators to effectively use online campuses and classrooms have seen significant measures taken by individual institutions (Childs, 2019; Jacobs & Jacobs, 2019). Online learning has advanced mainly by making at least two languages (i.e., English and French) the medium of instruction and making access to course materials, classrooms, and learners easier. Even with these measures, many students were not participating in online courses by interacting with their peers and educators. Hence, it was necessary to make classroom participation compulsory for students by ensuring that the student's classroom activity is part of their continuous assessment (Childs, 2020). This strategy impelled students from diverse cultural backgrounds to interact with their teachers and mates not only to meet a requirement but also to make an impact in a multicultural setting.

The effectiveness of the foregoing program depended on how well educators and students are able to navigate online courses and learning environments (Mccalman, 2014). So, learning programs for both students and teachers has been the primary process by which effective use of online learning has been ensured in individual institutions (Miled, 2019). However, training of isolated students is not always possible. The PD of educators is relatively frequent is some Canadian schools, and the effectiveness of such PD programs depends on the models are their consistencies (Mccalman, 2014; Miled, 2019). Academic leads and administrators of online education, who often influence the nature of online learning in individual institutions also pursue PD (Miled, 2019). Though the quality and effectiveness of PD are sometimes curtailed by inadequate funding in many institutions, PD has been the main instrument for enabling effective

use of online education by culturally diverse learners and educators (Childs, 2020; Jacobsen &

Jacobsen, 2019)

Currently, there are efforts by individual institutions to enhance the cultural competence

of educators and academic leadership (Miled, 2019). In this context, cultural competence is

synonymous with cultural intelligence, which refers to the ability of educators, and academics

leads to understanding diverse cultures (Mccalman, 2014; Pritchard & Hughes, 2017). While PD

can enhance cultural competence, experience (i.e., learning to live with different cultures) and

reading materials on how to relate with students with different cultural backgrounds are

considered the best ways to enhance cultural intelligence (Pritchard & Hughes, 2017; Torras &

Bellot, 2017). In most Canadian institutions, therefore, educators improve their cultural

intelligence through observation and interaction (Miled, 2019), though PD programs are

designed to initiate this behavior (Miled, 2019; Torras & Bellot, 2017). Thus, it is the

responsibility of academic institutions to encourage academic leadership and educators to

gradually learn to work with students and colleagues from diverse cultures.

Academic institutions have, at different levels, fostered a sense of community within

online classes by enforcing participation in online social activities, including informal chatting

and exchange of ideas (Jacobs et al., 2017; Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2019). By this, virtual chats

and social activities result in friendships and acquaintances that deepen classroom trust and

cohesion. Miled (2019) is of the view that this socialization process makes it easier for students

to communicate in class and contribute to online academic activities. If so, I can argue that

fostering a sense of community online is a way to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and

learning. Finally, academic institutions have made their admission requirements more flexible to

enable disadvantaged groups to access education in Canada (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2019). For

instance, some academic institutions have relaxed their English language requirements and rolled out special English language PD programs for new students with poor English skills (Childs, 2020; Miled, 2019), thereby making access to education to people with different cultural backgrounds possible.

The above interventions, arguably, are based on either empirical evidence or theory. This assertion relates to the idea that interventions and decisions in a human organization rely on empirical evidence or theoretical propositions (Liu, Baker, Milman, 2014; Noble & Smith, 2015). As such, findings and practical lessons from this study are substantiated because of the adopted theoretical framework. In the next section, this framework is developed.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

This study draws on two theoretical approaches, namely critical multiculturalism and transformative multiculturalism (Childs, 2020; Hinton, 2007). These theories guided and informed the framing of research on multicultural education over the years (Childs, 2020; Miled, 2019). Critical multiculturalism is a theory of education that emphasizes and promotes the ability of students to enforce and work out a social change to ensure social equity (Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004). The framework, which is considered a neoliberal way of thinking (Miled, 2019), describes a conceptual path along which students and stakeholders can question the status quo to make the conduct of education culturally inclusive. It proposes social justice as an end to the democratization of teaching and learning. It further influences the decisions that make pedagogies and curricula culturally inclusive.

Critical multiculturalism originated from several conceptual models developed by educational researchers such as Freire (1978), Apple (1999), May (1999), and McLaren (1997). Nieto (2000) added to the model by arguing that critical and transformative multiculturalism is a

system of social justice that changes the way institutions marginalize some groups of students and therefore change the fate of marginalized students. Nieto (2000) adds that the system emphasizes continuous pedagogical reform and changes related to perceptions about the role of educators. Moreover, the model pursues equity for all, with the marginalization of any group considered a threat to social justice and the inclusive process of teaching and learning. Thus, like earlier works from various scholars (Apple, 1999; Freire, 1978; McLaren, 1997), the theory of Nieto depicts multicultural education as the outcome of institutions applying the democratic principles of social justice to foster equity and avoid sectarian stereotype. From this perspective, academic institutions and their leadership design pedagogies and curricula that are mindful of different contextual cultures.

Transformative multiculturalism, as the above discussion may suggest, is interwoven with critical multiculturalism in the sense that radical change for social justice can only occur when relevant stakeholders value the need to change the status quo (Apple, 1999). From this viewpoint, social change serves as a metaphor for a gradual shift in perceiving multicultural classes, the role of educators, and the identity of students (Apple, 1999; McLaren, 1997; Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004). Thus, Nieto (2000) blended the two concepts to make up a 'critical transformative framework' for multiculturalism. With this model, he explained that a gradual change in the role of the teacher, student, and approach to learning is a necessity to replace the so-called 'leap service' provided by academic institutions through 'celebratory multiculturalism.' The process subtly undermines minority students and intimidates students who are not impacted by functional pedagogies due to their cultural and racial identities. Celebratory multiculturalism also pretends to protect the vulnerable and make an educational process democratic and culturally inclusive.

Nieto (2000) further explained that multicultural education is a process of different components, of which prejudice reduction and the application of equity pedagogies are noteworthy. It is to say that pedagogy should be void of prejudice and make an equitable impact on students, regardless of their cultural identities and principles. Interestingly, the realization of Nieto's expectations is made possible by Freire's (1973) theory of 'conscientization.' This theory contends that 'critical conscientization' would ensure that teachers do not only alter their teaching methods to meet changing cultural needs but also challenge their bias against some cultures and races. In this vein, teaching is considered a liberal process in which all participants feel free to express themselves and make the most of ongoing discussions and activities. Modern-day researchers (Childs, 2020; Miled, 2019; Mujawamariya & Mahrouse, 2004) have alluded that this thinking forms the basis of the philosophy by which academic institutions adopt and implement multicultural educational programs and systems. As such, pedagogical considerations for the design of an inclusive online educational system draw on this, and the other models discussed.
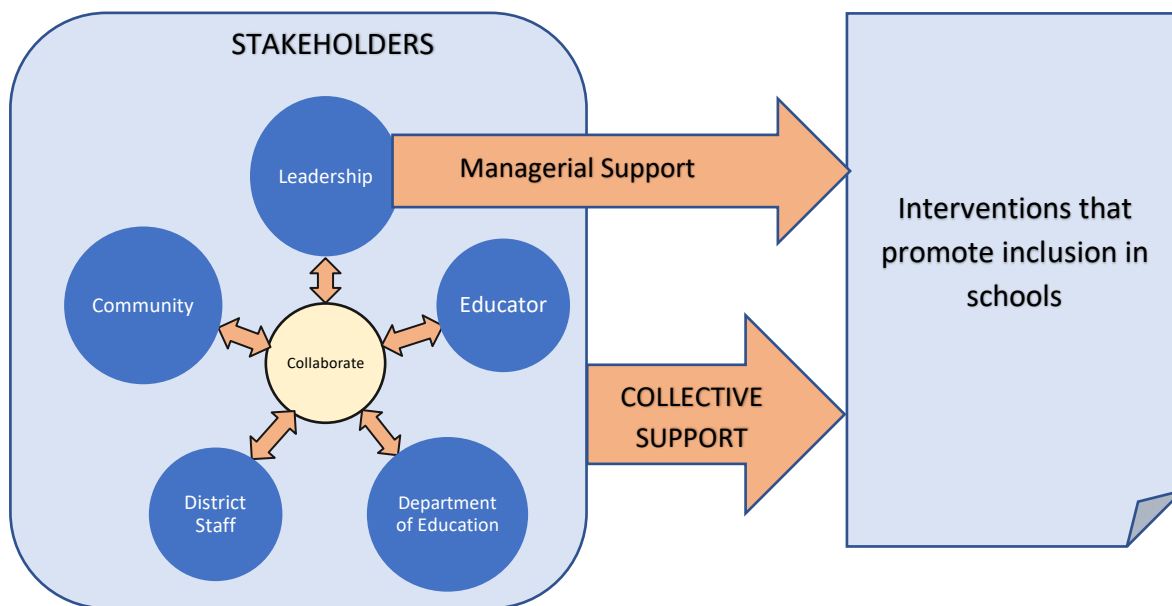
Figure 1: A conceptual model showing key steps for enhancing the inclusiveness of schools
Source: The Researcher's Construct

2.10 Conceptual Framework

According to Childs (2020), transformative multiculturalism has several phases that the

average institution should pass through to attain a high level of inclusiveness. This study focused

on research gaps within transformative multiculturalism in the context of making online

education in Canada. The first phase requires the coordination of stakeholders responsible for

improving inclusion in schools (Childs, 2020; Yilmaz, 2016). The design and implementation of

an inclusive online educational system occur in a chronological transformative process in which

stakeholders understand changes in learner needs, the multicultural nature of classes, and the

need for equity for learners. Within this process, radical change that tends to enhance social

justice and the democratic orientation of education is inevitable. For this reason, stakeholders are

collaborating with other stakeholders to equip educators with the ability to teach and manage

multicultural classes. 'Collaboration' in this context means working with all relevant

stakeholders (i.e., academic leadership, organizations, educators, and students) to play their role

as a team towards the development of an inclusive model of teaching and learning (Yilmaz, 2016; Banerjee & Firtell, 2017).

As core stakeholders influencing the design and implementation of pedagogies, academic leadership is in a better place to indicate institutional arrangements for educator PD towards enhancing the inclusiveness of online learning and teaching. Drawing on the above discussion, faculty PD on culturally inclusive pedagogies is an aspect of transformative multiculturalism since an inclusive system of education requires educators who understand different cultures and how to utilize available resources to meet the needs of culturally diverse classes (Childs, 2020; Yilmaz, 2016). This point implies that transformative multiculturalism and its role in enhancing the inclusiveness of online education are meaningless without equipping educators with relevant skills that would enable them to understand the needs of multicultural classes and utilize potentially limited online teaching resources to teach online courses. By understanding the role of academic leadership on this task, policymakers in other jurisdictions can assess their status quo and opportunities to implement culturally responsive pedagogies to improve inclusion in their schools.

The implementation of culturally inclusive pedagogy is another prominent aspect of critical and transformative multiculturalism (Childs, 2020). By this step, academic institutions transform plans and policies into actions and activities that benefit culturally inclusive online teaching and learning. Identifying and understanding interventions and lessons is a way to replace ineffective interventions and improve the inclusiveness of online teaching and learning in other places that want to emulate Newfoundland and Labrador. It is consistent with Baltes' (2010) argument that critical and transformative multiculturalism produces the best results when the process dedicated to improving the inclusiveness of online education is adaptable and fosters

further improvements. The current study makes way for further interventions to improve the inclusiveness of online education through the provision of a guiding conceptual model.

2.11 Summary of Chapter

As the demand for online education increases across the world, academic institutions can build their online educational infrastructure further and develop faculty members to provide an inclusive environment for diverse learners. While taking the foregoing step, academic institutions must recognize the reality brought by increasing the cultural diversity of online classes and align pedagogies, faculty capabilities, and online campuses with it. This study is framed by the critical transformative multiculturalism, which is a process aimed at making online education democratic, liberal, and culturally sensitive. Making pedagogies culturally inclusive is, therefore, the primary objective that academic institutions pursue in the light of this paradigm as explored the roles and functions of stakeholders (primarily academic leadership) as they make education inclusive and culturally responsive for multicultural learners. These endeavors complement identified successful inclusive interventions for online educators to produce a model for promoting inclusiveness in online learning environments. The next chapter presents the research methodology of the study.

Chapter 3
Research Methods

I describe and justify the methodology for my study in this chapter. I specifically discuss and explain my research philosophy, study setting, study population, data collection, research credibility and trustworthiness, validity, reliability, ethical considerations, data analysis methods, and the organization of this study.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The researcher's worldview widely influences the philosophical research positionality chosen for a study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Allwood (2012) defines worldviews as the researcher's philosophical understanding of the world and the research problem. It encompasses the researcher's shared beliefs, school of thought, and principles that form the basis of data interpretation in a study (Mingers, 2003). The philosophical assumption of a study, therefore, guides the researcher to gather, analyze, and interpret data. As the quality of data influences the value of every empirical research, the application of the right philosophical assumption in a study is inevitable.

The two philosophical assumptions applied to research are epistemology and ontology (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). According to Allwood (2012), epistemology constitutes of the validity of knowledge and what makes reality different from an illusion. Ontology, on the other hand, is a facet of philosophy that related to the study of being (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Otologists ask questions such as *what can be said to exist,* and *what is truth?* These and similar questions guide the assumptions researchers must make to gather and analyze data. When researchers assume that reality or knowledge is independent of one's thinking, then the most appropriate philosophical paradigm to apply is positivism or objectivism (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). On the other hand, the necessary paradigm is interpretivism or subjectivism if the

researcher believes that reality is an outcome of man's cognition and subjective experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). If the researcher assumes that reality is best constructed or known by applying both positivism and subjectivism, then a pragmatic (pluralistic) paradigm is the most appropriate for a study (Allwood, 2012).

In this study, I subscribe to the subjectivist philosophical approach. Thus, I assume that knowledge of reality is socially constructed and is an outcome of one's cognitive processes. I chose this approach for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the study's objectives require in-depth exploration of the policies related to making education inclusive. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), subjectivism is the right approach to a study aimed at a detailed assessment of experiences that provide an insight into a phenomenon. Secondly, none of the objectives require the use of inferential statistical tools to evaluate the relationship between variables or estimate some population parameters based on a sample. For this reason, I cannot use the objectivist philosophical approach because it involves the principle of statistical inference as outlined by Williams (2007). Also, I will not use the pragmatic or pluralistic paradigm for my study because it includes elements of positivism, which are inapplicable to achieving my research objectives.

3.2 Study Setting

The inclusiveness of online education systems is a central concept that I will examine in this study. It implies that I will explore concepts and research findings related to making online higher education inclusive for multiculturally diverse learners in Canada. With this understanding, I choose St. John's, NL, because it has higher education institutions that offer online courses. More so, it the most appropriate in terms of convenience and accessibility for the researcher.

St. John's is a city located in the Canadian provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL). It is not only the capital but also the largest city with a population of 108,860 during the 2016 census. The urban population of St. John's was recorded as 178,427, while the metro population exceeds 200,000. The province is at the end of the Eastern part of North America and has a long history dating back to its founding in 1494. Data from the 2016 census show that over 4,000 minorities were making up a part of the population of St. John's. The largest minority group comes from South Asia, which makes up 1.2% of the overall population. Chinese Canadians and Blacks are also part of the city's minority groups. The majority of the people in greater St. John's area are of English descent, making up 45.5% of the population. Besides, 41.1% of the population is of Canadian descent, 31.3% of Irish descent, 8.3% are of Scottish descent, 4.6% are of French descent, and 2.1% of German descent.

The population of NL is increasingly multicultural. The number of immigrants arriving annually is growing, almost doubling in number from 546 in 2007 to 1,190 in 2016. There will be increasing numbers of children in early years programs and K-12 schools who come from different countries and cultures, and these students will require much supports from the province's education system. Given the above statistics and information, it is understandable that cultural diversity is increasing in St. John's and its universities. Thus, the province aspires to align its education system to satisfy the needs of a growing body of diverse classes, including online courses.

To synthesize available policy documents on inclusion in schools for Newfoundland and Labrador and to consequently develop a framework for online higher education, this study will use and analyze secondary data.

3.3 Secondary Data Collection

I restate my research questions to provide additional context to this section on data collection:

i.   Who is responsible for making education inclusive for multicultural learners?

ii.   How can academic leadership make education more culturally responsive to multicultural learners?

iii.   What are lessons and interventions that promote the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies among online educators?

The use of two or more sources of qualitative data is said to increase the accuracy and richness of findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). For this reason, I will employ two sources of secondary qualitative data, namely policy documentation, and empirical studies. Policy documentation includes documents from the Premier's task force on improving educational outcomes and the Department of Education for Newfoundland. Data from empirical studies include research findings from journal articles reported by Eras (2016) as a rich source of qualitative data.

It was beneficial using secondary qualitative data since the data sources are suitable for answering my research questions. Furthermore, the use of secondary qualitative data was specifically relevant to the current state of emergency health policies in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada. Using interviews or in-person data gathering techniques may pose unprecedented challenges for the researcher and the research participants in terms of convenience, suitability, time, and convenience (Creswell, 2014). Especially, with the social distancing measures still in place, it is essential to adhere to such directives to protect the researcher and the research participants. The reliance on comprehensive policy documents that

cover a similar research question but for a different level was beneficial to this study and involved critical translative interpretations. Likewise, the use of empirical studies complemented policy documentation by adding on some contextualized and specialized additions that work together in developing an empirical and contextually relevant framework for online education.

Specifically, I used secondary data because it allowed me to generate new insights and understandings from previous studies related to NL. The authors of policy documents had broader prerogatives that influenced their studies as compared to mine. I used a different set of lenses to explore my research questions based on these policy documents. For instance, I used the constructivist leadership theory and transformative multiculturalism theory to investigate stakeholder's role in promoting inclusion for multicultural learners with my secondary data sources.

In the case of the policy document by the Premier's task force, their data was extensive as it covered all of NL. Members of the task force are astute experts and professionals, who gathered information from students, educators, parents, and the public. These added another layer to the credibility of my data. To gather such rich data, the comparatively well-resourced task force offered opportunities for input from their larger sample size through written submissions, surveys, online forums, and email. Therefore, the policy document emerges from extensive data sources that cover all of Newfoundland and Labrador and was led by an expert taskforce. Since I was interested in efforts to promote inclusion for multicultural learners based in NL, I carefully selected these secondary data sources (in consultation with my advisor) because of their relevance and contextual suitability. Otherwise, due to resource constraints, I could not cover all of NL nor use extensive data sources to identify the roles of stakeholders to promote inclusion.

3.3.1 Policy Documentation Data Sets

The selected data sets for this study were the following publicly available documents that pertain to education in Newfoundland and Labrador.

1. Now is the time: The next chapter in education in Newfoundland and Labrador by the Premier's task force on improving educational outcomes (2017). The authors are:

   a. Dr. Alice Collins, Chair

   b. Dr. David Philpott

   c. Dr. Marian Fushell

   d. Dr. Margaret Wakeham

   e. Charlotte Strong (Research consultant)

   f. Sheila Tulk-Lane (Administrative assistant)

   The task force consulted with stakeholders (NL Teachers' Association, NL Federation of School Councils, NL English School District, and others). They further met with students, teachers, parents, and the public by providing opportunities for input through written submissions, surveys, online forums, and email. The task force received these inputs between January and March 2017. The document includes recommendations for change and to inform an Education Action Plan.

2. Education action plan: The way forward (2018). A vision for sustainability and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador. By the Premier's task force on improving educational outcomes.

   Based on the recommendations received by the Premier's task force for improving educational outcomes, the task force received the mandate to develop a new direction for nine core areas of the provincial educational system. The nine areas are listed below:

   a. Inclusive education

b. Mathematics

c. Student mental health and wellness

d. Indigenous education

e. Reading

f. Multicultural education

g. Career and co-operative education

h. Early years

i. Teacher education and professional development

In all, this document outlines 82 recommendations within these areas for an improvement in NL educational outcomes. The government accepted these recommendations and emphasized its commitment to the development of an Education Action plan.

3. The standards of practice for instructional resource teachers

This data source includes eight standards that outline competencies expected of teachers working in special education. These standards include foundations of special education, development and characteristics of learners, educational assessment, planning instruction, and delivering instruction. The remaining standards are learning environment, collaborative partnerships, and reflective practice.

3.3.2 Data from Empirical Studies

Data from empirical studies complemented policy documentation, as discussed above. To ensure that data from empirical studies are of quality, I focused on peer-reviewed articles and working papers from journals and databases listed in Scopus and Scimago Country and Institution Ranking. I only included documents closely related to the topic. I systematically

reviewed literature by using key terms such as *multicultural, multiculturalism, education, online learning, online classes, diverse classes, curriculum,* and *pedagogy*. My search included papers published between 2010-2020 to generate current data. I further screened the available literature to identify information relevant to the study.

Additionally, I paid attention to my gathered information that supports or refutes claims, opinions, or experiences.

3.4 Secondary Qualitative Data Analysis

As Hinds et al. (1997) state, secondary data analysis refers to the use of existing data to get answers to different research questions from the original ones. In this case, the data sets for this study are related to making k-12 education inclusive for St. John's, whiles my research involved making online education more inclusive.

I chose the thematic analytic method to analyze data from this study because it allows researchers to perceive and make sense of collective or shared information. The thematic analysis is a method to systematically identify, organize, and offer insights into discovered patterns of meaning across a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), there are six phases for conducting thematic analysis; and, I followed these phases to analyze my data.

3.4.1 Phase 1: Getting Familiar with Data

The purpose of phase 1 is for the researcher to get intimately familiarized with the contents of the data sets and to map out portions with significant relevance to their study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thus, I began my analysis by reading my data and then outlining them with core parts of my research questions. For the first two research questions, I sought to explore who was responsible for making education inclusive and their roles (especially leadership's). The

third research question explored successes that promoted inclusiveness in online education based on findings from other studies.

With my outlined research questions, I identified core topics for which I needed literature. The nature of the first two research questions necessitated the use of policy documents as the most suitable secondary data. I used my predetermined search criteria to carefully select policy documentation on making education inclusive in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The third objective required the use of empirical studies that showed successful strategies and lessons from interventions that made education inclusive. These searched and compiled with online databases provided by MUN's library. After screening articles and ensuring that they met my criteria, I compiled and managed these with Mendeley.

Altogether, I carefully read through the selected data sources to ensure that they are suitable for the study and that I had an idea of their contents. The process also involved making notes and identifying portions of the data that were of particular interest to me.

3.4.2 Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes

The purpose of the second phase is to analyze data systematically and for meaning-making through coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The developed codes served as succinct labels for portions of the data, which are potentially relevant to the research question. I generated the initial codes for the first two research questions. The initial codes helped make sense of the data through categorizations and the development of themes. I used MAXQDA 2020 to code the data. For the third research question, I paid specific attention to reported interventions and their successes.

3.4.3 Phase 3: Searching for Themes

In the third phase, I explored themes that developed from the code categorizations. The themes capture salient noticing about the dataset as they relate to the research questions. The third phase involved the critical review of coded data for overlapping and similar codes. I arranged identifiable clusters of codes into categories. During this phase, I began to explore interrelationships and mappings between categories that will provide suitable answers to my research question. Also, I had the opportunity to compile categories that I did not need readily need with the intention that they may augment my discussion of research findings eventually.

The deliverable at the end of this phase is the tables that I have presented in the next chapter. The tables show the codes, categories, and themes that I developed from the analysis.

3.4.4 Phase 4: Reviewing Potential Themes

The fourth phased involved a recursive process of reviewing themes concerning the coded data, entire dataset, and research question. In other words, this phase included a quality check to ensure that developed themes are consistent with significant supporting evidence. I removed a few categories and then shifted them around till they fit other themes better. I kept moving categories around because I did not want to force my analysis into coherence, as suggested by (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

I kept reviewing and reorganizing my themes, categories, and codes until the developed themes were robust and properly aligned.

3.4.5 Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes

In the fifth phase, I defined each theme and mentioned their uniqueness. Just as Braun and Clarke (2006) recommended, I also ensured that each theme has the following qualities.

1. Themes should have a singular focus

2. Themes should not overlap and should not be repetitive

3. Themes should directly address research questions

Consequently, each theme is concise, informative, and unique.

3.4.6 Phase 6: Producing the Report

I discussed each theme with my research question in mind. I provided descriptions of each category and then offered a corresponding discussion of the associated theme for each research question. My discussions involved references from my literature review and other sources. The other literature sources formed a basis to support or reject findings from my thematic analysis. I arranged the developed themes logically in tables for the discussion chapter. The arrangement followed the sequential order of the research questions.

3.5 Research Credibility and Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, validity, and reliability are terms used to describe the credibility or trustworthiness of findings (Noble & Smith, 2015). These two measures are of utmost importance to researchers and decision-makers because the value of a qualitative study depends on them. As such, the researcher's effort to achieve validity and reliability is a crucial step towards research quality.

3.5.1 Validity

The validity of a qualitative study, also known as trustworthiness, concerns the quality of the study, the rigor and suitability of its methodology, and whether readers think the research is trustworthy (Shead, 2019). Every qualitative study must demonstrate validity for its findings to be accepted and used in the practical world. In this study, I followed two main steps recommended in the literature to achieve validity. First, I applied more than one data source, as suggested by Young (2017); thereby, increasing the likelihood of identifying and removing

systematic errors. Secondly, I reduced bias by using plausible and most suitable methods that are consistent with previous research practice, as suggested by Young (2017) and Shead (2019).

3.5.2 Reliability

In qualitative research, reliability is a measure of the replicability of the methods and procedures as well as results (Leung, 2015). That is, a study is reliable if it produces consistent findings across populations and different replications of the study. Silverman (2009) recommends five comprehensive methods for ensuring reliability in qualitative research, which includes refutational analysis, data comparison, extensive data use, use of tables to present findings, and inclusion of the deviant cases. For this study, I applied the data comparison method so that I can critically compare the data between the two sources used (i.e., articles and policy documents). Based on Silverman's (2009) recommendations, I will only use empirical data from peer-reviewed articles and my secondary data to compare policy documents.

3.6 Summary of Chapter

In this chapter, I described the research methods used in addressing the research problem. It began with a description of my interpretivist philosophical stance and how those assumptions aligned with my study. Next, I stated the study's setting, which was Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. The next sections described my data collection and thematic analytical processes. I also provided steps that I applied to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the study.

In the next chapter, I present results and discussions for each research question.

Chapter 4

Results and Discussions

In this chapter, I present results from the thematic analysis for each research question as well as discussions based on the developed themes. The first section is results and thematic discussions from research question 1 related to stakeholders responsible for making education inclusive for multicultural learners. The second section presents results and thematic discussions for research question 2, which focuses on the role of leadership in promoting inclusive education through culturally responsive pedagogies. Afterward, I present results and thematic discussions on making online education more inclusive for multicultural students through culturally responsive pedagogy results. I provide code and category excerpts from the analyzed data to support my discussions. The last section contains a developed model based on findings from this study.

4.1 Research Question 1

Who is responsible for making online education inclusive for multicultural learners?

Table 1: Results from Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Who is responsible for making education inclusive for multicultural learners?				
	Code (Stakeholder)	Category 1 (Roles)	Category 2 (Function)	Theme
1	Academic Leadership	Make decisions, advice, and spearhead planning and activities for school-wide inclusive education	Managerial-level support	Academic leadership play constructivist managerial roles in making education inclusive
2	Educator	Support in making	Collaborative Support	

		classrooms inclusive		There is a collaborative supporting role in making education inclusive
3	Department of Education	Collaborate with others to review the continuum of supports and services		
4	District Staff	Support faculty on community issues		
5	Community (School council & Students)	Support implementation strategies		

4.1.1 Analysis and Results: Stakeholders and Their Various Roles in Making Education Inclusive

Table 1 presents codes and two-level categories (level 1 is for roles and level 2 is for their functions) as they contribute to the developed theme. For each identified code, a categorization of all related codes yielded a set of roles. I collectively described those categories into a second one to identify their functions. I needed the second categorization so that there is a distinction between functions of leadership and other stakeholders.

Analysis of the data shows five categories of stakeholders are involved in improving inclusiveness in schools. These categories include academic leadership, educator, Department of Education, district staff, and family. These findings confirm similar findings in Liu, Liu, Lee, and Magiuka's (2010) study.

4.1.1.1 Academic Leadership

Academic leadership represent managerial-level staff, who make decisions, plan, and spearhead activities (including strategies for inclusion) in schools. Since they may be abreast with curriculum development, resource management, and are willing to collaborate with experts,

they stand a good chance of meeting educational goals. The academic leadership may contribute

to decisions bordering on PD needs, the nature of the PD program, and resources needed to carry

out specific personnel development programs. In most cases, they are responsible for managing

resources related to making schools more inclusive.

The following are excerpts from the data sources that contain relevant codes and

categories related to academic leadership in promoting inclusiveness in schools.

> *These government and educational leaders will provide direction with respect to*
> *implementation.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 2)*

> *The Department Education and Early Childhood Development will work closely*
> *with the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism within the Department of*
> *Advanced Education, Skills and Labour to develop and support the leadership*
> *and programs that treat diversity as a source of growth.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 13)*

> *The Faculty of Education review recommendations addressed to the Faculty of*
> *Education in Toward an Achieving Society, Special Matters, Focusing on*
> *Students, and Now is the Time, and provide a response by June 2018 to EECD,*
> *NLESD, CSFP, and the Provost of Memorial University on intended changes*
> *and/or rationale where changes will not be made.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 26)*

> *Increased collaboration with other Atlantic Canada education partners through*
> *the Council of Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) and use the*
> *Council's Career Education in Atlantic Canada report as a foundational*
> *document to plan career and co-operative education initiatives from kindergarten*
> *through to Grade 12;*
> *(K12, 2020, p. 16)*

> *The task force recommendations for Indigenous education initiatives align with*
> *the Indigenous Education Plan of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada*
> *(CMEC) that was developed in response to recommendations from the Truth and*
> *Reconciliation Commission.*
> *(K12, 2020, p. 12)*

In addition, executive and management within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development have engaged in dialogue with associations, advisory councils, and advocacy groups,
(EAP, 2018, p. 19)

EECD allocate five permanent program specialists with expertise in reading instruction to provide leadership and curriculum support to the school-based reading specialists.
(EAP, 2018, p. 24)

The entire staff will complete the Department of Education survey during a full staff meeting or during their school's first introductory session for Inclusive Education.
(K12, 2020, p. 3)

Create a learning community where staff members share best practices for all students.
(K12, 2020, p. 17)

Leadership is required to communicate a clear and consistent message to educators and parents alike.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 15)

In SK, the Deputy Minister of Education, the school division directors and representatives from First Nations and Métis formed a leadership team and are setting the direction for education in the province.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 64)

The TRC report has urged provincial and federal governments to establish high level leadership positions with responsibility for ensuring the inclusion of Indigenous content in education. The report further recommended that the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) work with provincial education partners to improve teaching about Indigenous issues for all students.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 83)

The excerpts above contain codes representing identified stakeholders in the selected

policy documentations. As seen in the selected excerpts, there are associated roles for each

stakeholder. For example, the first excerpt states that "government and educational leaders will

provide direction with respect to implementation." (EAP, 2018, p. 2). Similarly, other codes for stakeholders helped develop roles and functions as shown in Table 1.

4.1.1.2 Educators

Based on the analysis, educators (faculty, teachers, and professors) are identified as essential role players when it comes to making education inclusive. While their specific roles and functions might differ based on the school level or institution, educators play are instrumental when it comes to making implementing inclusive strategies for multicultural learners. Their integral role is fundamental to providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment whiles meeting multicultural learner needs. Specifically, educators are involved in planning, developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating curricula for their teaching and learning activities. Through these mentioned activities and more, educators may use culturally responsive pedagogies or other prescribed instructional strategies to ensure education in more inclusive for their multicultural learners.

The following are extracts from the data sources that contain relevant codes and categories related to the role of educators towards promoting inclusiveness in schools:

> *Teachers will collaboratively design learning experiences for students using a tiered, student-centred structure to inform the level of intervention that is most appropriate.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 8)*

> *High quality initial teacher education through university degree programs combined with ongoing professional learning can improve educational outcomes for all students.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 17)*

> *b) infuse appropriate knowledge and learning, experiences in teacher education programs for teaching Indigenous students and teaching about Indigenous populations.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 33)*

Students, teachers and parents said they hoped for increased interaction between newcomer students and other students, but many felt that students were socializing more and commented that the current generation of young people seemed "less racist and discriminatory."
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 93)

The ratio of ESL teachers to students requires improvement to address the complex needs of newcomers, particularly refugees who have little or no knowledge of English, have limited experiences with formal schooling, and who have experienced trauma in their previous environments.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 94)
ESL and LEARN teachers who work directly with newcomers need improved initial teacher education and ongoing professional development, and they require support in assessing and responding appropriately to newcomer students' educational, social and psychological needs.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 94)

4.1.1.3 Staff and Professionals from DETSD, DAESL, EECD, and NLESD

Staff and professionals from the Department of Education, Training, Skills Development (DETSD), the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labor (DAESL), and Department Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) also play a supportive and collaborative role with other stakeholders in promoting inclusion in schools and the community at large. Among the myriad of duties carried out by the DETSD and DAESL, their duties also include reviewing the continuum of supports and services as well as collaborating with other stakeholders to provide logistics and resources to promote inclusion in schools.

In the selected excerpts below, an analysis of the roles of staff and professionals shows the emphasis on collaboration and supporting roles that they play. For instance, "EECD, in collaboration with other agencies and partners, provide cultural and linguistic support services for K-12 Indigenous students going to school away from home communities." (EAP, 2018, p. 33). Similarly, the following are excerpts from the data

sources that contain relevant codes and categories related to staff and professionals in

various departments in promoting inclusiveness in schools:

> *The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will*
> *work closely with the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism within the*
> *Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labor to develop and support the*
> *leadership and programs that treat diversity as a source of growth.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 14)*

> *EECD collaborate with the other Atlantic provinces, to develop professional*
> *learning opportunities on self-regulation and play-based learning, common*
> *early learning program frameworks, and education programs for early childhood*
> *educators.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 25)*

> *EECD, in collaboration with other agencies and partners, provide cultural and*
> *linguistic support services for K-12 Indigenous students going to school away*
> *from home communities.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 33)*

> *EECD develop financial incentives and opportunities for early childhood*
> *educators to improve their professional education levels including linking*
> *certificate and diploma programs to university degree programs.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 25)*

> *EECD adopt New Brunswick's model of department-led professional learning on*
> *responding to student behavior with at least one full day devoted exclusively to it*
> *annually, supported by ongoing web-based learning opportunities.*
> *(EAP, 2018, p. 29)*

> *The school environment has changed over the years to be more inclusive and with*
> *it there needs to be the right supportive staff in place.*
> *(Collins et al., 2017, p. 36)*

> The staff and teachers of its education system are all members of its Indigenous
> community.
> *(Collins et al., 2017, p. 81)*

> *Indigenous populations in NL and elsewhere have benefited when school teachers*
> *and support staff belong to their communities.*
> *(Collins et al., 2017, p. 84)*

These paraprofessionals are assigned to the classroom teacher, move among classes and subjects, and are primarily focused on the primary and elementary grades.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 7)

Students with special needs often receive services from professionals outside the school system. Better communication and improved protocols between health and education administrators and professionals could facilitate improved arrangements for service for students.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 20)

4.1.1.4 Community

Furthermore, the community (including families and the school council) plays a

supporting role in the inclusion drive as well. For example, crowdsourcing of essential

information shows the supportiveness of a community as schools depend on such information to

make education inclusive for members of the community. Such information is vital in planning

out strategies and interventions. Their role is critical for extending support to multicultural

educators and learners in the community.

The following are snippets from the data sources that contain relevant codes and

categories related to members of the community in promoting inclusiveness in schools:

… (school, district and department personnel, School Council, families) to discuss the school's plan for inclusive education.
(K12, 2020, p. 4

These committees are composed of professionals with diverse expertise from across government departments, the education and health systems, and from the community sector.
(EAP, 2018, p. 6)

Since September 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has met with professional and community organizations to discuss the recommendations and to explore opportunities for collaboration for their implementation.
(EAP, 2018, p. 7)

This should be offered periodically for people new to the
school including parents, students, interns, student assistants, support staff and
substitute, term, and pre-service teachers.
(EAP, 2018, p. 6)

There were suggestions that schools should have their own social workers, and a
submission by the NL Association of Social Workers suggested that social
workers could and should perform duties in schools such as "assessment,
screening, and intervention; counselling and therapy for individuals, families and
groups; education and support for school staff and parents; referrals and
linkages with community agencies; and mental health promotion".
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 35)

The Nunatsiavut Government (Inuit) is currently collaborating with Memorial University
on a teaching degree program in Labrador studies to encourage community members to
pursue degrees in teaching.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 84)

The range of programs and services offered depends on the identified needs of a
particular community. Family resource centre programs are well attended and held in
high regard by both the families who visit and the communities in which they operate.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 98)

4.1.2 Theme 1: Academic Leadership Play Collective Managerial Roles in Making Education Inclusive

The first theme to emerge from the thematic analysis of this study suggests that academic

leadership play managerial roles when it comes to making education inclusive in Newfoundland

and Labrador. My research finding confirms findings from West et al. (2003), which show that

learner diversity, as well as making education inclusive, are increasingly concerning for

educational leaders. The managerial-level decision-making and planning by leaders are integral

components of making education inclusive for diverse learners. For instance, academic

leadership may need to make consensual decisions on strategies and resources that will support

in making education inclusive. Furthermore, rolling out policies might need phasing; thus,

academic leadership can make strategically favorable decisions on implementing policies. In

Newfoundland and Labrador, academic leadership were involved in planning and making decisions related to the Premier's task force on improving educational outcomes, which includes making education inclusive.

According to observations from the analyzed data, collaborative efforts within academic leadership can promote inclusion for diverse learners. Research findings from Ainscow and Miles (2008) state that there is a need for shared leadership when it comes to making education inclusive. The researchers further emphasize the need for replacing hierarchical structures with shared responsibility in the leadership community. With shared responsibilities, there is a potential to foster standards for controlling the various functions associated with academic leadership as they become comparatively less decentralized (Ainscow & Miles, 2008).

Collective managerial roles played by academic leadership are constructivist. Researchers (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Lambert et al., 1995; Lambert et al., 2002) define constructivist leadership as the reciprocal process, which allows members of an educational community to construct mutual understandings towards a common purpose about schooling. In this case, the common goal of constructing mutual understandings is to make education inclusive for multicultural learners. Lambert et al. (2002) argue that leadership entails an interactive process with various members of the academic community, taking up critical contributory roles. My data sources showed roles and functions of academic leaders and other stakeholders in Newfoundland and Labrador, who are involved in promoting inclusion in schools.

In making education more inclusive, it becomes crucial to perceive the entire process as a discursive, reflective, refining, and collective cycle that is aimed at developing a comparatively more inclusive culture (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010). Consequently, this conceptualization suggests that inclusion includes contextual factors as well as social relations that may sustain or limit it

(Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006). In other words, inclusion involves a complex interplay between leaders, individuals, groups, and stakeholders who share beliefs and values related to extending the inclusiveness of education (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010).

Concerning the shared values and beliefs of leaders when it comes to making education more inclusive, Kaser and Halbert (2009) state that to achieve such goals, it is crucial for leaders to adopt strategies that will refocus core educational values. With such an approach, there is a sharper focus on the very fundamental understanding of multiculturalism and perceptions related to inclusion. Cherkowski and Ragoonaden (2016) opine that attaining a common understanding resonates throughout their decision-making and planning process; and, in turn, have a rippling effect on the attainment of educational outcomes tied to their objective.

Kaser and Halbert (2009) further argue that "leading the shift away from a sorting system where there is a success for some towards a learning system where there is deep learning for all is at the heart of moral purpose" (p. 40). Nonetheless, Woods (2007) cautions that it is imperative to develop the skills and capacities required by leaders to engage in efficient reflective practices and cycles of inquiries as they make important decisions and plan.

To address the concerns raised by Woods (2007) about the PD of leaders when it comes to making education more inclusive, researchers suggested the learning community model of school improvement (Cherkowski & Ragoonaden, 2016; Dufour & Eaker, 1998; Huffman & Hip, 2003; Mitchell & Sackney, 2009; Stoll & Louis, 2007). The learning community model is quite standard among educational leaders because it fosters professional learning and various forms of renewal for schools and members of the academic community (Mitchell & Sackney, 2009).

To ensure that academic leaders efficiently carry out their roles in making education more inclusive, Dantley and Tillman (2010) suggest the need to initially explore existing conditions, climates, behaviors, and assumptions that may promote inequities in an educational system. Indeed, having such fundamental knowledge allows a bottom-up perspective of the underlying factors that need attention. It makes interventions specific and targeted for leaders to explicitly make the implied assumptions that hinder inclusion in schools. Bustamante, Nelson, and Onwuegbuzie (2009) recommend the use of culture audits, equity audits, and cultural competence surveys to achieve those goals.

As seen through the thematic analysis and as established in studies by Piotrowsky (2016) and Spicer (2016), there is a strong relationship between collaborative leadership and developing astute policies capable of improving inclusiveness in schools. Notably, the decentralization of leadership through the use of sub-committees and distribution of roles connotes the effective implementation of inclusive interventions (Miˇskolci, Armstrong, & Spandagou, 2016; Mullick, 2013).

Theme 2: Collaborative Supporting Role in Making Education Inclusive

Collectively, government and partner agencies will make a sustained effort to ensure schools are welcoming places for newcomers, places where they feel respected and accepted, and where teachers and students demonstrate inter-cultural understandings.
(EAP, 2018, p. 14)

The second emergent theme from my thematic analysis entails categorizations, which reflect the collaborative and supporting roles that educators, district staff, family, and instructional technologists play in making education more inclusive for multicultural learners. According to the review of empirical studies, there is an evident culture of support underneath the various roles in making education more inclusive.

Kagan (1991, p. 3) defines collaboration as institutional and inter-organizational structures where resources, power, and authority are shared, and where people are brought together to share common goals that could not be accomplished by a single individual or organization independently.

Research findings from Ainscow and Miles (2008) show that there is an increasing emphasis on the notion of sharing expertise and resources within the academic community and to the broader community. It is very much identical to Stroker's (2003) 'public value management,' which centers on network governance. Stoker (2003) states that the public value management approach centers on criticisms surrounding pre-existing strategies for improving education. The assertion further resonates with Dantley and Tillman's (2010) point that it is vital to explore underlying conditions and potential causes of inequities that hinder inclusive education. Nevertheless, Stoker (2003) emphasizes that achieving public value is through deliberations that involve all stakeholders and their actions on reflexively blending their intervention options. These networks of deliberation are salient in the education service through manifested negotiation of new symbiotic relationships among stakeholders, who are collaborating to improve inclusiveness in schools (Hargreaves, 2003). Collaborative efforts sometimes include professional networking, which may promote the collegial sharing of experiences and ideas related to enhancing inclusiveness in schools (Ainscow & Miles, 2008; Miles & Ahuja, 2007).

The review of empirical studies show that collaboration is a critical attribute of the successful implementation of strategies to make education more inclusive for multicultural learners (Bausela, 2003; Boavida & Ponte, 2011). Thus, it is relevant to shift from individualistic notions of support for inclusiveness towards a relatively more active mindset that involves shared responsibility by all involved stakeholders (Moliner, 2014; Sanahuja-Gavaldà, Olmos-

Rueda & Morón-Velasco, 2016). Shared responsibility refers to the fact that each member of an organization or group is accountable for decision-making, participation, and outcomes.

Collaborating on educational inclusion can encourage stakeholders to gain a sense of ownership during such processes (Macarulla & Saiz, 2009). Invariably, stakeholders that actively participate can become owners of the inclusion process, which requires sustainable interventions that professionals with a sense of belonging can provide.

In relation to policy documentation for Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan's Ministry of Education (2017) similarly made the following assertions in their policy document for inclusive education:

> *Inclusive education creates environments where students feel accepted, valued, confident and safe to engage in learning and where school personnel, families, students, and community agencies form collaborative teams that are committed to a shared vision to support students in reaching their full potential. (p. 2)*

> *Students, parents/guardians, senior and school-based administrators, teachers, educational assistants, supporting professionals, human service agencies and community organizations form collaborative teams to support student success within inclusive settings. (p. 3)*

> *The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education encourages the creation of educational settings where students are engaged in authentic inclusive learning experiences with age appropriate peers in their home communities. Collaborative teams work together with the end goal of inclusive educational experiences for all. (p. 4)*

As seen in the quotes above, the ministry of education for Saskatchewan duly acknowledges the relevance of collaborating and working together to improve inclusiveness in schools. It reflects the communal perspective of education and the constructivist notions that back interventions.

4.2 Research Question 2 – How can academic leadership make education more culturally responsive to multicultural learners?

Table 2: Results from Research Question 2

Codes (Level 1)	Codes (Level 2)	Category 1	Theme
Research Question 2: How can leadership make education more culturally responsive to multicultural learners?			
Leadership	Provide support to the academic community	To provide managerial support that makes education more inclusive for multicultural learners	The academic leader's quest to establish culturally responsive teaching that promotes a learner's well-being/achievement
	Ensure education is inclusive		
Educator	Identification of unique cultural strengths	To use a student-centered and culturally responsive pedagogical approach	
	Nurturing of unique cultural strengths		
	Student-centered approach		
Student	Diverse	To learn in an inclusive environment that promotes their well-being/achievement	
	Multicultural		
	Inclusive environment		
	Well-being/Achievement		

This section analyzed how academic leadership can make teaching more culturally responsive to multicultural learners. The thematic analysis showed categorizations that ascribe specific assertions for leadership, educators, and students. In this section, I will discuss the findings of the three core categorizations (leadership, educators, and students) that emerged from the study.

For the analysis, I sorted out the identified codes for stakeholder's roles according to the definition of culturally responsive pedagogy, which refers to "teaching that recognizes that all students learn differently and that these differences may be connected to background, language,

family structure and social or cultural identity" (Gay, 2002; Lucas 2002). From the definition, three stakeholders are identified – leadership, educators, and students. I selected their associated roles based on the definition, which further contributed to the developed theme on making education culturally inclusive.

4.2.1 Making Education Culturally Inclusive

In this section, I provide a description of leadership, educators, and students concerning their functions in making education culturally inclusive.

4.2.1.1 Leadership

Per the thematic analysis, leadership remains a dominant category and is at the core of making education more inclusive for multicultural learners in Newfoundland and Labrador. Leadership varies according to levels; however, as per my analysis, it is restricted to academic leadership. Concerning the second objective, leadership roles that emerged from the analysis are to provide support through planning and making essential decisions that promotes inclusion for multicultural learners.

As observed in the analyzed policy documents, there is much onus on leadership to ensure that they provide suitable resources, PD, and learning environments for inclusion. Of particular interest, academic leadership recognizes the relevance of collective efforts to achieve their inclusion goals; however, educators bear a significant portion of directives. Based on the expectations and assumptions upheld by leadership, I deduced that their goal is to achieve an inclusive learning environment where educators use culturally responsive pedagogies to promote effective teaching and to learn in a multiculturally diverse class.

The following are excerpts from the data sources that contain relevant codes and categories related to leadership's role in promoting culturally responsive pedagogies in schools:

School, district and department personnel, School Council, families) to discuss the school's plan for inclusive education.
(K12, 2020, p. 4)

Maintain awareness of the time and leadership required to foster a positive and supportive school culture.
(K12, 2020, p. 7))

While the task force was commissioned to consult on nine focus areas, all curriculum areas will be
influenced through ongoing curriculum renewal, expansion of supportive technology, and professional
learning support for teachers, school district personnel, and early childhood educators.
(EAP, 2018, p. 5)

g) providing department-led professional learning on a
new special education policy to ensure consistency.
(EAP, 2018, p. 21)

… enable a broad and meaningful response to the educational needs of newcomers and students of diverse cultural and other backgrounds; and,
• address the need for all students to learn more about the many cultures of the world;
• resources to develop expertise to respond to the educational needs of newcomer students from diverse linguistic, religious, cultural, educational, and social backgrounds, including an increase in the allocation of English as a Second Language teachers and expanded access to Literacy Enrichment and Academic Readiness for Newcomers (LEARN) programming;
(EAP, 2018, p. 14)

Implementation of the recommendations related to teacher education and professional learning will build on current strengths among its partners, which include the school districts, Memorial University's Faculty of Education, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.
(EAP, 2018, p. 17)

• professional learning initiatives and university programming to support reading specialists and classroom teachers who deliver reading curriculum;
(EAP, 2018, p. 12)

*NLESD, CSFP, Faculty of Education, the EECD, and NLTA provide leadership
and resources to achieve the principles of professional development as envisioned
in the Professional Development Alliance and the EECD model for professional
development, particularly sustainability, relevance, and adequate resourcing.
(EAP, 2018, p. 35)*

*Develop a common understanding of inclusive education among all staff.
(K12, 2020, p. 3)*

*With the school-based team school development team, determine how the
entire staff will gather data regarding existing inclusive cultures, policies and
practices in your school.
(K12, 2020, p. 3)*

*Identify professional learning needs of the staff.
(K12, 2020, p. 6)*

*Determine the professional learning needs of staff members regarding topics
such as differentiated instruction, differentiated assessment, program planning
process, co-teaching and shared discipline.
(K12, 2020, p. 6)*

*The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the school
districts designate individuals in leadership positions in their respective
organizations to have responsibility for multicultural education to ensure that
specialist teachers and classroom teachers receive the direction, support and
resources they need:
a) to teach multicultural students, and
b) to teach about multiculturalism.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 132)*

4.2.1.2 Educator

My thematic analysis shows that educators are an essential component of the

collaborative team identified to make education inclusive for multicultural learners in

Newfoundland and Labrador. Educators are a core intermediary for promoting inclusiveness in

schools. Thus, it is understandable that academic leadership and other stakeholders are working

together with educators to promote multicultural learner's well-being and achievement in the province.

Based on the expectations set out for educators to implement culturally responsive pedagogies, an educator's experience, capacity, and PD should focus on the needs of the student. Since a multicultural classroom may have diverse needs and expectations, the educator's PD towards the development of culturally inclusive pedagogies depends on the institution's clear understanding of student needs and expectations.

I have provided the following excerpts to emphasize the collaborative role of educators in making education inclusive for multicultural learners. For instance, EAP (2018, p. 8) mentions that "teachers will collaboratively design learning experiences for students using a tiered, student-centred structure to inform the level of intervention that is most appropriate." The remaining examples show different instances of collaborative roles for educators based on the data sources, and are as follows:

Provide professional reading material and other resources regarding the
philosophy of inclusive education.
(K12, 2020, p. 3)

adjustments to mathematics curriculum to include clear expectations for each
grade level and to create a balance between foundation skills and concept
development;
(K12, 2020, p. 4)

• professional learning opportunities for classroom teachers and early childhood
educators who teach multicultural students and those who teach about
multiculturalism; and
(EAP, 2018, p. 14)

• improved access to post-secondary education programs and professional
learning opportunities for early childhood educators and incentives for early
childhood educators to increase their early childhood education credentials;

(EAP, 2018, p. 15)

High quality initial teacher education through university degree programs combined with ongoing professional learning can improve educational outcomes for all students.
(EAP, 2018, p. 17)

Implementation of the recommendations related to teacher education and professional learning will build on current strengths among its partners, which include the school districts, Memorial University's Faculty of Education, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.
(EAP, 2018, p. 17)

• a sustainable combination of system-wide and school-directed professional learning opportunities guided by teacher and student learning needs and designed to foster change in practice;
• alignment of teacher education programs with the needs of the education system in Newfoundland and Labrador;
(EAP, 2018, p. 17)

b) infuse appropriate knowledge and learning, experiences in teacher education programs for teaching Indigenous students and teaching about Indigenous populations.
(EAP, 2018, p. 33)

c) Review the intermediate curriculum and develop materials, as needed, to better engage able students and to support students who experience difficulty.
(EAP, 2018, p. 38)

The Faculty of Education plays a significant role in teacher education. Over ninety per cent of teachers in NL receive their initial teacher education degrees from Memorial University.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 114)

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers` Association (NLTA) supports professional development through the development and delivery of a range of sessions and programs.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 114)

The NLESD reported that new teachers lack competencies in high need areas, most especially, reading, inclusive education and mathematics, creating a gap between the teaching needs of the school system and the competencies of newly certified teachers.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 115)

4.2.1.3 Student

Throughout the analysis of data, I observed that academic leadership acknowledges that the student-base in Newfoundland and Labrador is continually becoming diverse at an increasing rate. It is crucial to meet the learning needs of multicultural students in a safe, welcoming, student-centered, and inclusive learning environment that promotes learner's well-being and achievement.

The 'student' category relates to the assumption that 'all students can learn,' which the analyzed data explicitly portrays. The assumption is related to Mestre's (2006) opinion that all students can learn if guided in a conducive learning environment, and by a culturally responsive educator. Thus, it is relevant to understand the needs of learners and their diversity so that they can attain their educational goals. I selected codes related to learners and their multicultural needs. The first one (EAP, 2018, p. 9) states that "the physical, mental, and social well-being of students is essential in order to improve their educational outcomes." The selected codes highlight learner needs, which leadership may be aware of and are trying to make provision for.

The following are other examples of such codes:

There will be increasing numbers of children in early years programs and K-12 schools who come from different countries and cultures, and these students will require many supports from the province's education system.
(EAP, 2018, p. 14)

The first was to improve teaching and learning outcomes for Indigenous students.
(EAP, 2018, p. 12)

The second was to enhance understanding of Indigenous knowledge, history, experiences, culture, and practices for all teachers and students in the province.
(EAP, 2018, p. 12)

Students experience a safe, caring, and inclusive school environment; 3.
(EAP, 2018, p. 18)

The K-12 education system is responsive to students' strengths and needs; 4.
(EAP, 2018, p. 33)

b) ensure that all students learn about multiculturalism.
(EAP, 2018, p. 34)

• linguistic and cultural support services provided for K-12 Indigenous students who attend school away from their home communities.
(EAP, 2018, p. 13)
the principles of Universal Design for Learning included in curriculum as it is renewed, and in the design of the learning environment, to produce more flexible learning opportunities for all learners;
(EAP, 2018, p. 9)

This action plan aligns with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's mandate to ensure that all children in Newfoundland and Labrador have access to safe, caring and inclusive learning environments and an education system that is responsive to students' strengths and needs.
(EAP, 2018, p. 3)

Outcomes for some student populations have historically not been as good in the K-12 school system due to varying life circumstances.
(EAP, 2018, p. 4)

In the implementation of this action plan, government will recognize the diversity of life experiences and the influence it has on student learning styles and educational outcomes.
(EAP, 2018, p. 4)

This includes all students: girls, boys, varying gender identities; students with disabilities; students who are Indigenous; those who are new to the province, and LGBTQI2-S children and youth.

(EAP, 2018, p. 4)

Moving forward, ongoing dialogue with stakeholders will inform other initiatives to improve program delivery and student outcomes.
(EAP, 2018, p. 5)

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, in collaboration with other agencies and partners, provide cultural and linguistic support services for K – 12 Indigenous students going to school away from home communities. This would include safeguarding first language skills and providing adequate ESL skills to students to help them succeed in school.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 87)

4.2.2 Theme 3: The Academic Leader's Quest to Establish Culturally Responsive Teaching

The emergent theme for this study's second objective skews towards the third dimension of culturally responsive pedagogy – the institutional dimension with a focus on academic leadership. Just as Leithwood et al. (2004) states, 'School leadership acts as a catalyst without which other good things are quite unlikely to happen.' Leadership and administration of academic institutions are undoubtedly central to promoting inclusion in schools. Their roles include developing values that reflect in educational policies and practices that improve the quality of education and make it more inclusive. Academic leadership are relevant for enacting educational policies and planning out strategies to improve education. These affordances relate to various levels of academic leadership. For instance, at the school level, the academic leadership may be centered on managing and prioritizing resources, fostering relationships between families and the community, as well as managing educational goals and related interventions.

NAESP (2016) mentions that academic leaders must take the forefront and lead any change related to raising awareness, promoting tolerance, and making schools inclusive for diverse learners. In some instances, academic leadership is expected to promote and support

these values so that inclusiveness becomes achievable. The emergent theme from my study

confirms these points since there is a heavy emphasis on academic leadership when it comes to

making education more inclusive. Therefore, leadership is tasked with several roles to promote

inclusion in schools.

4.2.2.1 Assumptions Underlying Academic Leadership's Provision of Culturally Responsive Education

It is critical to outline related underlying assumptions of leadership to get a

comprehensive grasp of leadership's role in providing culturally responsive PD for educators.

The first assumption is the idea that 'all students can learn' (NL Department of

Education, 2014). That is a fundamental condition necessary for learning in a multicultural

setting, and it duly requires a culturally responsive educator who understands multicultural

learners and knows how to work with them. With these in mind, academic leadership should

understand that PD, which is the primary way to equip educators with skills relevant to the

teaching of multicultural online classes, is a necessity within an institution pursuing an inclusive

education agenda.

The second assumption identified is that 'students are the responsibilities of educators'

(NL Department of Education, 2014). It is to say that educators have an integral role in

supporting their academic institutions to meet the needs of learners. Therefore, the needs of the

student should influence what the educator knows and can do. An import of the second

assumption is that PD for educators should focus on the needs of the student and the educators.

Since multicultural learners may have diverse needs and expectations, PD towards the

development of culturally responsive pedagogies should reflect the institution's clear

understanding of the diversity of student needs and expectations.

The next assumption states that "programming is to be offered in the most inclusive environment least restrictive environment respecting the dignity of the student' (NL Department of Education, 2014). The assumption highlights the essence of the learning environment in promoting inclusion for multicultural learners. To provide PD for educators, getting an understanding of the current status of the learning environment and its needs is required to strategically provide comparatively more suitable and focused PD. The educator's input is valuable since they are at the forefront of working with multicultural learners. More so, educators spend an extensive amount of time in the learning environment with these learners. Therefore, academic leadership should consider the relevance of input from learners and educators in planning inclusion PDs for educators.

4.2.2.2 Providing Educator's with PD for Educational Inclusion

The following are excerpts from data that developed the theme:

• a review the standards for teacher certification to ensure alignment of requirements for certification, the needs of the school system, and initial teacher education programs; and (EAP, 2018, p. 4)

• a revision to the Teacher Training Act to be responsive to the needs of the school system.
(EAP, 2018, p. 17)

NLESD, CSFP, Faculty of Education, the EECD, and NLTA provide leadership and resources to achieve the principles of professional development
as envisioned in the Professional Development Alliance and the EECD model for professional development, particularly sustainability, relevance, and adequate resourcing.
(EAP, 2018, p. 35)

EECD undertake a full review of the Teacher Training Act.
(EAP, 2018, p. 35)

... SEOs, inclusive education itinerant) to identify and deliver relevant training.
(K12, 2020, p. 3)

At the school district level, where hiring, professional development, and program delivery occur, there is no designated program specialist for ESL and the LEARN program.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 91)

Others commented that teachers in regular classrooms in NL would benefit from professional development to improve their inter-cultural competencies and teaching strategies to create more welcoming classrooms for newcomers.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 93)

ESL and LEARN teachers who work directly with newcomers need improved initial teacher education and ongoing professional development, and they require support in assessing and responding appropriately to newcomer students' educational, social and psychological needs.
(Collins et al., 2017, p. 94)

Observations from the thematic analysis show that PD for promoting inclusion for educators is vital. There is potential for PD; however, leadership can pay more attention on how they can attain these successes. As seen in the excerpts, there are specific sections of the data that call for inclusion PD for educators. An example is K12 (2020, p. 25), which states that "the level of collaboration and co-teaching in inclusive schools will be impacted by a number of variables such as: students' diverse learning needs, teachers' training and background, physical space, and available resources." I have provided more excerpts from the data showing the importance of PD for educators.

Provinces in Canada have recognized the strong correlation between academic leadership and student achievement (Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009). Even though academic leaders might not necessarily be directly involved in teaching and learning activities in the learning environment, their impact is far-reaching.

Guskey (2002) mentions that PD should be an ongoing process and should be well-structured. When academic leadership is planning PD, the input of educators is critical to the success of the PD program. For instance, the inquiry should gauge the educator's competency,

expectations, and requirements when planning a specialized PD to promote culturally responsive pedagogies.

Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) are of the view that culturally responsive pedagogy goes beyond acknowledging the 'cultural uniqueness' of multicultural learners; however, educators should be mindful about nurturing this uniqueness to foster effective learning. In other words, cultural theorists and other practitioners should perceive multiculturalism as a strength and reorient themselves to capitalizing on such opportunities that can enhance teaching and learning. Doing away with negative thoughts and perceptions can afford the practitioner a chance to perceive multiculturalism as an advantage and not a deficit to the learner and the learning community. Academic leadership can potentially factor in the points mentioned above in designing and implementing PD programs on culturally responsive teaching.

As noted in the identified assumptions, academic leadership is of the view that classes are supposed to be provided in the most inclusive environment that avoids or reduces cultural and racial stereotyping. As such, pedagogies for teaching multicultural learners ought to recognize the equally important places of various cultures in a diverse classroom setting. Based on my observations, learners, regardless of their cultural disposition, should fully participate in the learning process. As such, educators may need to be culturally intelligent in the classroom to make teaching and learning immersive for all students. My suggestion is related to Childs' (2020) argument that the educator's technical competence is as good as his cultural and social intelligence, which is essential to teaching multicultural classes. By deduction, educators should possess both the traditional skills of teaching as well as cognitive skills that enable them to relate with students from different racial and cultural settings. It becomes critical to include educators in the planning of PD programs for culturally responsive teaching.

PD for educators to develop an inclusive educational program must, therefore, impart key cognitive skills, including emotional, cultural, and social intelligence (Junfeng Yang, Yu, Chen & Huang, 2014). Emotional intelligence enables the teacher to understand the emotions of students and react to these emotions in a way that does not cause cultural stereotypes. Cultural intelligence is a requirement for understanding the nature of the various cultures that make up an online class. Cultural intelligence facilitates the application of emotional intelligence because a good understanding of the diverse cultures of a class is only made possible by an emotional understanding of these cultures (Liu et al., 2010). Also, social intelligence enables the teacher to understand general student behaviors and how to relate with students in the face of these behaviors.

4.3 Research Question 3 – What are lessons and interventions that promote the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies among online educators?

Table 3: Results from Research Question 3

Research Question 3: What are lessons and interventions that promote the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies among online educators	
Categories	**Emergent Theme**
Adult-focused pedagogy	Andragogical approach to online teaching and learning
Learning styles	Designing online learning to suit the learning styles of students
Culturally responsive pedagogy	Making online education more inclusive for multicultural students through culturally responsive pedagogy

4.3.1 Theme 4: Making Online Education More Inclusive for Multicultural Students Through Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

The analysis unfolded various lessons and interventions that promote the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies among higher education faculty.

Research findings from Heitner and Jennings (2016) indicate that culturally responsive pedagogies can create equal opportunities for multicultural students in their academic endeavors. Siwatu (2007) acknowledges that a learner's diverse background, prior knowledge, and learning experiences enhance the process of teaching and learning based on their research findings. Furthermore, (Garcia & Guerra, 2006) mentions that it is essential also to recognize the learner's identity, language, and culture to design efficient teaching and learning activities for inclusion. Thus, culturally responsive teaching involves placing value on cultural differences of learners whiles confronting notions on stereotypes, racism, oppression, intolerance, prejudice, and injustice (Gay, 2010).

For a Province like Newfoundland that has diverse learners, using culturally responsive pedagogies like mentioned in the cited studies above can yield desirable learning outcomes.

In terms of providing educators with culturally responsive teaching PD, Romiszowski's (2011) had this to say:

"… there is the need to also consider pedagogy for the professional development of online faculty and not just how to use instructional technology and online tools." (P. 12)

Romiszowki's (2011) recommendation suggests that institutions currently tend to focus on the use of instructional technology and tools without considering appropriate pedagogies to suit online teaching and learning. As indicated earlier, the nature of teaching and learning online using instructional technologies is determined in part by the underlying pedagogy. Hence, focusing on only the instructional aspects of online education may make it difficult for academic leadership to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and ensure that online teaching follows the best standard often incorporated into the pedagogy.

As student needs change over time, academic institutions can use transformative pedagogies that can stand the test of time and meet the ever-changing expectations of online learners. In light of the preceding points, utilizing culturally inclusive and adaptable pedagogies for online learners is a critical intervention. The use of an adaptable pedagogy necessitates continuous support for faculties teaching online. The reason is because the expertise of faculties can align with changes in student needs as well as the changing levels of cultural inclusiveness in schools. More so, academic institutions would have to incorporate a continuous faculty development program into the creation of a multicultural online platform.

4.3.1.1 Andragogical Approach to Online Teaching and Learning

Romiszowski (2011) mentioned 'andragogy' as a fundamental approach to improving online teaching and learning since it involves implementing developing pedagogies primarily for adult-learners. Romiszowski (2011) mentions that andragogical efforts for academic institutions should consider five assumptions that enhance learner experiences, and using pedagogies that reflect changes such as student aging, priorities, and ego.

The first assumption is that self-concepts change from dependency on others (which occurs among children) toward self-direction at adulthood. Secondly, a learner's prior experience becomes an essential resource for learning; hence, adult learners would draw on their past experiences when exploring educational opportunities. Besides, the adult's readiness to learn becomes increasingly oriented to their work or social roles. The fourth assumption is that the focus of aging learners shifts from subject-centeredness to problem-centeredness, which means that academic institutions must ensure that online teaching is practice-oriented. If so, pedagogies for online teaching and learning ought to be practice-oriented. Finally, the motivation to learn is increasingly intrinsic rather than extrinsic, suggesting that online education should address the

inherent needs of adult students. Based on these assumptions, academic institutions would have to adopt a model of teaching that is well suited for adults from different backgrounds, which differs from K-12 models.

According to Lui et al. (2010), academic institutions can encourage students to participate in online courses by creating an inclusive learning climate and showing respect for all. This recommendation underscores the idea that students would only show disinterest in participating in a diverse online class if they feel that they may be disrespected, marginalized, or alienated by the teaching process and social classroom environment.

Additionally, Coffin et al. (2015) support the notion that learners achieve learning outcomes when they adopt teaching and learning modules tailored towards learning styles. Hence, using andragogical models to modify learning activities to suit learning styles influences adult learning (Winerman, 2011). Furthermore, Gina (2016), emphasized that andragogy is a student-focused, experience-centered, and problem-oriented and requires cooperation between adult educators and learners to achieve better online learning outcomes. The study also indicates that andragogy and problem-based learning has offered a platform for skills learned through online settings for transfer into practical contexts. Thus, well-constructed educational materials for online studies allows adults to learn how to study. Also, findings from Adebisi and Oyeleke (2018), concludes that an effective approach to teaching adults using andragogical models to teaching can influence the interest of learners, students' engagement in learning, critical thinking skills, and the enhancement of online teaching and learning.

Findings from the reviewed literature indicate that effective andragogical teaching models involve diverse teaching and learning strategies through differentiated instruction. Hence,

effective online teaching and learning environments require a combination of andragogical and pedagogical modules for constructive online learning.

4.3.1.2 Designing Online Learning to Suit the Learning Styles of Students

In designing online learning, Fasihuddin et al. (2017) examined learner-behavior based on selecting suitable literature for multicultural learners in an online learning environment. The study employed the Felder and Silverman Learning Styles Model (FSLSM) to evaluate learning styles ideal for online learning. The outcome of the study proves that when learning materials and literature conceptualizes online learning environments, they provide an adequate level of precision in identifying learning styles appropriate for online studies. Relative to results identified in the FSLSM model, findings from Kumar et al. (2017) shows that current research models such as Kolb, Honey, and Mumford (1982) attest to the importance of adaptability in educational techniques and teaching methods and its impact on online learning outcomes.

Romiszowski (2011) also proposed factoring the multicultural-influenced learning styles of students into designing, teaching, and assessing online students. The suggestion relates to the assumption that students who choose to learn online are prepared to learn and evaluated online. Needless to say, whatever medium teachers use to teach is the ideal medium for assessing students. It is essential to extensively consider the background and characteristics of learners when designing online learning. Cercone (2008) mentions that most adults learn in a traditional and passive classroom. Nevertheless, online learning environments are new to learners as they might be new to teachers. Also, the findings of analysis based on the review of 78 prior studies on adaptive teaching and learning methods suggest that learning styles and methods of evaluation impact a learners' academic performance and satisfaction level (Kumar et al., 2017).

In another study that employed the Kolb learning style to assess online learning behavior and its related outcome, they found that online learning yielded better results when learners participate in online discussions and activities. The researchers further advised online educators to consider the multiplicity of learning styles in developing literature models for online studies to the benefit of students with different study patterns (Lu et al., 2007). In a study by Johnson, Jacobsen, and Howe (2017), their research findings indicate that it is beneficial to select literature for learners carefully. For instance, the learning resource should be age-appropriate, which the educator can achieve through a 'negotiation' process with learners, community members, district staff, and other educators. Consequently, educators should vividly evaluate 'all' multimedia content before presenting it to students. It allows the educator to assess the suitability of the resource for learners. Previewing content beforehand also provides a unique opportunity to crosscheck whether it is in line with your predetermined learning objectives. In my opinion, strategic and well-thought-out instructional risk-taking decisions, which are backed by research, provide a teacher with the needed support to pursue innovative pedagogic exploits.

Research findings from Desak (2017) on students' performance based on online learning indicate that although online learning evolves around teacher-centered and student-centered, a class with more active and receptive teachers produced much better results. The study also implied that lesson plans of teachers have an impact on the academic achievement of learners. It was established based on a comparative study between different teachers with different teaching and learning styles.

In another study by McLawhon and Cutright (2012), the Smarter Educator model fostered assess the relationship between educators teaching or learning style and online job satisfaction. Their research findings suggest that the different use of educational materials and

facilities based on educator's learning preference impacted on learning satisfaction. In their

study, they suggest that online learning is both teacher-centered and student-centered, and the

success of students to excel in online learning is affected by the teaching styles of educators.

Thus, it is also essential to factor in the learning styles of students when designing online

learning for multicultural learners.

Thus, the reviewed literature on online learning styles suggests that the educator's

pedagogical choices may impact learning outcomes for diverse learners.
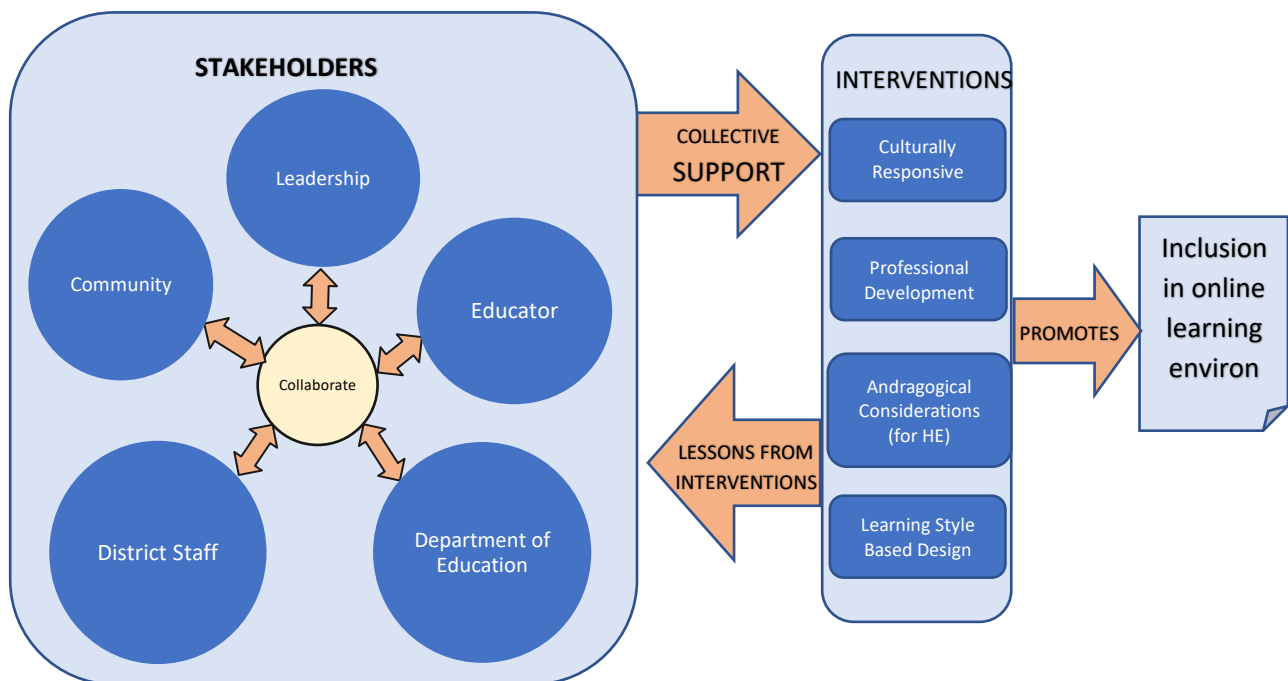
Figure 2: Model for Promoting Inclusiveness in an Online Learning Environment
Source: Researcher's construct

The developed model for promoting inclusiveness conceptualizes findings based on

secondary data in an online learning environment, which conceptualizes the research findings. It

involves a translation of research findings from promoting inclusiveness in Newfoundland and

Labrador and research findings on successful interventions for multicultural online teaching and

learning.

The model emphasizes the complementary roles and functions of each stakeholder in promoting inclusiveness in schools. For instance, there is collaboration between stakeholders. Furthermore, these roles are in accordance with the collaborative support of stakeholders in promoting inclusiveness in schools. To this point, the model includes successful interventions and strategies for inclusiveness in online learning environments. The interventions include the use of culturally responsive pedagogies, professional development for educators, andragogical considerations (for higher education), and learning style-based designs. Importantly, the model highlights a sustainable process, whereby lessons from interventions informs collaborative efforts in promoting inclusion in schools.

4.4 Summary of Chapter

In the results and discussion chapter, I provided results and thematic analysis for each research question. Research question 1 showed that academic leadership, educators, the Department of Education, district staff, and the community are stakeholders responsible for promoting inclusion in schools. Based on their roles and functions, two themes developed, and I duly discussed them in comparison with findings from other studies. Results from the second research question showed how roles of academic leadership, educators, and students developed a theme on making education culturally inclusive. The third research question showed that focusing on andragogy, learning styles of learners, and using culturally responsive pedagogies can promote inclusion in online higher education. The last section in this chapter shows a developed model for promoting inclusiveness in an online learning environment.

The next chapter provides a summary of the study as well as recommendations and limitations associated with the study.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

My study explored the roles of stakeholders in making education more inclusive based on occurrences in St. John's, NL. I then explored lessons from interventions in making online inclusive for multicultural learners. In this chapter, I present the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The chapter also includes discussions of limitations and future directions. Before presenting the study conclusions, it is important to provide a summary of the research findings.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

Findings of the study are summarized as follows:

5.1.1 Research Question 1 - Who is Responsible for Making Online Education Inclusive for Multicultural Learners?

The study found five stakeholders responsible for making online education inclusive for multicultural learners. The first of the stakeholders is academic leadership. Their roles may include the coordination of the activities of the five stakeholders in the provision of culturally inclusive education. The second stakeholder is the educator, who is responsible for implementing policies in an online learning environment. The department of education and its subsidiary departments form the third identified stakeholders. They regulate the activities of academic institutions and ensure that policies, pedagogies, and teaching styles designed by institutions meet predetermined standards. The district staff is the fourth stakeholder who support academic institutions on community issues and to understand the cultural composition of the community. The community, including families and the school council, may support academic institutions to align online education with its ethnic and cultural orientation.

5.1.2 Research Question 2 – How Can Academic Leadership Make Education More Culturally Responsive to Multicultural Learners?

The analyzed data suggested that academic leadership could make education more culturally inclusive in a couple of ways. Firstly, academic leadership can influence the development of pedagogies, policies, and curricula that foster cultural inclusion. Secondly, academic leadership can modify teaching styles and online classrooms to make online teaching student-centric. Finally, academic leadership can moderate online teaching and pedagogies to maximize student achievement and well-being.

5.1.3 Research Question 3 – Lessons and Interventions That Promote the Implementation of Culturally Responsive Pedagogies Among Online Educators

The reviewed literature for the third research question emphasized four main lessons and interventions. The first is the need for an andragogic approach to online teaching and learning to be adopted. By this result, the study highlights the potential that online teaching and its underlying pedagogies have for adult learning. Secondly, pedagogies can suit the learning styles of students since this approach would make teaching more effective. The third lesson is that online education should be made more inclusive for multicultural students through the development and utilization of culturally responsive pedagogy. Continuous faculty development in the context of multicultural online education provision is the final way to improve the inclusiveness of teaching and learning.

5.2 Conclusion

Five stakeholders are responsible for making teaching and learning inclusive, namely academic leadership, educator, department of education, district staff, and community. These stakeholders play their roles in multicultural education as a team or in collaboration. Academic leadership could contribute to an improved multicultural education by influencing the development of pedagogies, policies, and curricula that foster cultural inclusion. They are also

able to modify teaching styles and online classrooms to make online teaching student-centric. Finally, they can moderate online teaching and pedagogies to maximize student achievement and well-being. Lessons and interventions for improving the inclusiveness of teaching and learning include aligning online teaching and learning with the needs of adult learners, designing pedagogies to suit the learning styles of students, making online education more inclusive for multicultural students through the development and utilization of culturally responsive pedagogy, and improving continuous faculty development in the context of multicultural online education provision.

5.3 Recommendations

The analysis of data in this study has yielded interesting findings with several implications for practice. In this section, the researcher draws on the findings of the study to recommend ways for improving the inclusiveness of online education. I provide details of the specific recommendations in the following subsections:

5.3.1 Continuous Modification of Online Teaching for Adult Learners

One of the main findings of this study highlights the need to design online teaching for adult learners. The finding is in line with the idea that demand for online education comes from working adults who would want to advance their education while maintaining their professional or employment statuses (Miled, 2019). According to the paradigm of transformative multiculturalism, educators can adopt pedagogies and modify them over time to meet the ever-changing needs of students. Consequently, the modification of online education should start with the design of pedagogies that are mindful of the skills and weaknesses of adult learners as well as the changing professional goals of these learners.

Adult learners have strengths and weaknesses that educators cannot ignore at the stage of pedagogy development. It is because the weaknesses of students can limit access to online learning and associated resources. Hence, the ultimate pedagogy is the one that allows the adult learner to fully participate in online learning activities. Further to the above, adult learners may include aging individuals whose life goals and physiological attributes can change with time. At age 35, for instance, a student can spend a maximum of 20 hours a week learning online. At age 45, this individual may be unable to spend the same amount of time learning online owing to health-related and physiological changes (e.g., declining vision) and a potential change in life goals. This illustration suggests that the design of pedagogies targeting adult learners may include a scheme for modifying existing pedagogies to maintain or improve the inclusiveness of aging adult learners.

Given this understanding, academic institutions could develop and use alterable pedagogies to address the evolving needs and situations of adult learners. Since a change in life goals and physiological conditions of aging adults can be natural and uncontrollable, institutions cannot expect adult learners to adapt to fixed pedagogies as they age and experience a gradual change in life goals and their physiological attributes. Thus, modifiability of pedagogies and efforts to align the style of teaching with the evolving needs of adult learners are unavoidable, going forward.

5.3.2 Aligning Teaching Styles with the Interests, Needs, and Approaches of Students

Beyond designing pedagogies to meet the needs of adult learners, the approach to teaching should meet the needs and learning styles of students. The priority of these institutions, therefore, should be to satisfy students by meeting their needs. For this reason, academic institutions must devise ways to achieve their core goals by aligning teaching with student

interests, needs, and learning styles. In guiding educational institutions to meet their goals, the following recommended steps are useful:

5.3.3 Understanding Students' Interests and How They Change with Time

Academic institutions should understand the interests of their students as far as online education is concerned. Frequent research work aimed at identifying what students expect from online programs is helpful to understand how student interests change over time. It is also incumbent on academic institutions to explore student perspectives in designing pedagogies, online learning environments, learning resources, and modalities for facilitating multicultural classes. These steps are potential ways to make the provision of online education student-focused and more satisfactory.

5.3.4 Designing Pedagogies and Teaching Strategies in Line with Student Needs

Essentially, educational institutions should invariably meet student needs. As such, the delivery of online education may be planned and designed to meet student needs. With this in mind, I can argue that a proper understanding of student needs is a precursor to designing pedagogies, learning resources, and online campuses. This understanding is also a requirement for staff recruitment and PD. It is another way to say that an academic institution can only meet the needs of its students if they design pedagogies, recruit or provide PD for faculty members, and develop online courses as well as course materials based on well-understood needs of students. As indicated earlier, academic institutions could utilize research as a tool to identify current student needs and monitor potential changes in these needs.

5.3.5 Students' Learning Style Must Drive Online Education

To meet their needs, students would have to adopt learning styles, which they are comfortable utilizing. As learners and people seeking to improve their skills, students would

expect academic institutions to provide a model of education that makes learning easier and enjoyable. Students may not enjoy learning when participation is not made optional and are rather limited to teaching strategies or styles that conflict with their learning styles. In light of this fact, it is incumbent on academic institutions to provide faculty members with professional development to teach effectively without changing the way students learn. Similarly, educators can adopt pedagogies to suit the students' learning styles. The need for academic institutions to design their teaching strategies based on students' learning approaches highlights the essence of asking students to align their learning styles with the institution's way of teaching makes learning less natural and potentially disorientating (Barber & Barber, 2012; Junfeng Yang et al., 2014).

5.3.6 Making Culturally Responsive Pedagogies the Foundation of Online Education

As the results of this study indicate, a way to improve the inclusiveness of online education is to design culturally responsive pedagogies as the foundation of online teaching and learning. In this section, I focus on what academic institutions can do to develop culturally responsive pedagogies. Firstly, the development of pedagogies in partnership with relevant stakeholders is inevitable. As the analysis of data indicates, key stakeholders (i.e., students, their families, community leaders, regulators of education, academic leadership) play a role in the development of an inclusive online learning system. As the foundation of online teaching and learning, therefore, pedagogies should be made culturally inclusive by drawing on the inputs of these stakeholders.

Students occupy a central place among these stakeholders because educational services institutions aim to provide are tailored for them. By involving them in the design of pedagogies, academic institutions have the best chance to apply teaching methods, materials, and online

classrooms that are well suited for online learners. Before academic institutions have the opportunity to communicate with their students and engage them in policy formulation, they have to engage families and community leaders to understand the cultural and ethnic distributions of relevant localities. By this effort, institutions would be able to design pedagogies, teaching materials, and online campuses that would best address the needs of the various cultures in the communities.

In their effort to develop culturally responsive pedagogies, academic institutions would have to maintain a close relationship with regulatory institutions such as the Ministry of Education. It is the case because the engagement of personnel from regulatory bodies exposes pedagogy development to monitoring and scrutiny, ensuring that the contents of teaching approaches and online campuses meet established standards. The engagement of regulators in this respect is also a way to align pedagogies with the regulator's expectations for student protection and security, given that the internet is vulnerable to hackers. In light of the above recommendations, it is clear that the role of academic leadership is to initiate the said partnership and facilitate its key activities.

5.3.7 Continuous Improvement of Professional Development

Continuous professional development forms a part of many academic institutional management strategies or processes logically because educators need to update their expertise regularly and align their teaching styles with new student needs. The cause for continuous professional development efforts emphasizes the idea that learner needs, and the employment landscape are bound to change with time. Based on the findings of this study, therefore, the following recommendations are made for improving faculty development:

5.3.8 Regularizing Professional Development

Arguably, many academic institutions know that faculty development is beneficial to them and students and therefore invest in faculty development programs. However, not all of them regularize faculty development programs (King, 2011). Per the basic import of transformative multiculturalism, teaching approaches have to change to meet evolving student needs. For this reason, academic institutions can develop a culture of continuous faculty development that guides and necessitates regular PD for faculty members. In agreement with Eras (2016), researchers recommend that academic institutions should provide their faculty members with annual PD since changes in student needs and the current teaching styles can occur within a year.

5.3.9 Applying Modern Professional Development Methods to Equip Contextually Relevant Teaching Skills

With professional development being a primary way to impart new skills and enhance existing expertise, academic institutions should look out for and apply modern professional development models and methods to enhance the ability of educators to teach with the current approaches suited for students. The methods of professional development must also be specialized for online teaching and learning because a generic professional development program that gives little attention to inclusive online teaching may not benefit the improvement of the quality of online learning. This recommendation relates to the idea that the skills needed to teach online are different from those needed to teach in a physical classroom (Barber & Barber, 2012).

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The methodological limitation of the study centers on the use of secondary data sources to address the research problem. The outbreak of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) disrupted the execution of this study. We originally designed this study as an empirical study that would draw

on the experiences of academic leadership in selected institutions. The pandemic broke out a few weeks prior to data collection, which compelled the researcher to redesign the study. The researcher utilized secondary data to address the research questions instead of primary data. As a result, the analysis of this study was exclusively limited to a thematic analysis of NL policy documentation and a review of relevant literature. As such, my study's research findings do not show specific details pertaining to explicit experiences and observations from a stakeholder point of view.

5.5 Future Research Suggestions

Given the above limitations, future research can add value to this study by utilizing appropriate primary data to answer the research questions posed. Such studies can provide specific details on individuals, their roles, and responsibilities in making education more inclusive for Newfoundland and Labrador. In other applicable contexts, future researchers could conduct this study as a phenomenological qualitative study. In this vein, a focus-group data collection approach may suffice.

The proposed model in my study welcomes further exploration as it contributes to efforts that promote inclusiveness in online education. Future researchers may choose to pursue my study's objectives by using other research methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and analytical processes. As such, research findings from my study as well as from future research in this area can promote inclusiveness for multicultural online learning in Canada and beyond.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX I

Screenshot of All 718 Coded Segments

Source: MAXQDA data analysis

APPENDIX II

Screenshot of 58 Coded Segments for 'Leadership'

Code: Leadership   58 coded segments

Document name	Code	Beginning	End	Weigh...	Preview	Created
eap-report-2	Leadership	6: 850	6: 944	0	These government and educational leaders will provide direction	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	12: 717	12: 1321	0	• clear curriculum guidelines for teachers at each grade level;	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	12: 1984	12: 2247	0	The task force recommendations for Indigenous education initiat	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	12: 2249	12: 2291	0	The Council's plan focuses on four areas:	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	13: 1331	13: 1377	0	Photo courtesy of NunatuKavut Community Council	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	14: 580	14: 869	0	The Department Education and Early Childhood Development will	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	16: 602	16: 1017	0	• increased collaboration with other Atlantic Canada education	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	19: 258	19: 462	0	In addition, executive and management within the Department of	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	19: 465	19: 1409	0	• Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	19: 1411	19: 1825	0	Restorative Justice Education Consortium • Special Interest C	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	23: 250	23: 418	0	The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador establish a secret	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	24: 1189	24: 1366	0	EECD allocate five permanent program specialists with expertis	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	25: 74	25: 358	0	EECD and the school districts designate individuals in leaders	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	27: 216	27: 351	0	Appoint an educational leader, reporting to the Clerk of the E	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	29: 1831	29: 1952	0	NLESD, CSFP, and EECD ensure that an individual qualified in s	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	30: 274	30: 368	0	EECD, CSSD, and HCS, Executive Council Secretariat in partne	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	30: 695	30: 761	0	HCS and EECD, with support from Executive Council Secretaria	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	30: 1685	30: 1758	0	2020 EECD and CSSD, with support from Executive Council Sec	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	30: 2123	30: 2230	0	September 2019 Completed by 2021 EECD, HCS, and CSSD with su	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
eap-report-2	Leadership	35: 1463	35: 1777	0	NLESD, CSFP, Faculty of Education, the EECD, and NLTA provide	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
k12_inclusive_p...	Leadership	4: 220	4: 345	0	, school, district and department personnel, School Council, f	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
k12_inclusive_p...	Leadership	4: 531	4: 679	0	, school, district and department personnel, School Council, f	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
k12_inclusive_p...	Leadership	4: 694	4: 854	0	The plan may include newsletters, brochures, fact sheets, schoo	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
k12_inclusive_p...	Leadership	7: 2113	7: 2220	0	Maintain awareness of the time and leadership required to foste	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
k12_inclusive_p...	Leadership	24: 2240	24: 2293	0	Copyright 2001 by The Council for Exceptional Children	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
k12_inclusive_p...	Leadership	25: 2316	25: 2369	0	Copyright 2001 by The Council for Exceptional Children	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
k12_inclusive_p...	Leadership	51: 1273	51: 1300	0	Seem to be a natural leader?	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
k12_inclusive_p...	Leadership	54: 1237	54: 1686	0	____ I learn best interacting with others ____ I enjoy infor	07/06/2020 11:37 PM
task_force_rep...	Leadership	18: 931	18: 1162	0	"Given the provincial emphasis on entrepreneurship, economic d	06/09/2020 7:45 AM
task_force_rep...	Leadership	19: 1593	19: 1758	0	A full-time librarian for assistive technology and alternate f	06/09/2020 7:45 AM
task_force_rep...	Leadership	24: 2180	24: 2283	0	Leadership is required to communicate a clear and consistent m	06/09/2020 7:45 AM
task_force_rep...	Leadership	29: 335	29: 495	0	Reduction in supports such as secretarial time and increased d	06/09/2020 7:45 AM

Source: MAXQDA data analysis

APPENDIX III

Screenshot of 198 Coded Segments for 'Educator'

Source: MAXQDA data analysis

APPENDIX IV

Screenshot of 291 Coded Segments for 'Student'

Document name	Code	Beginning	End	Weigh...	Preview	Created
eap-report-2	Student	2: 670	2: 747	0	Student Mental Health and Wellness	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	3: 401	3: 435	0	Student Mental Health and Wellness;	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	3: 1219	3: 1526	0	This action plan aligns with the Department of Education and E	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	4: 103	4: 384	0	The past 50 years in Newfoundland and Labrador have been mar	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	4: 436	4: 680	0	While outcomes in the provincial education system have improve	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	4: 769	4: 903	0	Outcomes for some student populations have historically not bee	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	4: 905	4: 1088	0	In the implementation of this action plan, government will rec	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	4: 1090	4: 1286	0	This includes all students: girls, boys, varying gender identi	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	5: 112	5: 243	0	Moving forward, ongoing dialogue with stakeholders will inform	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	6: 1278	6: 1420	0	Research has established that healthier children are better lea	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	8: 542	8: 713	0	The task force heard that the approach to inclusive education,	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	8: 715	8: 946	0	Within the K-12 education system, there is a prevailing belie	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	8: 1132	8: 1305	0	The task force recommended that a new Student Support Services	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	8: 1307	8: 1526	0	The new policy will include placement options ranging from bei	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	8: 1530	8: 1705	0	Teachers will collaboratively design learning experiences for s	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	9: 55	9: 468	0	• a new Student Support Services Policy that makes appropriate	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	9: 737	9: 1523	0	• the principles of Universal Design for Learning included in c	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	9: 1529	9: 1562	0	Student Mental Health and Wellness	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	9: 1565	9: 1685	0	Student mental health is a significant concern for school admin	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	9: 1687	9: 1804	0	The physical, mental, and social well-being of students is esse	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	10: 3	10: 698	0	• embedded social/emotional learning in curriculum; • a set of	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	10: 718	10: 836	0	Mathematics has been a cause for concern for parents, teachers,	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	10: 838	10: 987	0	While students in Newfoundland and Labrador perform above avera	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	10: 989	10: 1098	0	This pattern has continued despite many initiatives to improve	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	10: 1100	10: 1385	0	Feedback provided during the task force consultation process,	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	10: 1389	10: 1566	0	The task force was clear in its response: the goal of the mathe	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	11: 362	11: 473	0	Reading is a foundational skill developed in primary grades tha	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	11: 475	11: 688	0	An effective reading program will respond to the learning needs	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	11: 755	11: 976	0	Now is the Time highlighted that, while student performance in	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	11: 978	11: 1089	0	Students who struggle with reading in the primary grades contin	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	11: 1092	11: 1243	0	Most students experiencing reading difficulty in the primary an	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	12: 65	12: 207	0	Implementation of the recommendations will focus on enhanced t	07/06/2020 11:40 PM
eap-report-2	Student	12: 366	12: 553	0	• teachers who understand how children learn to read and how to	07/06/2020 11:40 PM

Source: MAXQDA data analysis

APPENDIX V

Screenshot of 85 coded segments for 'Collaborate

Source: MAXQDA data analysis