

Yahia Abdelrahman

Chalmers Neighborhoods Rewena Corporation

Trust and reconciliation Call to Action

Urban and Inner- City Studies

The Intergenerational Legacy of the Residential Schools

Survivors of residential schools whose mothers are professional First Nations are deeply affected by the intergenerational effects. The residential school experiences for the boys and girls whose parents and grandparents attended the residential school is not an easy experience because there is a negative experience in general that connects those children's relationship with their family. The legacy of residential schools includes the abuse experiences, both mental and physical, that those mothers and grandparents experienced while at the schools.

The purpose of the professional women's initiative is to facilitate group discussions about women's memories of their experiences with residential schools. They had a direct connection with the residential schools by telling their stories early and by having others taking notes in creating a swift education line, learning about what had happened to them during their existence at the residential schools. They engage in dialogue, telling stories that help them understand in a clear way how the residential school system had created ongoing suffering and pain that still plays a significant role in generations of family survivors. The survivor has different ways of emphasizing themselves because they all attended a residential school system, despite the fact that some schools were better than others. This refers to the legacy of how the system had shaped their identity.

The residential school system was run by the Canadian federal government, supported by religious leaders such as the Catholic Roman church and the Canadian Anglican church. This was done because they believed it was necessary to remove thousands of Indigenous children from their families and communities and to place them into schools with strict rules. They were built in the perspective of European central view and beliefs, and their attitude regarding thousands of Indigenous ways of life. This undermined their existence, ultimately transferring them to new religions and different educational systems without regards to their concerns as human beings.

Despite the strong reinforcement of religions that Indigenous mothers and grandparents experienced, many of them do not feel satisfied or even believe that the education support that the government provided was not beneficial. They wanted them to be better human beings, gain academic knowledge, and be able to contribute to their community. The government had one purpose, to remove them from their families and let them assimilate in the white central educational system. While Stephen Harper formally apologized to the students at Indian residential schools, there is no indication that the apology has produced any progress. Indigenous communities are worsened, the survivors demand the reconciliation commission that took place, but still did not meet the whole purpose of it.

Despite acknowledging the harm done to children by separated them from their families and the chaotic and strict environment they were placed in, the government was hesitant to take responsibility. As a result, many of them lost their lives due to mistreatment from the policies that aim to harm residential school survivors. The project that set out to explore the professional First Nations women's perspective whose mothers attended residential schools involves documenting evidence that involves visual proofs that can understand how their mothers were

affected in their attendance at the schools. Also, the project creates a steady ground and rules that the inter-generational effect requires additional research because of the mechanism's issues.

Further studies will help to better understand how residential schools played a huge part in the lives of First Nations people. Stout and Peters state that "By listening to the stories of women, it is clear that the residential school system has produced ongoing effects for subsequent generations of survivors, families. The stories the women shared defy the myth that effects of the residential school system begin and end with survivors. Where this myth is found, it needs to be roundly refuted with the knowledge of those who continue to live the residential school legacy and embody the resiliency of multiple generations" (p. 3). In the recommendations, further developments in mental health were brought forth for Aboriginal women so that services could assist them in easing the suffering they have been experiencing, including intergenerational issues that continue to affect the families of those who attended residential schools. As a result of the legacy of residential schools, Aboriginal women face problems in the health sector, more assistance needs to be provided to them, so they can overcome their hardships and challenges.

This study must be pursued further, particularly for First Nations women, as legacy of the residential school system has created a gap. Therefore, to narrow down this particular issue, further research must take place because of the inter-generational effects of mental health and gender inequality in the white central view, which has created a problem with those particular groups. They were prepared to pursue advocacy on behalf of impacted persons and their loved ones that experienced and suffered in the residential schools' system. The government has a responsibility to provide them with funds to continue their research. The colonization of North America had severe consequences, especially on the natives. The Europeans created gender inequality and psychological problems for Aboriginals communities.

Many of the participants were able to share their storytelling in the testimonies that involved Aboriginal cultural ways in the projects that share circles of groups and focus on how those six women explored their learning opportunities, direct conversation with the survivors of the residential schools and the impact that they had suffered. The writers whose mothers were survivors of the residential school system could express their emotional perspectives while conducting the research. The mothers of residential school survivors described their emotional ordeal to their children, and they will explore how those issues have created a gap and that they have difficulties of coping with that particular outcome.

Thus, some mothers became alcoholics as a way to escape the stress and anxiety in their minds. Residential schools' memories of some mothers have connected to become religious by attending church regularly, but the worst part of it was reconnecting with the experience of abuse and suffering throughout the journey in residential schools. The survivors are emplacing their emotions and pain, anger that left the women self-restraint weakened as the mothers tried to protect their daughters from their emotional feeling. It is clear to say that it was not easy for those women in some circumstances to hide the truth from their children anymore.

They discussed their memories as survivors related to their experiences of trauma and mental health impact. The pains are widened because of its ongoing suffering and memories that continue to follow the Indigenous women who have joined the residential schools by force. Therefore, the healing process is a long journey, and it is not that easy to overcome those experiences. The daughter's goal was to protect their mothers from the suffering and pain that strongly affected them. That is why they strongly encourage sharing their stories through the videos or cycle learning to expose what had happened to their mothers in the residential schools.

In conclusion, after interviewing many survivors, the professional women's experience from this study came with many suggestions and improvements on how the Indigenous communities and their families can overcome those particular horrible traumas, abuse, physical and emotional experiences that they have endured during their existence at the residential schools. The residential schools' system attempted to genocide Canada's Indigenous people and assimilate them into the Canadian white central educational system. The Indigenous people resisted as much as possible not to follow the colonizers perspective by rejecting the educational system that was enforced on them. Some of them hid their children because they did not believe that this purpose was about education, they thought from the early days that it was to occupy their lands and to change their identity.

Another reason was changing their way of living such as hunting, farming, removing them from the ground and restricting them in one place. As Indigenous people believe in mother earth, the white Europeans stopped them from practicing their traditional life. Today, many of the survivors of residential schools have gotten compensation for money. It is not a solution because there are inter-generational effects such as abuse of racism. Many children lost their lives at the schools, beaten and were sexually abused. The healing process will take a long time to complete because it took decades to create this mess. Therefore, it will not be easy to just come out of it. The federal and provincial governments are responsible for providing funds for Indigenous organizations such as professional women whose mothers experienced residential school abuse. More funds need to be allocated to research future studies to build a healthy and positive relationship for all Canadians.

Work Cited

Roberta, Stout, and Sheryl Peters. "Inter-Generational Effects on Professional First Nations Women Whose Mothers Are Residential School Survivors." *The Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence*, Aug. 2011, www.pwhce.ca.