“[Are] Aboriginal People *That* Important to Canada?":
International Students’ Knowledge, Perspectives, and
Attitudes about Indigenous Peoples of Scarborough

Jilanch Alphonso
Breanna Barrie
Alveera Mamoon
Abstract

Knowledge of Canada’s Indigenous communities and colonial history have long been underrepresented and misshaped by residents, institutions/organisations, and the state itself. With distorted historical context, Canadian residents are endowed with inadequate information about Indigenous communities, treaties, residential schools, and land agreements. Furthermore, there exist vast gaps in the research pertaining to the types and modes of exposure that newcomers to Canada, specifically Scarborough, receive. Drawing on nine semi-structured interviews conducted with international students at the University of Toronto Scarborough, we examine the level, sources, and attitudes that newcomers to Scarborough have toward obtaining knowledge about Indigenous histories and colonisation. Findings and results indicate a strong lack of knowledge about Indigenous communities, cultures, and struggles. Most of our participants only gained knowledge owing to their designated courses and programs in university. Other, less prevalent sources of knowledge included personal networks, mainstream media, university application forms and government websites, although none of these provided expansive knowledge. Most participants, including those without prior knowledge, shared feelings of regret and sympathy toward Indigenous communities after discussion of their hardships. Participants were also found to be open to public discussion of residential schools and attempts toward reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups. We concluded that if international students plan to apply for permanent residence, they are more likely to seek historical and current information about the country they reside in.
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Introduction

The struggles of Indigenous peoples in Canada are not a thing of the past – they continue to exist to this day. In the past, Indigenous communities faced warfare, brutality, and manipulation by European colonial powers who sought to gain power over these groups (Sanders, 1992). Not only were they robbed of their land and political rights, but their cultures were also not spared (Schissel and Witherspoon, 2010). Residential schools were imposed in an assimilation project to similarise distinct Indigenous cultures and Canadian ones. Indigenous children were removed from their homes in a nationwide attempt to sever their familial and cultural ties, and shape them into a homogenised, “acceptable” society to expedite Canada’s white-settler nation-building plan. Currently, the oppression of Indigenous rights and insufficient celebration of their diverse cultures still remain a problem. The history about Indigenous dispossession and white-settler colonialism are often overlooked in Canada. Not enough recognition is given to the contributions of or the injustices against Indigenous peoples (Gustafson, 2016).

Education about Indigenous histories has only recently been supported by the government, which has led to a sizeable proportion of students being unaware of residential schools and other discrimination against Indigenous peoples. Moreover, what little education is provided has been criticised for not being reflective of Indigenous struggles, and its failure to provide coverage of cultural minorities (Stueck & Alphonso, 2017). In the light of these issues, it is only natural that Indigenous communities and its advocates petition for a more inclusive curriculum, broadly defined to include formal schooling, information provided to immigrants - for example, through the citizenship exam, and other informal modes of teaching and learning.
The latter has been requested by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2012); its Calls to Action #93 demands a more comprehensive history of Indigenous communities, treaties and residential schools in citizenship tests. This brings attention to the fact that while most research focuses on the knowledge gap between Canada’s Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, little has been done to find out whether or not immigrants and/or newcomers are subjected to the same informational discrepancies.

This report draws on first-hand qualitative research to explore the knowledge and perceptions of international students at the University of Toronto Scarborough regarding Indigenous peoples. Provided their temporary status of residence, international students are not obligated to take citizenship tests, for which they would otherwise be required to touch upon information about Indigenous communities. Moreover, they are less likely to have emotional ties/commitment to Canada, and therefore less likely to invest resources into learning about the land’s history. Our goal is to find out the extent to which this holds true; we wish to evaluate the level and ways of exposure they receive about Indigenous communities in the absence of citizenship tests, and primary/secondary education.

Findings suggest that much like Canadian residents, international students’ levels and depth of knowledge are quite low. While most of our participants were familiar with terminology such as “Indigenous/Aboriginal peoples”, only a small percentage was informed about treaty relationships, land agreements and residential schools. Their primary exposure also stems from education – however, only at a university level, owing solely to their programs. We also found that participants are more inclined to give effort into learning about a country’s history only when they have legal or emotional ties to it. In addition, most participants are united by feelings
of sympathy and respect toward Indigenous communities upon hearing of their struggles. We must note that with a sample size of only nine participants, the limited scope of our research may not be generalizable to the larger population. Given that, we recommend that more detailed research be done to evaluate the likelihood that newcomers will be in support of mandatory historical education and events in university outside of academic credits and requirements.

**Conceptual Framework**

The information we have gathered from our participants in relation to the kinds and source of knowledge they received regarding Indigenous communities can be conceptualised by three key variables - settler colonialism, citizenship, and interculturalism. This framework provides a thorough overview of their definitions whilst making connections to how each of these three concepts relates to the research topic. Thus, the aim of this section is to theoretically analyse our key variables in order to clarify and rationalise claims/predictions made further along the paper.

**Settler Colonialism**

Settler colonialism is the ongoing structure of replacing Indigenous populations within settler societies like Canada. Thus, “colonialism” cannot be understood as a thing of the past in societies where colonisers “come to stay” (Wolfe, 2006: 388). While Canada now boasts a multicultural and diverse society, its structure is still rooted in colonialism (Lawrence & Dua, 2005) Settler colonialism differs from colonialism in that it functions by replacing Indigenous peoples with a settler society through im/migration, which then develops a distinct identity and sovereignty.
According to Dhamoon (2015), settler colonialism becomes “a system that is deemed to determine all other relationships and ideas, including its culture, institutions, rituals, and governing structures, such that formations of capitalism, sexuality, and patriarchy are seen as derivative of this meta-structure rather than co-constituted and varied in operation and effect” (32). Therefore, settler colonialism is “generated by intersecting and interactive forces of power” (Dhamoon, 2015: 33). According to Elkins and Pedersen (2005), in settler societies such as Scarborough, settlers form the majority of the population and have substantial political independence. This is evident in the “unequal relations between Indigenous peoples and their non-Indigenous counterparts” (Hugill, 2017 6), which results in underdevelopment of social services (Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, 2015) and political fragmentation (Cowen & Parlette, 2011).

Much like Indigenous folks, international students do not hold political or social power that can affect their standards of living - and as such, live precarious lives. However, the systematic recruitment of international students in Canadian post-secondary institutions is the result of them being considered ideal migrants as “they possess a local degree, the cultural ‘know-how’ of the receiving society, and linguistic mastery that can assist them in securing professional advancement in the domestic labor force” (Chatterjee 2015). Settler nations like Canada position international students and Indigenous populations as “outsiders”, while also exploiting their labour and economy. International students within postsecondary institutions ultimately seek social and political mobility through applying for citizenship in Canada. As such they have an opportunity to enjoy and access “metropolitan living standards and political privileges” that are often not granted to Indigenous communities. It is important to note that
settler colonialism is a structure, not an event (Wolfe, 2006), as it persists in the ongoing elimination of Indigenous populations, and the assertion of the Canadian state-sovereignty and judicial control over Indigenous lands. Although ideas of post-colonialism have transformed Canada, the structure of settler colonialism is still very much intact. Furthermore, settler colonialism can operate without the displacements of ethnic migrants, as its main purpose is the “eradication of Indigenous peoples, unhindered access to land, and the naturalization of colonial state-based sovereignty as legitimate” (Dhamoon, 2015: 23).

**Citizenship**

While citizenship is typically defined as the adoption of legal rights, responsibilities, and membership of a nation’s community (The Hedgehog Review, 2008), we will use a (pre-established) broader version of the term. Firstly, “citizenship” will be used as an umbrella term to define the act of obtaining permanent residency, as well as a passport; this concept will be addressed as legal citizenship. Second, citizenship will not only be used as a political specification, but will also refer to the non-political dimensions of acquiring legal membership that enable an individual to associate him/herself with the social, cultural and historical context of a country and its community. This modern concept of citizenship can be termed social citizenship. Historical evidence shows that Indigenous peoples have struggled to obtain the rights of either form of citizenship. Our use of the term in this paper will be associated to their struggles in relation to legal, political and social rights.

Although citizenship in Canada is obtainable through birth in the country, Indigenous peoples have been deprived of this right. Moreover, historical and present relations between
Canada and its Indigenous peoples have revealed strong “Canadianisation” agendas, and efforts to rob these communities of their distinct cultures, language, and social customs (Wood, 2003). These homogenising narratives are similar to - albeit, at a higher degree than - the ones placed on immigrants, for whom assimilation has become an increasingly important determinant of citizenship (McLean, 2002). Both are seen as marginalised, foreign groups that require a standardisation of their cultures and social norms (Bohaker & Lacovetta, 2009).

Canada’s immigration policies have long been scrutinised, whether it be as failure to carry out equal distribution of rights, or as being white-settler nation-building acts (Bashford, 2014). In addition, the state’s efforts toward acculturation of its marginal groups, including Indigenous ones, have been evidenced many a time. In 1961, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was quoted saying, “The fundamental aim of the government’s policy towards Indians is the gradual integration of our country’s fastest growing ethnic group into the Canadian community” (Bohaker & Lacovetta, 2009: 444). When passing the Canadian Citizenship Act, the Liberals intended to create two distinct modes of citizenship, legal and social (Bohaker & Lacovetta, 2009). Indigenous peoples, although without a doubt born on Canadian soil, were not given the rights of either mode of citizenship. They were denied rights to vote, and considered a threat to the building of “unity” and the sense of Canadian identity that social citizenship was believed to create.

There is a persistent struggle of the Indigenous peoples and supporting organisations to secure the political and legal rights that are reserved by other members of Canadian communities. Little has been done to resolve these conflicts between Indigenous peoples and the
state (Turpel, 1992). Constitutional reform has been ineffective in providing the opportunity to focus and reflect on Indigenous struggles and deprivations, take direct political action, and mobilise public opinion to recognise their hardships.

**Interculturalism**

Although interculturalism is not a new concept, it is a concept that has not been as widely disseminated as multiculturalism. Compared to multiculturalism, little been done about interculturalism in terms of its academic development, and it has also been neglected by ways of policy implementation and practice. Interculturalism has no clear, widely-accepted definition and, as a result, continues to be a highly contested term that is used in ambiguity (Cantle, 2012). Nonetheless, there exist some broad parameters around the term as declared by its current advocates. As a concept that has arisen to address the criticisms of existing policies of multiculturalism, and to essentially replace this highly scrutinised term (Cantle, 2012), interculturalism is being branded as a new model for integration (Montpetit, 2011). Multiculturalism in Canada is often criticised because it has created a distorted narrative of Canada as a socially just and tolerant state (Bannerji, 2000; St. Denis, 2011). This narrative completely erases the exclusive and distinct historical perspectives of Indigenous communities by entirely overlooking the European invasions and the colonial subjugation of the First Peoples (St. Denis, 2011; Srikanth, 2009). In addition, rather than generating an inclusion of the diverse cultures within society, policies surrounding multiculturalism have divided society through the legitimisation of segregated, isolated communities (Nagle, 2009: 169; Bannerji, 2000). Thus, interculturalism goes beyond multiculturalism in that it stresses the importance of communication between cultures (Ewijk, 2010; Gyepi-Garbrah, 2014). With dialogue, exchange,
interaction, and reciprocal understanding between people of differing backgrounds, the similarities and differences between cultures are recognised and respected to allow for a socially cohesive and integrative society.

The discussion and implementation of interculturalism in Canadian society through public education and outreach initiatives allow for a deep and rich understanding of and respect for all cultures (including those of Indigenous communities), as well as a chance for many to bond over shared experiences. Due to a lack of exposure, many immigrants in Canada either do not have knowledge of Indigenous communities’ history and current situations or they possess incorrect and/or stereotypic understanding. Through the usage of communication, interculturalism can result in increased awareness of factual and undistorted histories, current situations, and ongoing presence of colonialism in Indigenous communities coming directly from the community themselves as opposed to the media and/or mainstream stereotypes. This new knowledge could help dismantle preconceived notions and racial impressions held about Indigenous peoples by those who are non-Indigenous, and could foster a mutually beneficial coexistence for both groups.

**Review of Literature**

Given the TRC’s Call to Action #93, we reviewed existing literature to examine how immigrant populations across Canada learn about its Indigenous history, cultures and ongoing struggles. Our literature review was guided by the following research questions: do immigrant populations across Canada learn about Indigenous peoples? What do they learn about such communities? How do they access this information? What strategies have been used to inform
immigrants? Only small-scale research has been done so far to understand the types of information immigrants and newcomers receive about the context and histories of Indigenous peoples. This literature review highlights gaps and weaknesses that currently exist in the academic literature and suggests future research on this topic. It merges ideas from various sources and academic research, such as the need for collaborative events to foster interculturalism, and synthesise this information to help frame the answers to our research question.

Although immigrant and Indigenous communities are the fastest growing populations in Toronto (Galloway, BascaraMurty, & Maki, 2017), there is a lack of effort to facilitate their intercultural community bonding. The lack of divergence between the two communities in their day-to-day lives (school, work etc.) could be a result of competing for limited affordable housing, jobs and services (Circles for Reconciliation, 2017). Chung (2010) characterises various aspects between the two communities, namely, lack of initiative by government in facilitating a relationship, the mutual misunderstanding, prejudice, and the racism both groups endure.

Alternatively, author and activist Sarah Khan (2015) explores the ways in which newcomers are introduced to Indigenous peoples, which are usually through stereotypes, negative assumptions and paternalistic portrayal as shown in mainstream media. She concludes by noting that her perceived Canadian identity was based on a false and incomplete understanding of Canadian history, and recommends the necessity of a dialogue between Indigenous communities and newcomers to Canada. Therefore, it can be understood that newcomers are often heedless to Indigenous knowledge and practises, leaving them ignorant to their own role in settler colonialism.
There are new decolonised frameworks and methods being put into place to build
dialogue between both communities and cross-cultural collaboration through activism and social change. For example, Circles for Reconciliation (2017) engages two communities, Indigenous and newcomers, in the process of decolonization and reconciliation through interrelated activities and traditional practices. This group conducts ongoing workshops that unite and educate both communities through common cultural traditions (drumming, storytelling, hair, tribes, sewing etc.) Similarly, Mitra (2011) explores trust building and solidarity between Indigenous peoples and South Asian immigrants through an exhibit that highlights both cultures through performance and art. As such, this exhibit allows us to understand that newcomer knowledge can stem from public exhibits and events that celebrate their own culture while learning about Indigenous histories. In addition to creating bonds via common cultural practises, community building is also fostered through discussion of commonly experienced challenges by both communities such as colonialism, racism and socioeconomic challenges. Gyepi-Garbrah, Walker and Garcea (2014) discuss how an Indigenous organisation from Winnipeg, Kanichihk Inc. (KNK), supports the integration of immigrant newcomers. This dialogue and talking circles allows for intercultural relationships, development, and space for interaction between the two distinct communities. Therefore, Indigenous organizations enhance “urban indigeneity” while fostering cross-cultural relationship within shared social and public spaces.

This approach highlights the role of community organizations in disseminating knowledge directly to newcomers, and vice versa, that is not influenced by the state or popular media, who view Indigenous groups as ‘history.’ As such, Indigenous communities are infiltrating the knowledge processes without mediation and involvement from the Canadian
Government that allows immigrants to learn about their culture in a way that centres Indigenous narrative and perspectives. In Winnipeg, Indigenous communities hosted a ‘Building Bridges’ conference. Garbish (2017) notes that many newcomers obtain information about Indigenous peoples of Canada through the media, which often features stereotypes and other negative connotations. This project highlights intercultural collaborations with immigrant-focused organizations to disseminate information to their community members on Canada’s colonial history and its contemporary repercussions.

Collaboration between the two groups to coexist in shared spaces and disseminating ‘accurate’ historical knowledge is a core theme surrounding the kinds of information immigrants to Canada learn about Indigenous communities. Likewise, the City of Vancouver (2011) has created a dialogue project that focuses on building understanding and strengthening relations between the Urban Aboriginal communities, and Immigrant Communities. This municipally funded event fosters collective awareness amongst newcomers about oppressive histories of colonisation in Canada, thus making them complicit in decolonising of Canada. Therefore, pedagogy is used as a means to not only educate newcomers in compliance with the TRC Call to Action 93, but also to create dialogue towards decolonization and reconciliation.

Acquiring citizenship in Canada is often the goal for many newcomers such as post-secondary international students; ergo, incorporating other ‘truths’ in the learning process is important when testing newcomers about Canada’s Indigenous and colonial history. The “People’s Citizenship Guide: A Response to Conservative Canada” is a document that critiques historical perspectives of Canada such as Canadian symbols, economy and Indigenous history that vastly counters the official citizenship guide. Authors Esyllt Jones and Adele Perry (2011)
illustrate the importance of learning about the Indigenous people’s difficult histories and the role that one’s immigrant status plays in the colonization of Indigenous land. Although not a required reading in obtaining Canadian Citizenship, it is a source in which migrants receive information about the context and histories of Indigenous communities in Canada.

**Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism in Canada was presented as a political strategy with the intention of dealing with the opposing language, culture, and land claims within the nation. It was also introduced in an effort to recognise and reject racial discrimination, highlight equality and tolerance, allow for an increased understanding between different ethnic groups, and ultimately, celebrate diversity (Fleras & Elliott, 1992: 75). Since its inception and its revises, it has been extensively explained, defended, and critiqued (Fleras & Elliot, 1992; Legare, 1995; Kymlicka, 1996; Mackey, 2002; Wood & Gilbert, 2005). Contrary to popular belief, multiculturalism in Canada has its shortcomings, which have been examined by many scholars such as Day and Sadik (2002), Mackey (2002), Lawrence and Dua (2005), Mackey (2005), Short (2005); Wood & Gilbert (2005), and Rutherford (2010). Converse to its proposed purpose, multiculturalism encourages social division in that it “separates, intensifies misunderstanding and hostility, and pits one group against another in the competition for power and resources” (Fleras & Elliot, 1992: 132). This social division creates minimal contact and interaction between communities, which consequently leads to mutual ignorance and mistrust (Barrett, Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Is There a Difference?).
Many Canadians and immigrants assume that multiculturalism is solely about immigrant identities, and, accordingly, believe that it has nothing to do with the Indigenous peoples residing in the country. Despite the colour Indigenous peoples add to the cultural mosaic that multiculturalism paints, their Indigeneity situates them outside of multiculturalism. Inclusion would entirely discount their fight for exclusive rights and continued concerns. In this multicultural society, Indigenous peoples are adamant about their rightful sovereignty and asserting their rights based on their original and continuing roles as protectors of the land, yet multiculturalism silences their voices (Paine, 1999; Day & Sadik, 2002; Mackey, 2002; Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Mackey, 2005; Short, 2005; Rutherford, 2010). As a result, Indigenous peoples are quite concerned with the use and portrayal of multiculturalism, as they feel that it enables racism and colonialism, and is more concerned with the interests of the immigrant ethnic communities than those of the Indigenous peoples (Srikanth, 2009). In other words, they believe that multiculturalism is a form of colonialism that diverts our attention from the recognition and redress of their rights, and instead directs it toward an idealistic and overtly distorted view of Canada. There is an overall lack of concern for Indigenous peoples that stems from a history of broken promises and a false sense of multiculturalism. This diversion allows for the omission of their histories at all levels, including at the education level. In fact, in Canada one can graduate from high-school and university or college without ever learning about the history of Indigenous peoples’ struggles because in Canada, there are no mandatory Indigenous courses (Vowel, 2015; Stewart, 2012). As a result, Canadians who have not had formal education on the topic are unable to diffuse their knowledge of Indigenous communities to newcomers like international students. That alongside the minimal contact between Indigenous peoples and newcomers create
a situation where newcomers are left to gain knowledge of Indigenous communities through other means such as the media and sights from the streets (Gyepi-Garbrah, 2014).

**Methodology**

This report is dedicated to exploring the types and exposures to knowledge that newcomers to Canada have regarding Canadian Indigenous communities and cultures. The data has been drawn from a sample of nine international students residing in Scarborough, who are currently enrolled in undergraduate programs at the University of Toronto Scarborough. The sample had an average age of 21 years, and was made up (coincidentally) solely of females. Each participant except one, who preferred not to be recorded, underwent audio-taped semi-structured interviews with at least two of our researchers. The average length of the audio-taped interviews was 24 minutes. Participants who chose not to reveal their names were given the liberty of choosing pseudonyms for themselves. Responses of the participants who declined audio-recording were documented in detailed notes. We drew on our existing contacts to recruit participants. Efforts were made to choose participants from a variety of different programs so as to obtain expansive results; said programs included Psychology, Sociology, Health Studies, Women and Gender Studies, International Development Studies, Statistics, Micromolecular Biology, Biotechnology, Management, and Mental Health. Below is a tabular categorisation of the background information of our target population, namely their names/pseudonyms, age, gender, country of origin, year of study and program at UTSC.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Davison</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Double major in Psychology and Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tao</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Health Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikita</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Major in Health Studies and Minor in Statistics and Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mifaly</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Specialist in International Developmental Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>XYZ</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nishita</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>1st</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vanshika</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morticia Adams</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Specialist in Mental Health and minor in Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitula</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Major in Psychology and double minor in Women and Gender Studies</td>
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Our findings were coded in terms of relevance to our research question. The interview process itself consisted of questions pertaining to personal background, knowledge of Indigenous histories and continued colonial practises, as well as newcomers’ attitudes and personal importance given towards learning this topic. Participants were also asked about their intent to
obtain Canadian permanent residency in order to identify their level of attachment to the country. We coded responses into three core themes using an inductive approach that was based on common patterns that emerged in the responses. We chose sources of knowledge, disseminating Indigenous knowledge through education, and opinions/attitudes to learning about Indigenous histories and cultures as our primary themes, to understand where our participants gained knowledge about Indigenous communities, if at all, and how they feel about furthering their knowledge alongside other newcomers/students. We identified patterns, and deviations from patterns when participants were asked the same question(s). We then evaluated the relationship between each theme, and transcribed participants’ quotes to fit our analyses.

**Scarborough Context**

Before discussing our findings, we will provide a bit of context about our research site, Scarborough. Incorporated as a township in 1850, Scarborough had a population of more than 600,000 of Toronto’s 2.7 million residents (Basu & Fiedler, 2016). It was named by Elizabeth Simcoe, who thought that Lake Ontario was similar to Scarborough, England’s Cliffs (Myrvold, 1997; Bonis, 1965). Scarborough today is imbued with many diverse communities as it continues to remain the youngest multiculturalism suburb in the Toronto; about “54 percent of its residents are foreign-born, compared to the Canadian average of 19 percent” (Gillmor, 2007). Yet, before Scarborough became the home for many migrants from around the world, and an ‘undiscovered’ land by European settlers, it was a source of life to various Indigenous communities.

*A Home on Native Land*
Scarborough is located on Turtle Island and those native to this land were the Huron-Wendat, Petun First Nations (Myrvold, 1997), the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit River (Freeman, 2010; Methot, 2012). For example, the Handenosaunee established a vast number of strategically placed villages including Ganestiquiacon along the Rouge River, which operated as an instrumental trading route for Indigenous peoples who were sustained by Lake Ontario. The region’s natural resources were essential to the nomadic native groups as it was a prime location for cultivation and agriculture. The Scarborough Highlands were entirely forested with diverse tree and plant life and the waterways contained a variety of fish, both of which helped sustain life for the many nations. Particularly notable is the Toronto Passage (also known as the Carrying Place), the name given to the territory that links Lake Simcoe and the Georgian Bay (Kaitlin, 2013). It was used as portage, hunting, and trading routes by the Indigenous people who began using the Toronto Passage “as a shortcut between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay. It was a vital link in the trade route that ran from the Gulf of Mexico to Lake Superior” (Methot, 2012). Throughout the late-1800s, the Mississaugas utilized the Rouge trail, by camping in small bands, hunting, trading or selling their items such as basketry, sugar, maple, and leather items (Scarborough Museum, 2017). During the 17th century, following the dispersal of the Huron, Petun and Neutral, the area was inhabited by the Seneca, who were later displaced by the Mississaugas of the Credit River (Myrvold, 1997; Bonis, 1965; Methot, 2012; Freeman, 2010). Eventually, the Mississaugas were expatriate into reserves by European settlers who began to arrive in the late 18th century. At this time, Indigenous tribes welcomed and helped accustomed the early Europeans to the land and climate of Canada (Saul, 2008).

**Scarborough’s ‘First’ Settlers**
In the 1800s, Toronto’s landscape was characterised by a period of urban development and industrialisation. For Europeans, a move to Canada meant greater economic stability and land ownership. Although the various Indigenous tribes have called the Scarborough area ‘home’ for centuries, the widely renowned ‘first’ settlers to Scarborough were David and Mary Thomson, who settled in the area in the late 1790s, along with William McCowan (Scarborough Museum, 2017). Scarborough was adopted as a predominantly agricultural town with a number of rural areas and farms. During this time, migration to Canada was overwhelmingly on a European-only basis as the immigration policy was inherently racist until after World War II (Freeman, 2010).

The Immigrant Gateway

A vast majority of Scarborough's current population is composed of immigrants and descendants of immigrants who have arrived in the last four decades. Scarborough begun to be seen as an immigrant reception area based on several factors, two of which were especially momentous in this immigration boom. First, by the late 1960s, the European economy improved so much that there were no longer a need for people to leave Europe. Secondly, with European emigration dwindling (in conjunction with Canada’s declining birth rate), Canada began to depend progressively more on labour from the Third World, thus allowing for mass migration from the East Asia, Caribbean, South Asia, and Africa. The changing immigration policies, post-war baby boom, a flourishing economy, and ethnic and familial expansion created a demand for affordable housing and influenced rapid suburbanisation in Scarborough (Myrvold, 1997: 117). In 1971, the Canadian government enacted the policy of multiculturalism, which created
space for ethnic and cultural “difference” within the Canadian society (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Kimlicka, 2003: 157).

Although Scarborough is acclaimed for its multiculturalism and ethnic diversity, recent studies indicate that it is often neglected in terms of public funding for transit, schools, and settlement services (Cowen & Parlette, 2011; Basu & Fiedler, 2017). Moreover, Scarborough is recognised to be “cursed” due to the prevalence of alienation, crime, gun violence and gang activity that taint its reputation (Gillmor, 2007; Wortley & Tanner, 2004). While Scarborough is in constant flux between its positive attributes and negative connotations, the overall dynamic of Scarborough influences the identities of people who live, study and work here (Scarborough Oral History Project, 2014).

**Findings and Discussion**

Our sample consisted of nine participants, all of whom were female undergraduate students at the University of Toronto Scarborough. Ensuing our interviews, three primary themes arose from the responses.

i) Sources of knowledge

ii) Disseminating Indigenous Knowledge Through Education, and

iii) Opinions and Attitudes Toward Learning About Indigenous Peoples

These themes provide a framework to answer our research question. Specifically, they helped us to understand the type of information that newcomers to Canada received about Indigenous communities, and strategies of the government, universities, and/or other institutions that have helped them to gain exposure to such knowledge. They also give us an insight as to how this process of learning impacts immigrant incorporation in Scarborough.
Sources of Knowledge

Over the past few years, Indigenous peoples have often been at the forefront in the media and public discourse as they participate in state-organized projects like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, social movements like Idle No More and campaigns to end violence around Missing and Murdered Aboriginal women (Ambler, 2014; Assaf, 2016; Pagtakhan, 2016). However, many newcomers to Canada, like international students, do not always have access to accurate information about Indigenous peoples. We thus define sources of knowledge as where our participants’ knowledge of Indigenous histories and continued colonial practices were obtained. We present our findings through our interview questions as we asked participants about their familiarity with the terms “Indigenous”, “First Nations”, and “Aboriginal”, and found that 89% had some knowledge pertaining to them. We further asked about their overall knowledge of Canada’s history of colonisation, Indigenous land agreements/treaty relationships, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), and the significance of the land on which our university was built on.

When asked if there are certain aspects about Scarborough that they thought they did not know enough about, the majority of participants agreed it would be its history. Prior to moving to Canada, none had any knowledge regarding Scarborough’s history or Indigenous peoples in Canada. Vanshika, a first-year Management student, and Nishita, a first-year Specialist in Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, had no knowledge both before and after moving to Scarborough regarding Canada’s history and Indigenous communities. Nishita echoed many other interviewees when she stated, “I don’t know anything about Canadian history…at all…I
just researched about the universities and the places where the universities were. I didn’t research about any history or anything about - I don’t know anything.”

A few students knew about the Land Acknowledgements and the significance of the land on which our university was built on due to attending campus events which made an effort to acknowledge it. Mitula demonstrated access to several modes of exposure to Land Acknowledgments, such as volunteering at the Native Child and Family Centre (where she also learned about their culture from the elders), independently researching Canada’s Indigenous history on Youtube, and through personal networks such as her boyfriend who works at Rouge National Park, a place that works closely with Indigenous communities when discussing land use. She cited a conversation with her boyfriend where he spoke about the Indigenous peoples’ urge to iterate the Land Acknowledge at the beginning of events taking place in Rouge Park.

Moving on to the depth of knowledge provided to these students regarding the TRC and residential schools, we find that only 11% of our population had knowledge about them, while the rest either had a vague idea (a one-line description or less), or none at all. Only one participant, Mifaly, answered yes when asked if she knew what the TRC is, saying she had learned about it in an Anthropology class. Fee (2012) discusses the federal government’s insufficient expenditure on historical and Indigenous education, rendering it unsurprising that many Canadians and Canadian residents do not know of the TRC, residential schools, or Indigenous peoples at all. Bureaucratic idling is one of the fundamental tools of colonisation that can make reconciliation with Indigenous groups a lengthier and more challenging process.

When asked to reflect on the terms ‘Aboriginal’, ‘Indigenous’, or ‘First Nations,’ Tao responded by saying, “I think it’s something like local, like, people, like, originally living in this
land”. Similarly, Mitula also engaged in attribution to the past, saying, “Indigenous and Aboriginal, I think, uh, were the people who were here before, like, uh, the co- before Canada was colonised and they were like really brutalised by the Britishers…and the French, yeah, so their land got taken away...”. It was confirmed that this knowledge was obtained in certain classes said participants took. When Vanshika was asked this question, she labelled Indigenous people as “tribal”, thus making a temporal assumption. Her use of the term “tribal” suggested the perception of society as binary, where tribes are not considered to be regulated by institutions as their contemporary counterpart. Likewise, Mifaly shared that prior to her arrival at university, her primary understanding of Indigenous life in Canada was from media stereotypes she saw on TV: “Inuits, they live in igloos…everyone lives in igloos.”

Newcomers to Canada often learn and perpetuate stereotypes they see within mainstream media and discourse. Correspondingly, Indigenous education amongst newcomers can also be accredited to stereotypes and a lack of accurate historical information. In her piece “Paying our Dues: The Importance of Newcomer Solidarity with the Indigenous Movement for Self-Determination in Canada”, Khan (2015) explores the ways in which newcomers are introduced to Indigenous peoples, which usually include stereotypes, negative assumptions and paternalistic portrayal as viewed in mainstream media. Additionally, this observed lack of awareness coupled with accumulated misconceptions held by our participants stand parallel to the research done by John Gyepi-Garbrah, Ryan Walker and Joseph Garcea (2013). In this piece, it was found that although Indigenous peoples and newcomers lived side-by-side in several neighbourhoods, both groups were impacted by ‘low levels of interaction, mutual
misunderstanding, misperceptions, and segregation and tension among the youth in high schools' (Gyepi-Garbrah, 2014; Walker & Garcea, 2013).

Continuing on the same vein, majority of our participants had never come in contact with Indigenous peoples. Likewise, even the students in Tom Clark and Ravi de Costa’s (2011) work brought up their little personal contact with Indigenous communities, thus highlighting the lack of interculturalism in Canada. With little personal contact, misperceptions and misconceptions may arise because immigrants then receive information from a secondary source that may be inaccurate. For example, a couple of participants in our study referred to Indigenous peoples as “another minority group”, who share the same inequalities as any other minority group, even immigrants, thus perpetuating the dominance asserted by settler colonialism in Canada. This standardisation of Indigenous peoples as a minority group is discussed by Verna St. Denis (2011), where she expands on the inaccuracy in equating Indigenous peoples with racialised minorities. She emphasises that by assuming these distinct groups share commonalities, multiculturalism has erased the exclusive and distinctive position of Aboriginal peoples as Indigenous to this land. She also discusses how normative Canadian history has created a distorted narrative of Canada as a socially just and tolerant multicultural state (St. Denis, 2011), which can be used to explain Mifaly, Mitula, and Nikita’s initial acknowledgment of Canada’s popular representation of these communities versus its factual history. This narrative completely erases the historical perspectives of Indigenous peoples. With multiculturalism ignoring ongoing colonisation, newcomers like Nishita do not believe Indigenous peoples face discrimination today because of Canada’s saintly guise, while a couple of other participants see Indigenous peoples as another minority group who experience the same struggles as other minority groups.
A common pattern we identified amongst international students is that they are likelier to feel a greater need to conduct research on their university in comparison to domestic students, owing to the fact that the former group has lower levels of knowledge (considering they migrate to foreign countries to attend the university) and thus more motivation. This motivation invokes in them a curiosity – we noticed that a few of our participants admitted to having come across the terms “First Nations” and “Aboriginals” on their university application, and out of curiosity, conducted a brief internet search. XYZ said she had come across one of the terms while applying to university, and had then done a Google search on it. Similarly, Vanshika said, “While applying for university, there was a part of this on the form... I did Google... what First Nations or something like that meant.”

Provided our participants’ inclination toward research about a foreign country, we asked about their intent to obtain citizenship in Canada, to evaluate whether such a possibility would cause them to conduct further independent research. Nearly all of our participants displayed an interest in gaining long-term citizenship in Canada, yet, only a few were made aware of Indigenous history in Canada upon/prior to their arrival. We hypothesise that this is because newcomers’ idea of social citizenships does not include learning about Indigenous content. Our discovery of low knowledge in this theme connect to previous research regarding Indigenous education amongst Canadians and newcomers. For instance, Stewart (2012) discusses an interim report published by the TRC stating that the history of residential schools is not being taught, and that the Canadian education system is a letdown in terms of raising awareness about this. This inhibits the exposure that Canadian and immigrant school-goers receive, especially impacting international students who have not had a chance to attend school in Canada before transitioning
to university. Changing this by improving exposure of Canadian-born students can benefit international students in that having Canadian peers who are better aware of this history can help to diffuse knowledge amongst them, thus making them more aware residents/newcomers. Otherwise, the suppression of Indigenous narratives from newcomers will continue to be directly in line with the ongoing erasure of Indigenous histories and identities.

**Disseminating Indigenous Knowledge through Education**

As indicated above, most of our participants obtained their knowledge from certain classes they took in their programs, which included Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Health Studies and Women and Gender Studies. Although none of the interviewees were aware of Scarborough’s history and Indigenous communities prior to moving, majority were able to learn more about the topic after attending certain classes at UTSC. Nikita, a Health Studies major, stated, “I think a, like, a lot of the people I’ve met we have been unaware of it, but we come to know about it [Indigenous peoples] through, um, school.” At the University of Toronto, there has been a recent push to integrate Indigenous knowledge within the university’s doctrine and curriculum (Shimo & Barmak, 2017). As an institution, the university is coming to terms with its own complicity that invisibilises Indigenous histories. More recently, the University of Toronto has created the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Steering Committee to address the ways in which the university can do better in terms of adhering to the relevant TRC’s Calls to Action (2012). Essentially, five working groups consisting of faculty, staff, and Indigenous students and elders created a report that calls for “integrating more accurate Indigenous history and culture into the curriculum. It called for honouring the truth, but also for reconciliation: healing and promoting U of T’s relationship with Indigenous students, hiring Indigenous faculty
and designating more Indigenous spaces.” (Shimo & Barmak, 2017; Halpern, 2016). By implementing this topic within the school environment, not only would Indigenous people feel more recognised and understood, but international students would also feel more included in the community and in conversations, helping to achieve interculturalism. In addition, by committing to the TRC recommendations, post-secondary schools will help reduce ignorance and racism as well as help in the elimination of prior misconceptions and stereotypes held by both residents and international students, thus allowing for better understanding.

We found that programs in the Arts and Humanities departments, including Sociology, Anthropology, and Health Studies were the primary modes of exposure for informed participants, and 80% confirm that had it not been for their programs at university, they would not have any idea about Indigenous communities. Nikita said,“...If I was just doing Bio and stuff and then I went into med school after that, I would not even think about Indigenous people.”, while Nishita echoed, “No… I think my program doesn’t cover these things… I have Bio and Chemistry and Animal Physiology which doesn’t of course talk about these things.” Mithula confirmed the contribution of her university toward her knowledge by saying, “… I feel like being here in UTSC, it’s, like, kinda helping me a lot to learn about them because of the different, like, programs they have and, like, the opportunities to volunteer…”

Particular programs like Health Studies and Psychology have the opportunity to highlight, address, and incorporate Indigenous content in ways that programs like Management and Biotechnology may have to try harder to accomplish. Students that took Health Studies courses like Tao and Nikita knew of Indigenous peoples in terms of their greater health inequalities, which is attributable to food shortages and food insecurity, poor housing conditions,
and lower access to healthcare. Mifaly recalled taking an Anthropology course in which she learned of residential schools and land agreements (treaties). She stated: “When I first came here…when I hear that, um, I was just, like, it’s [Indigenous peoples] Canada’s past. After taking, um, particular classes here on campus now the thing that comes into my head is residential schools, violence, um, colonisation actually. Canada is apparently bad”. Likewise, Nikita states that before taking a course on mental health in her second year, she hadn’t been exposed to such Indigenous teachings as she began her studies in the Biology and Chemistry fields: “No, I never even thought about Indigenous people. I only started doing my first-year Health study courses in my second year, so up until that point, my whole first year, I had no idea about them. I was studying Bio and Chem.” In a Psychology course, Morticia learned that suicide rates are higher amongst Indigenous peoples, whilst Mitula’s Psychology class took on a more biological standpoint, teaching her that Indigenous peoples living more up north do not receive enough nutrients in their diet and as a result sometimes have slower brain development than those receiving a nutrient-filled diet. Nishita, a Molecular Biology and Biotechnology specialist, explained the science programs rarely discuss Indigenous history, simply stating, "My program doesn't cover these topics."

**Opinions and Attitudes towards Learning about Indigenous peoples**

Our data suggested that while some responses followed recurring patterns, others deviated from them. Once made aware of Indigenous communities’ perseverance despite ongoing social restrictions and colonial trauma, the opinions and attitudes of participants were impacted immensely. Most of our participants expressed a keen interest in learning about Indigenous cultures and history. When asked if they believe it important for newcomers to learn
about the history of Indigenous people, treaties, and the residential schools, the majority of our population said yes. Through our interviews, we particularly sought to identify the level of importance international students placed on acquiring knowledge on the topic.

Almost all of the participants felt it was important to know of Scarborough’s history and the Indigenous peoples of Canada for a variety of reasons. For example, Nikita stated that it is important because Canada has a dark history, and even to this day Indigenous peoples are still marginalised. For her, by learning about them, we would allow them to feel more included in the discourse surrounding Canadian history. Tao felt it was important to know of them in terms of equity and equality; she even mentioned that they are culturally discriminated against today because people generally do not think of Indigenous peoples’ cultures as part of Canadian culture. Mitula believed it is simply respectful to know. Even when asked if the “bad” parts of its history - particularly, residential schools - would be appropriate to tell newcomers and immigrants, the same majority felt it was necessary. Mifaly passionately said, “I just don’t believe in just ignoring the history — their history… It’s really important to just raise awareness and just engage in the conversation. Yes, it’s a tough conversation, but there won’t be progress if we don’t have that difficult conversation.” We therefore observed that common motivations included feelings of respect, personal importance placed on being an aware resident, spreading information to protect rights of Indigenous communities, and strong support toward a less marginalised society.

Students who were aware of Indigenous presence in Canada but uneducated on residential schools were shocked to learn about their tragic history in Canada. One participant, Morticia, not only knew about it, but associated state responsibility with its repercussions. She
said, “I actually heard quite a bit about it in one of my courses… these people actually had their kids taken away and put into, uh, schools, taken away from their parents, stripped them off their childhood and uh, the government has really not done anything about it. And I saw the suicide rates for their families is very high, it’s just really sad.” Mitula resonated the views expressed by Morticia as well as an earlier one of Mifaly: “It’s very important because you see Canada as, like, this really peaceful country; nothing bad ever happens here; it’s a really passive country. But it’s horrible like the way they’ve been treated it’s [pause] everyone should know.” Upon learning about Indigenous culture and history, these students expressed a change in attitude as they showed great empathy and admiration towards Indigenous communities who have shown great resilience and perseverance.

Next, to understand if there is a distinction between opinions of historical education in terms of legal status, we asked our participants if they believe it is important for immigrants to learn about the Indigenous people’s history and current situation. We found that motivations spiral between feelings of repentance, respect, and inclusiveness, and a great deal of passion for Indigenous communities. Nikita said, “I think it is important… it’s important they are respected as well… I think just that general awareness would just help, umm, people respect a lot of the communities more… it would help the Indigenous communities feel more included.” Another participant, Mifaly, spoke with grief about having met only one person with Indigenous roots at UofT. She demands answers as to why their representation in universities should be this low. She complains, “I feel like that also kind of makes you question, like, why? Where are they? …Why aren’t they here? University of Toronto being #1 in Canada, but, do you include all Canadians in that university?” and continues to share, “…The more that doesn’t happen, the more this, this
cycle of ignorance… and not knowing about, about their history is just going to continue further and further.” - referring to not being able to meet more Indigenous students.

To test whether participants’ viewpoints vary across different dimensions, we asked them if they think it is important to learn about the history of a place they live in, even if it isn’t the country they were born in. The most prevalent theme was a sense of attachment stemming from the hypothetical act of residing in said country, and the motivation to share knowledge with others. Nishita said, “Yes, because, umm, like, I’m here now. I – I was not born here, but I’m here now. And of course, I would love to know about a place where I’m here – uhh, I’m, uhh, at present and… some time in life I would go back to my country and I’ll be able to tell people more about it of course…”, while Vanshika said, “Yeah! I think… if I’m gonna live here, I do think it’s important to know the history of that land… history is in the past, I mean you have to know about it either way if it’s violent or peaceful.” We noticed that this participant has deviated from her previous neutral views of allowing personal choice in self-education, and transitioned to the belief that historical education is crucial in spite of an individual’s country of origin. In addition, Morticia responded with an enthusiastic “Yeah, absolutely.”

In contrast, Mary held her standpoint against the imposition of historical education and cultural awareness. When asked if she would attend events hosted by Aboriginal clubs such as the Native Students Association, she shares, “I think the thing is I don’t really know anything about it to start with. It’s just like a blank area for me. So I don’t know how can I be interested in something I don’t know. So, like, maybe if I start to learning a bit about it, like, I might [indecipherable].” This directly contradicts Mifaly’s expression of remorse toward having only met one Indigenous person on campus, and implies that had Indigenous communities been
represented and less marginalised, perhaps people with similar mindsets as Mary’s would grow a stronger interest in them. Within mainstream media, European history is often privileged and idealised as they often focus on history that dates centuries back. For example, Mary revealed a bit more about her lack of motivation toward learning about (Indigenous) history. She said, “I don’t feel like Scarborough is that interesting to me, if it’s like Europe somewhere, I might be interested to learn.”, implying that places with history that has been collectively deemed rich and interesting by others appeal more to her. This highlights the centralised dominant European discourse as ‘interesting’ history while Indigenous history is gradually erased. Indigenous narratives and histories are rich, complex and enlightening. For example, Scarborough was home to various prominent Indigenous groups namely the Huron-Wendat, Petun First Nations (Myrvold, 1997), the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit River (Freeman, 2010). Yet, they have been systematically excluded from the dominant discourse in Canada’s history. The mobilisation of dominant frameworks of history showcase European history as superior and Canadian history as seemingly marginalised and uninteresting. This ideology not only disenfranchises Indigenous perspectives and history, but also multicultural communities like Scarborough. Therefore, as the history of Scarborough is often marginalised and silenced in comparison to European histories, so is Indigenous knowledge against the mainstream Canadian history.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

This report analyses what and how Scarborough international students learn about Canada’s colonial context and the current struggles of Indigenous communities. Firstly, findings suggest that newcomers were exposed to a range of sources to facilitate awareness and foster
understanding. These sources include education (primarily post-secondary), personal networks, university/job applications, media, news, government websites and volunteer programs. Of these sources however, many - namely mainstream media and television - are often filled with stereotypes and a lack of accurate historical information. Moreover, some international students expressed not learning about Indigenous communities or being exposed to any types of knowledge or awareness. Secondly, the dissemination of knowledge through formal education at university was the primary source of knowledge that exposed students to Indigenous history. As UTSC begins to implement the TRC recommendation to “Indigenise the curriculum” (Shimo & Barmak, 2017), more and more students are being exposed to Indigenous knowledge and history. However, our study also found some shortcomings in this process, as not all students have access to this curriculum. As such, it is highly unlikely for students in the science programs to get a chance to be exposed to such Indigenous knowledge. Although newcomer students are eager to learn about the country they are currently residing in, this curiosity is not supported by the institution. Lastly, the opinions and attitudes that newcomers have towards Indigenous groups stems from a connection that recognises the struggles of Indigenous groups, and results in feeling a sense of empathy and respect. By contrast, those who did not have much exposure to Indigenous narratives, felt indifferent to the significance of learning about Indigenous cultures.

Given the scope of our research, we wish to highlight some key limitations of this paper. We recognise that because our sample size is relatively small and participants come from a limited number of programs, our observations are not generalisable or reflective of the entire international student population at UTSC. Furthermore, the lack of male data for comparison may have limited the study findings as only women participated. Lack of data from domestic
students inhibits us from comparing responses so as to identify the gaps in knowledge and differences in opinions and attitudes toward learning. We realise the potential filtering and misinterpretation of participants who preferred not to be recorded. Finally, we believe we might be subjected to response bias. Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, some participants may have felt inclined to showcase a high level of personal care and declare a great importance in learning this topic for fear of negative judgment by the interviewers.

Next, given the recent quest to decolonise various structures of society to create a more fair and equitable society, we would like to propose a few recommendations for university curriculum and policy, and future academic research based on the limitations of our research. The university could begin with more Indigenous-centric events on campus. When asked if they would be interested in attending events hosted by Aboriginal clubs at UofT, approximately 78% of our interviewees answered yes. Assaf’s (2011) article highlights exactly this – there are numerous ways for newcomers to reconcile and fraternise with Indigenous communities excluding information kits and classes; events, celebrations, and festivals are a great way to bring the two groups together. The creation of campus wide events that centers Indigenous knowledge, can create dialogue and awareness among the post secondary student population.

A suggestion of more Indigenous perspectives within post-secondary curriculum will also be made. Each program addresses Indigenous content in a manner that coincides with the given field. However, not all programs such as Management and Biotechnology are able to incorporate Indigenous knowledge within their syllabi with the same amount of ease. Yet, many of our participants expressed that they would like to see this knowledge implemented in the university as an ungraded course or online module, which would be available to all students. These
participants felt this approach would be respectful and create a better understanding and awareness for Indigenous communities. They also added that it is only fair to know the history of the country in which you reside. As such, it is crucial that UTSC and other universities cover this topic by implementing it within the curriculum and outside the classrooms via Indigenous-centric events and celebrations. Not only would they be educating both domestic and international students on an important and often neglected aspect of Canada’s history, but they would also be adhering to Call to Action 62.ii listed under the ‘Education for Reconciliation,’ which states: “Provide the necessary funding to postsecondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012).

Lastly, we would recommend increased state responsibility. More and better strategies should be adopted by the government to foster reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups. It must be understood that an apology cannot suffice to redeem years of injustice and discrimination. Conscious and continued efforts must be made to facilitate solidarity. Public school curriculum should be revised by the Ministry of Education, funds should be apportioned to improve the standards of living of Indigenous folks, and open forums/discussions should be opened to allow for sharing of knowledge and information.

To conclude, we will also recommend future research on this topic to fill the knowledge gaps that still exist. Future research should incorporate a larger number of both international students as well as domestic students from various universities and programs to identify and compare the level of knowledge of Indigenous communities within Canada, the accuracy and source of this knowledge, and the opinions and attitudes towards learning of the communities.
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