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**Exploring Dropout
Amongst Inuit High School Students
In Nunavut**

By

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**A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

CALGARY, ALBERTA

September, 1998

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0-612-34994-2

ABSTRACT

Based on the dropout literature, the following variables were explored in order to determine their relationship with Inuit high school dropout: school variables, personal/social variables, home/family variables, self-concept, alienation, cultural estrangement, and gender. Twenty-five participants from 3 communities in the Nunavut region of the Northwest Territories participated in the study. The above listed variables were analyzed using a variety of descriptive and correlational techniques. It is a combination of factors and the interactions among them, which appear to influence students decisions to leave school. School variables, personal/social variables, and home/family variables predicted dropout better than did self-concept, alienation, or cultural estrangement. Female participants were also confronted with more obstacles than males were at school, in their personal/social lives, and in their home lives. However, a number of variables presented in the dropout literature did not help to predict high school dropout with this group. Educational implications and recommendations are made, and suggestions for future research are provided.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Labercane for being my inuksuk and for providing me with his continuous support, encouragement, and guidance during the planning, preparation and completion of this thesis.

Appreciation is also expressed to Dr. McDougall and Professor Gilchrist-James, members of my advisory committee, for their support, interest and counsel.

Thank-you Recas for patiently sticking by me and supporting me in completing this project.

I am indebted to Lily, Mirella, Mo and Dan for all your help, encouragement, comments and support. Being the last to finish, you have all been incredible role models for me.

Thanks to Tak Fung for your assistance with the statistical analyses.

Thank- you to the Nunavut Education Councils and the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies for financially making this project possible and for providing me with the opportunity to return home again.

Thanks are extended to participants, community members, high school staff, and college staff for their cooperation with the study.

Thanks to my many family and friends who believed in me and assured me that I could do this project. Thanks for checking up on me to make sure I was surviving.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL PAGE	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
CHAPTER I: Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Purpose	4
Research Questions	5
Design of the Study	5
Participants	6
Materials and Procedure	6
Data Analysis	7
Definition of Terms	7
Assumptions	9
Limitations	9
Significance of the Study	10
Organization of the Study	10
CHAPTER II: Review of the Literature	12
Education in the North	12
An Historical Perspective on Education in the North	12
Inuit Education Today	14
The High School Dropout Phenomenon and Theories of Dropout	17
Frustration-Self-Esteem Model	18
Participation-Identification Model	18

Cultural Discontinuity Hypothesis	19
Deficit Theory	20
Dropout Correlates	20
School Variables	21
School Curriculum	21
Learning Style	22
Teacher Attitudes	24
Grade Retention and Age-Grade Deceleration	25
Personal/ Social Variables	26
Achievement	26
Recreation	28
Peer Pressure	29
Cultural Identity	30
Family Background	31
Socioeconomic Status	32
Employment	33
Language Usage	34
Parents Attitudes Towards Education	37
Self-Concept and Self-Esteem	39
Alienation and Cultural Estrangement	42
Chapter Summary	43
CHAPTER III: Research Design and Methodology	45
Study Site	45
The Northwest Territories	45
Nunavut	46
Iqaluit	47
Rankin Inlet	49
Cambridge Bay	49
Participants	50
Procedure	51

Materials	52
Questionnaire	53
Tennessee Self-Concept Scale:2	54
Alienation Scale	55
Cultural Estrangement Scale	56
Data Analysis	57
Chapter Summary	57
CHAPTER IV: Results	58
Descriptive Statistics	58
Tennessee Self-Concept Scale:2	58
Total Self-Concept Score	59
Conflict	60
Inconsistent Responding	61
Self-Criticism	61
Faking Good	61
Response Distribution	61
Physical	62
Moral	62
Personal	62
Family	62
Social	63
Academic/Work	63
Identity	63
Satisfaction	63
Behavior	64
Alienation and Cultural Estrangement	64
Questionnaire Frequency Data	64
Demographic Information	65
School Variables	65
Personal/ Social Variables	74

Home/ Family Variables	79
Cross-Tabulations	83
Total Self-Concept	84
Academic/Work Self-Concept by Thoughts re: Leaving School to Work.....	84
Alienation by Discussion re: Leaving School	84
Alienation by Heterosexual Relationship	85
Cultural Estrangement by Leaving School to Work	85
Gender by Employment Status	85
Gender by Discussion re: Quitting School	85
Community by First Language	86
Community by Considering Suicide	86
Community by Suicide Attempt	86
Correlations	86
One-Way ANOVAs	87
Chapter Summary	87
CHAPTER V: Discussion	90
Findings	90
Research Question #1	90
Research Question #2	91
Research Question #3	94
Research Question #4	96
Educational Implications and Recommendations	97
Suggestions for Future Research	99
Summary and Conclusions	100
REFERENCES	103
APPENDIX A: Letter of Information	116
APPENDIX B: Consent for Research Participation	117

APPENDIX C: Questionnaire and Responses to the Questionnaire	118
APPENDIX D: Alienation Scale	152
APPENDIX E: Cultural Estrangement Scale	155
APPENDIX F: Debriefing Speech	156

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Frequency and Location for Participant Recruitment	51
Table 2	TSCS:2 Sample Mean Scores Compared With TSCS:2 Standardization Mean Scores	60
Table 3	Frequencies and School Likes	66
Table 4	Frequencies and School DISLIKES	67
Table 5	Frequencies and Reasons for Liking Certain Teachers	68
Table 6	Frequencies and Reasons for DISLIKING Certain Teachers	68
Table 7	Frequencies and Problems Experienced at School	69
Table 8	Frequencies and Preferred Changes in Schools	70
Table 9	Frequencies and Reasons for Leaving School	72
Table 10	Frequencies and Type of Current Employment	73
Table 11	Frequencies and Type of Financial Support	74
Table 12	Frequencies and Type of Friendship Network	75
Table 13	Frequencies and Activities Conducted by Dropout Peers	76
Table 14	Frequencies and Talents	77
Table 15	Frequencies and Reasons for Substance Abuse	78
Table 16	Frequencies and Family Type	79
Table 17	Frequencies and Happy Home	80
Table 18	Frequencies and Parental Contact with the School	81
Table 19	Frequencies and Variables Identified as Having a Negative Impact on Schooling	82
Table 20	Collapsed Scale Score Ranges	83
Table 21	One-Way ANOVA'a for Gender and Community by Scale	87

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Map of Canada's Northwest Territories	48
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Many studies reveal that smaller proportions of Native students finish high school than non-Native students. The phenomenon of dropping out is commonly defined as an issue of individual failure, whether it be academically or socially (Dehyle, 1992; McCaul, Donaldson Jr., Coladarci, & Davis, 1992; Wilson, 1991). Those who leave school are often described as deviant because of individual, family, or community characteristics.

A number of academic/school, personal/social, and home/family variables contribute to students being at-risk for dropout. The most common school variables related to high school dropout include little participation in extra-curricular activities, problems with other students or teachers, negative teacher expectations/stereotyping, irrelevant curriculum, boredom, grade retention, learning difficulties, low reading ability, low achievement motivation, truancy, absenteeism, tardiness, suspension, and other disciplinary infractions (Altieri, 1991; Bowker, 1992; Brandt, 1992; Clifton & Roberts, 1988; Coladarci, 1983; Keith, 1995; Kleinfeld, 1995; Persaud & Madak, 1992; Raddysh, 1992; Roderick, 1994; Tidwell, 1988).

Some of the most common personal/social variables related to dropout include peer influence and peers who have dropped out, pregnancy, substance abuse, trouble with the law, low self-esteem or self-concept, lack of confidence and sense of competence, and alienation from the school (Beauvais, Chavez, Oetting, Deffenbacher, & Cornell, 1996; Bowker, 1992; Coladarci, 1983; Ekstrom, Goertz, Pollack, & Rock, 1986; Finn, 1989;

Finn & Rock, 1997; Kaplan, Peck, & Kaplan, 1997; McInerney & Swisher, 1995; Persaud & Madak, 1992; Rumberger, 1983; 1987; Trusty, & Dooley-Dickey, 1993).

Some of the most common family/home variables related to dropout include low socio-economic status, low support for education in the home, low parental education, siblings who have dropped out, geographical isolation, ethnicity, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, drug or alcohol abuse in the home, single-parent households, and a language other than English being spoken at home (Altieri, 1991; Bowker, 1992; Brandt, 1992; Clifton & Roberts, 1988; Coladarci, 1983; Ekstrom, et al., 1986; Garnier, Stein, & Jacobs, 1997; Hull, 1990; Keith, 1995; Raddysh, 1992; Rumberger, 1983; 1987; Tidwell, 1988).

Furthermore, minority individuals may feel that they are pulled out of school because of family or community pressures, or pushed out of school by an unaccepting dominant society (Dehyle, 1992; Germaine, 1995; Scott, 1986).

As mentioned earlier, a low self-esteem/self-concept can lead to high school dropout. Specifically, self-esteem and self-concept refer to collections of perceptions, beliefs and feelings related to who one is. They are presumed to be composed of a number of components such as a sense of competence, autonomy, and purpose. This sense of self, it can be argued, may help to determine whether one stays in school or drops out. A person's expectations, motivation, and school performance levels are generalized from past experiences, incorporating the expectations of his/her community, parents, teachers, and peers. However, building an identity and positive self-esteem in order to succeed in an environment that appears often times to clash with a person's own

culture is a difficult task (Annahatak, 1994; Cole & Scribner, 1974; McInerney & Swisher, 1995).

Furthermore, alienation and cultural estrangement have been used to predict high school dropout. Alienation, or the feeling that one is isolated from others, is a developmental process that may eventually result in school dropout (Finn, 1989; Finn & Rock, 1997; Franklin & Streeter, 1995; Kaplan, Peck, & Kaplan, 1997; Trusty & Dooley-Dickey, 1993; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). Cultural estrangement is one aspect of alienation wherein individuals may reject a social value system which is incompatible with their own (Loughrey & Harris, 1992; Seeman, 1971).

The education process in the Northwest Territories (NWT) should reflect the unique nature of its people's past, including their traditions, history and values. While the people of the NWT move towards self-determination, the process should be moulded to provide an appropriate response in preparing young people for the future (Government of the NWT, 1991).

Statement of the Problem

Over 65% of students in the NWT are now participating in senior secondary school, compared to 40% in the late 1980's (Census of Canada, 1996; Jewison, 1995). The extension of secondary school grades in smaller communities has helped to encourage students to stay in school. However, it has been reported that the graduation rate for NWT students is one-third the rate of the national average (Government of the Northwest Territories, 1994). Despite the fact that the number of Inuit high school

students graduating has increased, a significant number of students continue to leave school before they graduate.

Looking into the future of the Arctic is very difficult. Resettlement and a clash of cultures has produced rapid social, cultural and economic change, with the abandonment of much of the aboriginal life-style (Irwin, 1989). Students will have to emerge from the school system much more flexible and adaptable than their predecessors in order to act confidently and responsibly in such a changing environment. Moreover, critical to the success of Nunavut, the new territory emerging from the eastern NWT, is the recognition that residents are more likely to achieve their aspirations through adequate training and education.

Purpose

The purpose of this exploratory study was to identify and examine school, personal/social, and home/family variables which have led Inuit students to leave high school before graduation, and to determine how much of an influence self concept, alienation, and cultural estrangement played in students' decisions to leave school. In order to achieve this, I spent time in three communities in the Nunavut region of the Northwest Territories in order to gain a sense of the educational climate, and I individually interviewed Inuit students who had left high school before graduation. The goal was to gain a better understanding of the factors influencing the dropout rates of Inuit students within the public schools in the NWT.

Originally, I considered including students who had successfully graduated from high school in the study. However, at the time of this study, another research team was examining high school graduates. The Nunavut Divisional Education Councils, in turn, asked that this project focus on high school dropouts in order to complement the recent research that was being done with high school graduates. Therefore, instead of conducting a comparison study, which would include both dropouts and graduates, the study focussed on examining high school dropouts.

Research Questions

The following four questions were developed to guide the research inquiry in this study:

1. What reasons have Inuit students offered for leaving high school before graduation?
2. What kinds of obstacles do Inuit students confront in high school, in their personal/
3. social lives, and at home/with family?
4. What roles do self-concept, alienation, and cultural estrangement play in determining Inuit high school dropout?
5. Do Inuit males and females give different reasons for leaving high school? Do they confront different obstacles? Are there differences between Inuit males and females when it comes to self-concept, alienation, and cultural estrangement?

Design of the Study

The following variables explored in the context of this study were used to develop a conceptual framework to guide the inquiry:

1. School experiences
2. Personal and social life
3. Home life and family factors
4. Self-concept
5. Alienation
6. Cultural estrangement
7. Gender

The semi-structured interview (using a questionnaire adapted from The Student Questionnaire) and the personality inventories (i.e., the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale:2, Alienation scale, and Cultural Estrangement scale) were used to determine whether the above stated variables influenced participant's decisions to dropout.

Participants

Twenty-eight individuals from Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay agreed to participate in the study, although 3 participants were dropped from the analysis due to missing data. Personnel from each of the high schools provided me with the names of 107 students who had dropped out of school in the last 4 years. A number of these individuals could not be reached by telephone, were out of town, refused to participate, or did not show up for appointments. Other participants were recruited through posters, announcements in college classrooms, and by word-of-mouth.

Materials and Procedure

Students were asked to participate in an in-depth semi-structured interview that covered information on the following topics: their school experiences, their personal and

social life, and their home life (see Appendix C for the Questionnaire). A number of topics were explored within each of the three subsections. Interviews were audio-taped and conducted individually with each of the high school leavers in person.

Participants were also asked to complete three personality inventories: Fitts' and Warren's (1996) Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS:2), which is broadly applicable and multidimensional in its description of self-concept/self-esteem; Jessor and Jessor's (1977) Alienation scale (see Appendix E) which measures generalized alienation in terms of uncertainty about the meaningfulness of daily roles and activities and beliefs of isolation from others; and the Cultural Estrangement scale adapted from Kohn and Schooler (see Appendix F) which assesses whether one believes one's ideas and opinions differ from those of friends, relatives, other people of the same religious background, and compatriots in general.

Data Analysis

Information gathered from the questionnaires and the personality inventories were analyzed statistically using a variety of descriptive and correlational techniques. These included frequencies, means, standard deviations, t-tests, cross-tabulations, Pearson Product-Moment correlations, and one-way analyses of variances (ANOVAs).

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the meanings attached to certain terms are as follows:

- *Native*: People whose ancestors inhabited North America prior to the arrival of the Europeans. The term Native includes Inuit, Status and Non-Status Indians, and Metis.
- *Inuit*: Inuit, translated from Inuktitut, means “people”. This study is concerned with the Canadian Inuit, the original inhabitants of Canada’s northern territories. The Circumpolar Inuit regions include Canada, Alaska, Greenland, and Russia.
- *Non-Native*: A person who is not Inuit, Indian (any person of North American Indian ancestry), or Metis (a person of mixed Indian and non-Indian ancestry).
- *Drop-out/ high school leaver*: Any student who has left the Territorial high school system before completing grade 12. This may include individuals who have since returned to school for academic upgrading.
- *Graduate*: Any student who has attended a Northwest Territories high school and has completed the minimum requirements for graduation.
- *Nunavut*: Nunavut, translated from Inuktitut, means “Our Land”. The Northwest Territories is splitting into two territories and Nunavut is the new territory emerging from the East. The Inuit constitute the majority population in Nunavut.
- *Self-concept/Self-esteem*: Self-concept refers to the general belief structure or theory individuals develop about themselves. Self-esteem is one aspect of self-concept dealing with feelings about oneself and feelings of personal worth and effectiveness.
- *Alienation*: The belief that one is isolated from others, whether it be psychologically and/or socially.

- *Cultural Estrangement*: Cultural estrangement, one aspect of alienation, involves the failure to share common values and opinions with dominant groups.

Assumptions

Inuit students experience a different life context from other native and non-Native groups, and factors in this context will affect their success in school. High school dropouts also experience a different life context from high school graduates.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations to this study:

1. This study is limited to a small sample of Inuit high school leavers from Territorial public high schools. The study is further limited to three communities in the Nunavut region of the Northwest Territories.
2. A comparison study examining both high school dropouts and high school graduates could not be conducted.
3. Findings from this study may not generalize to students from other ethnic backgrounds or to students from other settings.
4. Data is based on students' self-reported recollections of high school experiences and early life experiences.
5. Other informants with regards to each student could not be contacted/studied (e.g., teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, peers, etc.).
6. Access to school files was denied for fear that the rights of students and/or teachers may be compromised.

Significance of the Study

Assuming a need for individuals (Native and non-Native alike) to acquire an education in order to build a better quality of life, the present dropout rates in the NWT are not encouraging. Only a small number of research studies have examined high school dropouts in the NWT and, fewer still, have recently focused on Inuit high school dropouts. This study has implication and value for those interested in education with Native groups, including teachers, administrators, health and social service agencies, parents, and students.

Organization of the Study

The report for this study is divided into five chapters. Chapter I introduced the study, research questions, design of the study, definition of terms, limitations, and its significance. The remainder of the study is divided into the following areas:

- Chapter II presents a review of the literature. First, an historical overview of Inuit education is provided. Second, the dropout phenomenon and dropout theories are examined. Finally, a review on dropout correlates, including school factors, personal/social factors, family background, self-concept/self-esteem, alienation, and cultural estrangement are discussed.
- Chapter III outlines the methodology of the study. This chapter discusses the study site, participants, materials, procedure, and data analysis.
- Chapter IV provides the results obtained from the questionnaire, self-concept survey, alienation scale and cultural estrangement scale.

- Chapter V outlines the findings, recommendations, and suggestions for future directions in research.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

This chapter begins with an historical overview of Inuit education. Secondly, the dropout phenomenon and dropout theories are discussed. Lastly, there is a review on dropout correlates, including school factors, personal and social factors, family background, self-concept/self-esteem, alienation, and cultural estrangement.

Education in the North

An Historical Perspective on Education in the North

Before formalized education, Inuit culture was taught in an informal, spontaneous manner, aimed at a sound understanding of values, belief systems, and life skills, which enabled students to accept responsible adult roles in their communities. Children learned by listening, watching, and doing. However, the first mission schools in the Northwest Territories opened in the 1860's, and for the next 100 years, education was controlled from the outside (first by the church and later by the government). By the 1950's formalized schooling was popular in the North. Inuit families resettled near schools, sent their children to live with families closer to schools, or sent their children to boarding schools. Educators were to teach English and job-oriented skills in an effort to train Inuit for employment in larger northern settlements. Cultural replacement was the norm rather than cultural education. Therefore, many students later returned to their families and communities without the necessary skills to survive in their parents' world. With the establishment of settlements in the 1960's, Inuit children were able to live at home while

they attended grade school, and individuals who went on to high school were able to stay at schools in Yellowknife, Iqaluit, and Rankin Inlet (Annahatak, 1994; Chavers, 1991; Irwin, 1989; Maguire & McAlpine, 1996; Oakes, 1988; Perley, 1993).

The transfer of responsibility for education to the territorial government led to a plan to change and improve schooling in the North, and to build a foundation for a school system and curriculum that emphasized the languages and cultures of the north. Starting in 1985, in order to increase local control of education, eight divisional boards were established in each region of the NWT. Within a larger territorial educational framework, school jurisdictions established their own goals and priorities (Jewison, 1995; Maguire & McAlpine, 1996).

Furthermore, the extension of secondary school grades in many smaller NWT communities has helped to encourage students to stay in school and graduate. Students are now remaining in the classrooms longer, and many who had dropped out are returning to improve their level of education. Because more secondary school programs became available in the communities, there is no longer a need for student residences in the larger centers (Government of the NWT, 1994; Jewison, 1995). Moreover, researchers predict that the greatest effect of small high schools will be on the educational achievement of the next generation of students. By replacing boarding schools with village high schools, graduation rates will increase. Many parents will be high school graduates and will then be able to better facilitate their children's education (Kleinfeld, McDairmid, & Hagstrom, 1989).

Inuit Education Today

Despite the encouraging state of affairs, about 76% of students in the NWT continue to leave school before graduating from grade 12 (Jewison, 1995). The educational attainment of students in the North compares poorly to Canadian averages. Fewer than 40% of the Natives while over 80% of the general Canadian population complete grade 9 (Frideres, 1988).

Inuit children spend five hours a day, five days a week, for roughly 185 days of the year in school. This routine is totally out of synchronization with the rhythms of hunting, trapping, and fishing. However, in a White middle class society, which is how education in the North is organized, most middle-class, non-Native youth do succeed in school, and this suggests evidence that the school is an effective institution (Dehyle, 1992; Souaid, 1988; Taylor, Crago, & McAlpine, 1993).

Unfortunately, many Inuit students enter high school with academic abilities closer to grade seven than grade nine. For example, NWT students took part in a math testing program, and the results showed that they did not perform as well as students in other areas of Canada (Government of the NWT, 1994). Furthermore, tracking is a common practice in secondary schools where teachers have low expectations for Native students (Rehyner, 1992). As a result, the few Inuit students who do graduate usually do so with a general diploma that does not prepare them for a university education or profession (Clifton & Roberts, 1988; Government of the NWT, 1994; Irwin, 1989). The following quote supports this view:

Although there are some successful graduates, the general result of formal schooling in the North is shameful both in comparison to the traditional Inuit

socialization of children and in comparison with national school standards. The drop out and academic performance data speak for themselves. Such failure has fortunately left parents and Inuit organizations to doubt the process and to raise their voices to promote and preserve Inuit culture. (Williamson, 1987, p. 68)

Although the Alberta curricula is still used for many high school subjects in the NWT, the NWT has developed its own curricula for specific northern high school courses. As Maguire and McAlpine (1996) state, schools in the north are committed to a concept and vision of culture-based and inclusive schooling. In a compulsory course for secondary school graduation, students study the history of the NWT, culture and traditions, northern languages, and trends that will shape the future of northern society. The course is intended to promote a sense of confidence and pride in one's cultural heritage, and to help students respect cultural differences. The NWT education system strives to give young people the skills they need to participate in the traditional economy, the wage economy, or both (Jewison, 1995). If communities begin to forge a new, strong sense of cultural identity that includes knowing ancestral ways and valuing current ones, students will have a chance to succeed in many worlds, including their own. There is an increasing awareness among residents of the NWT of the value and potential of education to strengthen aboriginal communities (Henze & Vannett, 1993; Maguire & McAlpine, 1996).

However, Souaid (1988) and others (Nunavik Educational Task Force, 1992) report that there is nothing innovative or uniquely northern about Inuit schools, aside from the lower student-teacher ratios. Most are still regular four-wall classrooms, with bells and intercom systems, computers, libraries and long corridors. Students are still being inundated with programs, materials, and evaluation measures that reflect southern,

middle class values. Students and families are still forced to make the choice between formal education and traditional learning, between classroom and culture. When students miss class work, they fall behind and frustrate the teacher, who is confined by schedules and timetables. On the other hand, when students miss family camping time they miss out on opportunities to become proficient at the hands-on skills of their ancestors. It is difficult for children to choose what is best when they have not had time to be deeply immersed in either culture. For most Inuit children, the school environment is very different from their home environment (Wright & Taylor, 1995).

Therefore, the dilemma faced in educating Native children is whether to educate them in order to assimilate them into the Canadian mainstream culture or to concentrate on an educational system that prepares children for life in their home communities. If the home community is the focus, much of the current educational content is irrelevant. On the other hand, if mainstream culture is to be emphasized, then the community must acknowledge the fact that many of their children might have to leave their home communities and that they may not learn their family's ways and traditions (Germaine, 1995; Taylor, Crago, & McAlpine, 1993).

Alternatively, Taylor, Crago, and McAlpine (1993) suggest that Native children might become comfortable with mainstream culture through the school and thereby be able to switch between the required behaviors of home and school. Most Inuit are willing to learn the other culture of the school but would like to achieve this without the tragic loss of human resources and talents that they possess within their own society (Williamson, 1987). However, it may be unrealistic to believe that the integrity of their

Native culture can be maintained if education is designed to represent mainstream values exclusively.

The High School Dropout Phenomenon and Theories of Dropout

The research with dropouts tends to be in three different areas. One area includes empirical studies which define and estimate dropout rates and examine the correlates of dropping out, providing dropout profiles. Fewer studies are based on an understanding of the developmental processes that lead an individual to withdraw from school. At the same time, the third area of research studies describe intervention efforts to prevent students from leaving school or to attract dropouts back into school.

Different definitions of dropouts, different data collection methods, and different ways of tracking youth no longer in school result in unreliable dropout figures.

Therefore, while accurate figures are difficult to obtain, the rate at which Native youth prematurely leave the education system is higher than that of the general population, and it varies from community to community. It is difficult to provide the reader with accurate statistical data.

Dropouts and graduates can have many characteristics in common. However, there are variations in the experience of high school transition and the reasons for dropping out amongst students and their families. Dropping out of high school is usually not an impulsive decision, but a long-term multiply determined process beginning in childhood. Dropping out of school also increases the probability of a downward spiral into greater emotional, physical, and economic problems. “The negative consequences of

dropping out range from limited job opportunities, unemployment and welfare dependency to criminal behavior” (Beauvais, et al., 1996; Garnier, Stein, & Jacobs, 1997, p. 396; Persaud & Madak, 1992; Wilson, 1991).

Frustration-Self-Esteem Model

In the frustration-self-esteem model, poor school performance is hypothesized to lead to an impaired self-view, self-concept, or self-esteem, which in turn lead to an individual opposing the context that is seen as responsible. Frustration and embarrassment are commonly attributed to the school’s failure to provide an adequate instructional and/or emotional environment. Oppositional behavior may then take the form of disrupting the instructional process, skipping class, or even committing delinquent acts. “Consistent patterns of scholastic failure may threaten one’s self-view, resulting in a search for alternate activities that may be less sanctioned socially but through which the youngster can experience success” (Finn, 1989, p. 120). This alternative is readily accessible and may be one in which the individual is encouraged to take in order to avoid frustration and humiliation due to school failure. While in school the student’s behavior may become the focus of attention and it may be exacerbated until the student withdraws or is removed from participating in the school environment (Finn, 1989; Kaplan Peck, & Kaplan, 1997; Roderick, 1994; Wood, 1991).

Participation-Identification Model

Student’s active participation in school and classroom activities and a feeling of identification with the school might mediate school outcomes, such as absenteeism, truancy, dropout and delinquency (Finn, 1989; Finn & Rock, 1997; Mahoney & Cairns,

1997). Active participation (e.g., attending to the teacher, reading, studying, responding to questions, completing assignments, etc.) is essential for learning to occur.

Manipulating participation in school activities may help to increase levels of identification. Students that spend extra time in the school environment through extracurricular activities, for example, increase the likelihood of feeling a sense of belongingness. For students whose academic work is weak, extracurricular activities may be the primary source of attachment to the school. Therefore, policies which declare students ineligible for extracurricular activities because of grades may be counterproductive.

Finn (1989) also stated that students lacking encouragement from home may arrive at school predisposed to non-participation and non-identification. Teachers might be able to engage the interest of some students, but other students will become restless, distracted or withdrawn, turn in assignments late, or arrive late and/or unprepared for class. Because these former students are not provided with successful outcomes they do not have the encouragement to participate. If this pattern continues, identification with the school is unlikely. It is essential that non-participation be recognized early and that some form of institutional encouragement be provided (Finn, 1987; Finn & Rock, 1997; Srebnick & Elias, 1993).

The Cultural Discontinuity Hypothesis

Sociolinguists focus on the teacher-learner interaction, and the constant miscommunication and different value systems resulting from different cultural and linguistic preferences for interaction between the home and school. Solutions are said to

lie in increasing parental involvement and in teachers becoming knowledgeable about the culture and language of their students and adapting curriculum and teaching methods to students' needs (Germaine, 1995; Ledlow, 1992; Wilson, 1991).

For many Natives, success in education means mastering white-man's ways on one's own terms while maintaining some commitment to Native values and tradition. However, if becoming less Native is what is meant by success, than many would not consider dropping-out of school a mark of failure. The issue is not whether assimilation or acculturation should take place, but rather how much, how fast, and under whose direction. These are issues minority students must confront and resolve (Scott, 1986).

Deficit Theory

Germaine (1995) explains how educational psychologists have focused on the individual learner who, they believe, arrives at school broken by impoverished home and community experiences. This deficit theory calls for helping individuals to master skills before moving ahead as well as providing enrichment to overcome deficits in background experiences.

Dropout Correlates

For the community to be a place of learning it must be healthy, however, there are many problems within some of these communities. Alcohol and drugs represent two major issues which have produced economic, physical, psychological, social, and legal problems. Other problems include a lack of adequate housing, delinquency, family violence, child abuse, suicide, unemployment, and poverty. People are experiencing

helplessness, hopelessness, and isolation which stimulate dysfunctional behavior. These kinds of activities have negatively affected many students and their schooling (Dehyle, 1992; Government of the NWT, 1994; Grant, 1991; Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992).

Dropout correlates will now be discussed in terms of school variables, personal/social variables, home/family variables, self-concept/self-esteem, alienation, and cultural estrangement.

School Variables

School Curriculum

The curriculum is minimally related to Inuit culture. For example, during the larger part of schooling, the Inuktitut language is not used and most instruction is in English. Students can easily become dissatisfied with an institution that appears oblivious or insensitive to their identity (Coladarci, 1983). Deyhle (1992) also concluded that a culturally non-responsive curriculum is a greater threat to students whose cultural identity is insecure. She found that students who came from the most traditional Navajo homes, who spoke their Native language, and participated in traditional religious and social activities did not feel the school curriculum was inappropriate. However, Ute students who came from the least traditional homes felt that the curriculum was not important to them; they experienced the highest dropout rates, and the most problems academically and socially in school. Maximum learning takes place when programs are relevant and meaningful and based on student strengths and needs (Government of the NWT, 1993; Nunavik Educational Task Force, 1992; Rehyner, 1992; Vallerand & Menard, 1984).

The academic requirements of school may also be a problem. Although students are more likely to cite boredom as a reason for dropping out than academic failure, reading is often a major problem, with many school leavers being grade levels behind the national average. This should not be surprising when, for example, White middle-class cultural patterns of guiding children's performance in preliteracy activities may not exist in Aboriginal homes (Dehyle, 1992; Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992; Reyhner, 1992; Taylor, Crago, & McAlpine, 1993). In 1985, it was estimated that about 15% of the NWT student population needed additional supports to help them learn. More recently, departments and agencies reveal that the rate is probably closer to 25% or 30% (Government of the NWT, 1994). Thus, the academic curriculum needs to take this problem into consideration.

While small village high schools have advantages in keeping students close to home and providing a caring learning environment, they have limitations in course variety, the number of advanced courses and extracurricular activities offered, and exposure to the world outside the village. The village high school has not solved all problems, but the graduation rates of rural Alaskan high school students for example, have significantly increased (Kleinfeld, 1985).

Learning Style

“Many Native American children who are learning and participating in culturally appropriate ways are labeled as slow, passive shy, uncooperative, unassertive, withdrawn, or lazy” (Garrett, 1995, p. 192). However, public education is generally based largely on individualism, interpersonal competition, and other Western norms and values. Group-

based and cooperative forms of education may be more effective for Native people than more common individualistic/ competitive approaches (Badwound & Tierney, 1988). Carnew (1984) indicated that Native children fail in schools because programs have not been properly designed to match their particular cognitive processes.

The learning style in schools is often incongruent with traditional Inuit styles. The dominant personal learning style of Natives is said to be abstract random, whereas the dominant personal learning style of non-Native groups is said to be concrete sequential (Backes, 1993). The abstract random learning style coincides with a deductive, holistic instructional methodology. This methodology includes personalization, imagination, interpretation, being part of a social group, discussion, reflection, and flexibility. On the other hand, concrete sequential learning styles coincide with inductive, linear methodology, now dominant in traditional classrooms. As a consequence, the dominant personal learning style of Native students does not match the teaching style in many classrooms. If teachers adapt to individual differences and build on the strengths of students, this may increase learning, motivation and school completion. Despite the fact that Backes (1993) did not find any significant differences in the learning styles of Native dropouts and graduates, other researchers (Backes, 1993; Elofson & Elofson, 1988; Persi & Brunatti, 1987) suggest that learning style may be one factor that affects the learning success or failure of high school students. Therefore, if the teaching style of instructors matches the learning style of students, the probability of learning success increases.

Teacher Attitudes

Researchers (Brandt, 1992; Coladarci, 1983; Dehyle, 1992; Keith, 1995; Kleinfeld, 1995; Wilson, 1991) found that factors pertaining to teacher-student relationships were important in students' decisions to drop out. Dropouts believed that teachers did not care about them, did not like them, and/or did not help them (Dehyle, 1992; Keith, 1995; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). Clifton and Roberts (1988) and Coladarci (1983) suggested that Native students are treated differently from non-Native students by their teachers. This leads to student underachievement and possibly dropout. Further, teachers and administrators might frown on absences related to culture and family obligations, but they prize those who respect the school timetable. Teachers assume that students who are habitually late, absent, unmotivated or distracted lack seriousness (Souaid, 1988). For many dropouts, the system seems to have given up on them long before the student gave up on the system, and little seems to be done to change students minds about dropping out.

Wilson (1991) reported that although a few Indian students had tried taking university entrance courses, teachers reported that most students could not handle the work and had to be placed in vocational or special education classes. Before teachers knew students they would often prejudge them and could not imagine these students being successful. Stereotypes lead to subtle and not-so-subtle derogatory messages, which can lead to self-fulfilling prophecies wherein teachers' negative expectations and negative messages help trigger relatively poor performance and predispose Native students to dropout (Brandt, 1992).

Studies (Cobourn & Nelson, 1989; Coladarci, 1983; Deyhle, 1992; Kleinfeld, 1995) show that Native students' prefer warm, supportive teachers. Indian and Eskimo students in Alaska tended to expect highly personalized, emotionally intense relationships with their classmates and teachers. Effective teachers created a climate of emotional warmth that dissipated students' fears and fulfilled the students' expectations for highly personalized relationships. Teachers also maintained high academic standards once rapport had been established. Demands were accompanied by a smile, gentle teasing or other forms of emotional support. Students' were then obligated, in the relationship, to produce a high level of academic work. The assumption is that if teachers maintain high standards and expectations for student performance and provide effective programs, students will rise to the expected level. Conversely, if little is expected then little will be achieved; teachers and students then agree not to challenge each other (Dehyle, 1992; Germaine, 1995; Kleinfeld, 1995; Nunavik Educational Task Force, 1992; Wilson, 1991).

Grade Retention and Age-Grade Deceleration

Retention in one or more years of school, especially the first or second grade, is a predictor of dropping out (Afolayan, 1991; Roderick, 1994; Tidwell, 1988). Roderick (1994) reported that youths who repeat grades are more likely to dropout of school than those who do not repeat a grade. Students who repeat a grade are likely to drop out shortly after the time when students can legally leave school. Other students may fail grades the year or two before they can legally leave the school system and this may be an indication that they have left school informally. Roderick (1994) suggested that this may

be due to lower levels of academic success or lower self-esteem as a result of the retention.

Furthermore, being overage for grade may increase the odds of school leaving (Roderick, 1994). Hull (1990) found that age-grade discrepancies increased between grades one and six, with more than 30% of grade six Indian students being behind their expected grade levels. The proportion of students behind again begins to increase through grade nine. At each grade level, there is a higher proportion of students in band-operated schools who are behind the expected grade level. Furthermore, while most students in the NWT at age 16 should be in grade 10 or 11, only 6% achieve this level. This increases to 31% once the students are 17 years of age (Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992). Hull (1990) suggested that band-operated schools may have greater difficulties with their students; however, these schools are better at retaining students who would otherwise drop out if attending another type of school. Therefore the concept of an age cap in high school may not be a good idea for students who may be successfully progressing towards a high school diploma (Watt & Roessingh, 1994).

Personal/ Social Variables

Achievement

Research shows that despite the fact that many Native American children enter school with an eagerness and willingness to learn, beyond about the fourth grade, or if they have to transfer to mainstream secondary schools, their academic performance rapidly declines (Sanders, 1987; Wilson, 1992). Furthermore, Clifton and Roberts (1988) reported that ethnicity had a fairly strong causal effect on academic achievement. Inuit

students generally had lower assessments of their potential and were less active academically, which together produced lower academic achievement. Vallerand and Menard (1984) reported that intrinsic motivation decreases if students feel incompetent and overly controlled by the teachers and the educational structure. When this occurs, students may either come to school motivated by extrinsic incentives (e.g., grades, future jobs, etc.), or if students do not find these extrinsic incentives appealing they may stop going to school. However, when there is opportunity for choice and self-determination, intrinsic motivation is likely to be enhanced.

Many dropouts recognized that the school would not teach them to hunt or sew any better than their parents, and they felt that academics were of little consequence to them because many of the local jobs demanded unskilled labor or rudimentary calculations at best (Souaid, 1988). Many of the better jobs were often held by people who did not go to high school, but received on-the-job training and attended short training courses elsewhere (Condon, 1990; Patrick, 1994). Communities need to relate their children's schooling with future employment in their communities, otherwise, attempts at making education meaningful for students will be difficult (Taylor, Crago, & McAlpine, 1993). Expanding opportunities to participate in more complex levels of employment are important to the Inuit, but when their opportunities are restricted, their motivation to participate decreases (Roberts, 1985). Some community members believe that creative job opportunities need to be developed. Others believe that some individuals will never have jobs and that individuals need to find other ways to feel

successful and feel that they are contributing to the community (Dehyle, 1992; Government of the NWT, 1994; Ledlow, 1992; Maguire & McAlpine, 1996).

Recreation

Young people are no longer raised exclusively within the context of small family groups where they spend much of the year in isolated camps, and where there are few if any activities to distract them from participating in assigned chores. Population growth and the creation of centralized communities have given rise to a large adolescent peer group which now dominates the social/recreational activities of young people. They now have a great deal more autonomy than was ever afforded them in the pre-settlement era. Young people pass much of their time within the peer group (i.e., visiting friends, hanging out at a coffee shop or arcade, or playing games and sports) (Condon, 1990; Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992).

Ekstrom et al. (1986) reported that dropouts participated less in extracurricular activities and sports than did their non-dropout peers. Similarly, Lutra Associates Ltd. (1992) found that more than a third of students in the NWT generally did not belong to any sports, cultural or recreational organizations in their communities. Engagement in school extracurricular activities may decrease the rates of early school dropout. Enhancing the positive characteristics of the student and strengthening the student-school connection may decrease school dropout (Finn, 1989). However, Persaud and Madak (1992) did not find any difference between graduates and dropouts on involvement in extracurricular activities.

Furthermore, it has been reported that dropouts were significantly more likely to have used all forms of drugs than academically troubled youth or students in good standing (Beauvais, et al., 1996; Persaud & Madak, 1992). Garnier, Stein, and Jacobs (1997) reported that exposure to drug use in childhood significantly increased the chance that teens would use drugs and experience more stressful life events, both of which were related to lower academic achievement and motivation. Children living in environments where they were exposed to drugs were also more likely to be exposed to additional problems and experiences associated with drug use, including criminal activity. Interestingly, NWT students reported that their use of drugs, alcohol or sniffing solvents did not result in missed school days, change in attitude towards school, falling behind in their work, or a decision to quit school. Alternatively, they did report that substance abuse by another household member did negatively affect their schooling (Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992).

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is often a reason given by minority students for leaving school. Students are often teased and accused of thinking that they are better than their counterparts, or of looking down on their Native culture, and of forgetting how to speak their Native language; that is students are accused of “acting White” and of neglecting their Native culture. As a result, many Native students who are academically able to succeed, do poorly in school. Even those who do not fail or drop out generally perform well below their potential. The main strategy for coping with the burden of “acting White” is avoidance. The strategies of academically successful students include engaging

in activities (i.e., being athletic, clowning, or being a bully) which mask perceptions of their being preoccupied with academic excellence (Dehyle, 1992).

Many NWT students had friends who had dropped out, but most of them claimed that they were unconcerned about whether their friends had continued to attend school or had left school (Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992). Coladarci (1983) and Tidwell (1988) reported that dropouts would advise other students contemplating dropping out to stay in school for employment purposes. In fact, Lutra Associates Ltd. (1992) reported that 68% of NWT students were encouraged to stay in school by friends who had dropped out of school, but unfortunately, many of these friends who had dropped out also had less positive impacts on their friends. For example, Coladarci (1983) indicated that approximately one-third of dropouts reported peer pressure in the use of drugs and alcohol as a salient factor in the decision to drop out of school. Furthermore, from grades seven to nine, dropouts reported increases in the frequency with which their peers were engaging in contranormative patterns or deviant behaviors (Kaplan, Peck, & Kaplan, 1997).

Cultural Identity

The controversy surrounding cultural identity is based on two alternate possibilities: that higher levels of cultural identity will have a negative relationship with school success and higher levels of non-native cultural identity will have a positive relationship with it; or that both types of cultural identity will have a positive association with school success (Keith, 1995). “The concept of bicultural functioning includes the ability to function competently in two cultures and to view oneself as belonging to two

cultures” (Carnew, 1984, p. 13). Researchers (de Domanico, Crawford, & De Wolfe, 1994; Phinney, Chavira, & Williamson, 1992; Scott, 1986) have found better adjustment for students with a bicultural identity than a monocultural identity (i.e., clearly identifying with one culture). Possessing a bicultural identity was related to feeling better about oneself, having a higher level of self-esteem, and viewing oneself as having value and worth. On the other hand, monocultural students had significantly lower self-esteem, less self-confidence and greater levels of anxiety and unhappiness. Therefore, giving up one’s ethnic culture can have a negative impact on self-concept. However, Keith (1995) reported that identification with either Indian or mainstream culture promoted successful adjustment to mainstream schools among a group of seventh to twelfth- grade Indian students. Only students with weak identification with both cultures showed poor adjustment.

Schools that provide the opportunity for students to develop a strong cultural identity may prepare these students to function effectively in other cultural situations (Carnew, 1984). On the other hand, Brandt (1992) reported that ties to and involvement in one’s culture were strong among both graduates and leavers and did not clearly correlate with school persistence or with dropping out.

Family Background

“The process of dropping out of high school is a complex chain of events that begins with children’s experiences within the family. The strongest direct predictors of dropping out are family factors” (Coladarci, 1983; Deyhle, 1992; Garnier, Stein, & Jacobs, 1997, p. 414; Rumberger, 1983). Problems at home may significantly distract

students, reducing both their ability to concentrate and their motivation to learn (Streeter & Franklin, 1991). Although home problems may be difficult for educators to address, it is important to know about the kinds of issues they may be confronted with and their impact on student performance.

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Race does not tend to be a factor in predicting dropout when socioeconomic status (SES) is taken into account. Both Native and non-Native students from low SES backgrounds tend to be excluded from the mainstream of their school cultures by teachers and administrative practices (e.g., through streaming or tracking, or by enforcing different policies and practices for different students) (Brady, 1996; Hull, 1990; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986; Wilson, 1992). Therefore, socioeconomic status may be the most pervasive family background characteristic associated with dropping out of school (Clifton and Roberts, 1988; Levin, 1995; Rumberger, 1983; 1987).

Accordingly, it has been reported that of those students who left school, 64% of NWT families were receiving social assistance. Ninety-four percent of non-aboriginal students said their households never received social assistance in comparison to 42% of aboriginal students. Therefore, students (47%) reported leaving school because of work responsibilities at home or wage employment elsewhere (Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992).

Persistent poverty creates a culture of survival. Goals are short range and restricted full of immediate rather than remote concerns (Bruner, 1971). For example, a person can bring home more money when on welfare than they would working part-time at minimum wage. Furthermore, if individuals do receive some funding to attend school

and with an increase in income, they may have to pay for higher rent or a baby-sitter. The immediate monetary benefits of dropping out of school often outweigh possible long-term benefits (Irwin, 1989).

The Government of the NWT (1994) reported that between 20% and 30% of all children in the NWT live in poverty. The effects of poverty may include low birth weight, poor nutrition, chronic health problems, poor success in school, and unemployment. Quality early learning has been shown to play a significant role in reducing the effects of child poverty; there tend to be fewer school dropouts and failures, lower costs for remedial education, fewer teenage pregnancies, increased earning potential, decreased welfare costs, and less crime.

Hull (1990) suggested that assistance to Native parents to increase their income, training, and employment would likely result in improved educational success for their children. Native students are the victims of social and economic inequities, and of the failure for schools to address the needs of low-income, culturally distinct student populations (Perley, 1993).

Employment

Retrospective studies that point to personality and depression among the dropout population may be measuring the by-product of unemployment and not early school leaving. Unemployment, rather than dropout, among the dropout population could explain some individual pathology, such as depression. Furthermore, most dropouts plan to return to high school or to enroll in a vocational program and are not likely to

encourage others to dropout because of the need to obtain a diploma for employment (Svec, 1987; Tidwell, 1988).

Higher levels of education can provide Native people with the skills to obtain the jobs many southerners would have otherwise and their incomes are likely to increase (Government of the NWT, 1994). Approximately 44% of the government employees in Nunavut are Inuit and most of them fall within the lower half of the pay and responsibility scale. Eventually, the plan is to have the Nunavut public service reflect the population of Inuit (85%), and the 1999 target of 50% Inuit throughout the bureaucracy is the beginning (Pelly, 1997). However, Dehyle (1992) argued that the kinds of jobs graduates (or well educated) and non-graduates have, suggest that there is little difference. Dropouts did not appear to suffer the economic consequences so often predicted as a result of dropping out of school. Potential dropouts see that many of their peers who dropped out were making just as much money as those who recently graduated (McCaul, et al., 1992). Many are still employed in semi-skilled, seasonal or service industry jobs characterized by low pay, with few if any benefits. For youth who receive advanced training, the prospects of returning home where job possibilities are limited is slim. Few jobs are available even for those who are qualified and many elder Inuit believe that jobs cannot be relied on, so they want their children to learn both the new and the old ways (Irwin, 1989; Patrick, 1994).

Language Usage

In addition to the NWT's eight official languages (Chipeywan, Cree, Dogrib, Gwich'in, Slavey, Inuktitut, French, and English), there are also 6 major dialects of

Inuktitut (the language of the Inuit). Some dialects are similar to one another, with variations in pronunciation and vocabulary; others are very different and Inuit from different regions may have difficulty understanding one another. All of the languages have an important place in the school system. For example, the local language is used as the language of instruction from kindergarten to grade 3 in most schools in the Baffin and Keewatin regions, and in some schools in the Kitikmeot region (Jewison, 1995).

Inuktitut still constitutes the most common mother tongue (72%) for many Nunavut residents, but due to the presence of southern style education since the late 1950's, almost all people under the age of 40 also speak English with varying degrees of fluency (Census of Canada, 1996; Dorais, 1995). However, despite the bilingual curriculum in schools and the promotion of Inuit language and culture in Iqaluit for example, the percentage of Inuit who speak Inuktitut at home continues to decrease from year to year. Although only 37% of Iqaluit's people are non-Inuit, English is often the most common language of communication in the community. Not only is the English language a useful bridge between the Inuit and the White, but also between the Inuit from different regions who may speak different dialects (Crago, Annahatak, & Ninguiruvik, 1993; Darnell & Hoem, 1996; Government of the NWT, 1994). Even in communities where the Native language flourishes, finding fluent speakers to serve as models is often difficult, and if found they must be trained to teach. Most often the fluent speakers of the Native language are respected elders in the community and convincing these members to train as teachers in a modern school system is impractical. Although Inuktitut may be the

first language for many students, it is not the first language for many teachers in the secondary schools (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996; Taylor, Crago, & McAlpine, 1993).

Many Inuit who speak their Native language fear that their language will die, and that when their language dies, their culture will die with it. Others believe that there is more to people than just language and that cultural activities, stories, values and beliefs can still be maintained in other languages (Government of the NWT, 1995-96). There is a strong desire to maintain the Inuit language and culture and the school is seen as having an important role in the community's efforts to this end. However, there has been opposition to the bilingual model of language instruction from parents who favor English-only instruction. "The power of English is seductive, pervasive, and frequently associated with social and economic success" (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996, p. 226). However, the creation of Nunavut is expected to put a renewed emphasis on the importance of Native culture and language (Darnell & Hoem, 1996).

What people do (i.e., English is increasingly used in the community) conflicts with what they think (i.e., Inuktitut is greatly valued and most respondents are confident that it will survive into the next generation) (Dorais, 1995). Moreover, there is some degree of conscious decision making on the part of certain Inuit caregivers to prepare their children to participate in the conventions of school, to be competitive in the labor market, and to communicate with and understand the outside world (Crago, Annahatak, & Ningiuruvik, 1993; Dorais, 1995).

Unfortunately, those children living in families where an aboriginal language was spoken were less likely to graduate than other Indian students (Hull, 1990; Keith, 1995).

Similarly, while 83% of students in the North report that an aboriginal language is their first language, 40% of these students have problems using and/or speaking English (Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992). Since the use of a traditional language, Inuktitut for example, is associated with academic struggles, experiences of bias, and cultural traditionalism, being placed in an all-English school may promote negative feelings toward school and/or self (Reyhner, 1992; Wright & Taylor, 1995). Therefore there appears to be a need for stronger first language and/or bilingual education programming.

Parents Attitudes Towards Education

The schools have been seen as a system needed to assist in the unavoidable process of a changing society. This is a view that is upheld by many indigenous cultures and is strongly nurtured by the Inuit themselves. However, many parents have not had the school experiences that their children are experiencing, so they may have a difficult time supporting their children's educational experience (Dehyle, 1992; Government of the NWT, 1991; Nunavik Educational Task Force, 1992; Souaid, 1988; Taylor, Crago, & McAlpine, 1993; Williamson, 1987).

Children are isolated much of the day from the socializing influence of parents and other adults so, much to their parents' dismay, they learn more of the non-Native way of life than about their own cultural traditions (Condon, 1990). However, those who do succeed academically usually have the support of their parents or teachers or some other caring adult during their adolescent years. Successful students usually have established restrictions and rules at home, have good parental role models (i.e., absence of alcohol, parents value education, and may have been graduates themselves), and their parents are

involved in their children's lives in and out of school (Bowker, 1992; Brandt, 1992; Coladarci, 1983). It was found that 90% of NWT students believed that finishing high school was important, and 84% said that their parents or guardians shared this view. However, despite the fact that students' may believe that their parents or guardians are helpful with regards to their education, 69% of students said that their parents never contacted the school, or only contacted the school when requested (Lutra Associates, Ltd., 1992). Dehyle (1992) also found that parents do want their children to attend school, but there is still a lack of encouragement to do so. For example, Ekstrom et al., (1986) found that dropouts' homes had less educational support than did stayers. The groups differed significantly in the number of study aides available, opportunity for non-school-related learning, parent's educational expectations, interest, and amount of attention given to their children's school activities.

The parents that tend to go to parent-teacher meetings are those who are well informed, while those who do not go are usually the ones who need to be reached most urgently. Many of these parents who are uninvolved with their child's school feel more comfortable in the familiar surroundings of their own homes rather than within the confines of an imposing school building. These parents see the schools as separate from the community and thus do not get involved with the schools (Berger, 1994; Chavers, 1991; Lutra Associates, Ltd., 1992; Nunavik Educational Task Force, 1992). Greater parental involvement can reduce cultural distance between the home and school, and often school staff say they want parental involvement, but what they really want is for parents to encourage their children to attend school and study. Parental involvement

should include educating parents about the function of the school and allowing parents real decision making power about what and how their children learn (Nunavik Educational Task Force, 1992; Rehyner, 1992).

If historical factors have impacted negatively on parental involvement, educators should make the effort to break down barriers by establishing an inviting school climate, and by enabling and encouraging meaningful involvement of parents and other community members as part of the schooling process (Government of the NWT, 1991). Both parents and students need to know that students will be more successful if they stay in school. They need to understand their options for the future and the consequences of their choices (Government of the NWT, 1994).

Self-Concept and Self-Esteem

Self-concept and self-esteem are important variables in academic achievement, vocational maturation, and mental health (Pound, Hansen, & Putnam, 1977). Self-esteem and self-concept which regulate behavior and influence an individual's ability to develop skills or pursue interests and ambitions in life appear to be well established by early adolescence (Colangelo, Kelly, & Schrepfer, 1987; Government of the NWT, 1991; McInerney & Swisher, 1995; Riffel, 1991). In order to distinguish between the two, we might consider self-esteem to be just one aspect of self-concept. The term self-esteem could be limited to the evaluative aspects of the self such as feelings about oneself, feelings of personal worth, and feelings of personal effectiveness. However, the term self-concept could be used for all self-descriptions which do not necessarily involve judgements of worth. Self-concept is a theory or belief that people have about

themselves; it is individualistic and internalized, arising out of ones own responses and perceptions to experiences and interactions with others (Pepper & Henry, 1991; Roberts, 1985; Watkins & Dhawan, 1989; Wood, 1991; Wright & Taylor, 1995).

The experiences a child has in the family with parents and siblings are major factors in the early development of self-esteem. Later, as a child's world expands, experiences involving teachers, friends and work associates gain influential power (Pepper & Henry, 1991). The inconsistencies between school and home environments may reduce Inuit student's certainty about their abilities and competencies (Clifton & Roberts, 1988). The effect of ethnicity on academic achievement is mediated in part by activism and to a much lesser degree, by self-concept of ability (Clifton & Roberts, 1988). Inuit students generally had lower assessments of their potential, their self-concept of their ability, and had less active dispositions toward education, which together resulted in lower academic achievement. To know that one is part of a meaningful tradition, that one understands the surrounding world, and that one can take an active part in shaping the future are critical to student motivation, academic achievement and retention at school (McInerney & Swisher, 1995; Roberts, 1985).

Furthermore, the relationship between self-concept and achievement is bi-directional. School grades influence academic self-concept and academic self-concept serves as a motivating factor in shaping achievement (Kaplan, Peck, & Kaplan, 1997; Kurtz-Costes & Schneider, 1994).

It is difficult to find ways to help students do better in school without also exploring ways to help them feel better about themselves as learners. At the same time, it is almost impossible to help students improve their self-attitudes without

also assisting them in finding ways to improve their school performance. (Hamachek, 1995, p. 422)

Self-concept is also a multifaceted construct. General self-concept can be interpreted as distinct from but correlated with academic self-concept. Academic self-concept is more highly correlated with academic achievement than is general self-concept. Furthermore, the relationship between achievement or grades and subject matter self-concept (e.g. Math or Language Arts self-concept) is stronger than the relationship between grades and academic or general self-concept (Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach, & Rosenberg, 1995; Shavelson & Bolus, 1982).

Wright and Taylor (1995) suggested that heritage language education may have a positive effect on self-esteem. Minority language children will be spared the frustration of not understanding much of what goes on in a majority language classroom which can lead to poorer performance and a lower self-evaluation. Heritage language education may also spare children from the negative self-evaluations from social comparison with majority language speakers who are likely to be more successful in majority language classrooms. As Inuktitut-speaking children become aware of the fact that membership in the majority language group is an important determinant of success, the value of his or her in-group is reduced. Wright and Taylor (1995) reported that kindergarten instruction in heritage language was associated with increases in personal self-esteem, whereas instruction in a second language or English was not.

Ekstrom et al. (1986) as well as McCaul, et al.(1992), and Wehlage and Rutter (1986), however, found no significant differences between dropouts and graduates on self-esteem. In fact, the overall gain in self-esteem by dropouts was the same as for the

group with the highest self-esteem, the college bound. These researchers suggested that low self-esteem is not necessarily a character trait of dropouts.

Alienation and Cultural Estrangement

Although there is a lack of an agreed upon meaning for the concept of alienation, it is used to refer both to a personal psychological state and to a type of social relationship (Roberts, 1987). A person who feels alienated would be characterized by one or more of the following attitudes: powerlessness (the feeling that one lacks control over the events in one's life) or self-estrangement (engagement in activities that are not intrinsically rewarding), which most strongly reflect the underlying concept of alienation, followed by meaninglessness (a sense that one's actions and the world in which one operates are absurd or incomprehensible), normlessness (rules are perceived as inoperative, conflicting or absent, and not leading to desired ends), and cultural estrangement (the rejection of commonly held goals and values and opinions). All five of these concepts are part of a common domain, alienation (Roberts, 1987; Seeman, 1971; 1975).

Dropouts reported feeling isolated in school, isolated from the school system, and isolated from other students, and teachers. They also reported having more friends who were alienated from school than not (Ekstrom et al., 1986; Wilson, 1991). Alienation from school may be a developmental process that eventually results in school dropout (Finn, 1989; Franklin & Streeter, 1995; Kaplan, Peck, & Kaplan, 1997; Trusty & Dooley-Dickey, 1993; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). This pattern of alienation and the adoption of attitudes and behaviors which lead to dropout behavior can be observed in junior high school students. This process may begin with attendance and discipline problems that

intensify, making it difficult for students to keep up with school work and feel involved in school (Kaplan, Peck, & Kaplan, 1997; Srebnik & Elias, 1993).

Feelings of isolation, rejection and anxiety develop as Native American children are confronted with the demands of a social value system that is incompatible with their own. Discouraged youth experience confusion about themselves and their cultural heritage, feel alienated and ashamed of their inability to meet mainstream expectations and norms, and consequently, withdraw from school (Loughrey & Harris, 1992; Sanders, 1987).

School engagement is central to school success and to reducing dropout rates. Positive social and interpersonal connections with the school are needed to enhance students' sense of engagement. Increasing student involvement and responsibility to one another and to the school via peer mentoring and tutoring may enhance bonding as well as improve academic achievement (Finn & Rock, 1997; Hendrix, Sederberg, & Miller, 1990; Srebnik & Elias, 1993).

Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature related to high school dropout. The chapter began with an historical overview of education in the North. The next section examined the phenomenon of the high school dropout, including a review of the theories of dropout and dropout correlates, including school variables, personal/social characteristics, family background, self-concept/self-esteem, alienation, and cultural estrangement.

There have been a number of studies examining the correlates of high school dropout and dropping out of school appears to be an accumulation or combination of school, personal/social and family problems. This research will build on the current research examining the relationship between each of the above variables and Inuit high school dropout.

CHAPTER III

Research Design and Methodology

In this chapter the design of the study is described including the study site, the selection of participants, the procedures employed, the materials used, and the analyses employed. The section on study site describes the context from which participants originate. This includes a description of the NWT in general, Nunavut, and each of the three participating communities. The participants section describes the recruitment procedures and the dropouts participating in the study. Subsequently, the study's procedures are outlined and a description of the measures used in the study including the questionnaire, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale:2, the Alienation scale, and the Cultural Estrangement scale are discussed. This chapter concludes with a description of the data analyses employed in the study.

Study Site

The Northwest Territories (NWT)

The Canadian North includes over one-third of Canada's land mass, yet only makes up approximately one-percent of Canada's total population. The Northwest Territories is the only jurisdiction in Canada where aboriginal people are in the majority (at about 62% of the total population) (Census of Canada, 1996). In the high Arctic and the eastern Arctic, most members in communities are Inuit. In the Mackenzie District, the ethnic diversity reveals substantial numbers of Metis, Indian, and Whites, and in the Mackenzie Delta area, residents are mainly Inuvialuit (where the communities are much

more ethnically heterogeneous than in the east). The Inuvialuit are similar to the Inuit in both culture and racial background, but they have a distinctive language and collective consciousness, and see themselves as quite different from the Inuit (Frideres, 1988).

Communities in the Northwest Territories vary widely in the degree to which traditional subsistence patterns persist, in their degree of contact with Euro-Canadian society, and in their attitudes towards formal education. Some communities have experienced rapid modernization, while others have remained largely traditional. The rapidity of change and its unevenness has resulted in a variety of economic adaptations, with each community displaying a different combination of traditional, modified traditional, and industrially oriented patterns, along with unemployment and under-employment in many areas. Movement toward self-affirmation, defining and preserving Inuit identity, and educating children for the 21st century are fundamental concerns in the North (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996; Snidwell & Wintrob, 1972).

Nunavut (Inuktitut for “Our Land”)

The Nunavut Land Claim agreement, which has taken almost 20 years to negotiate, was ratified by the Inuit in November of 1992, and passed through Canadian Parliament in June of 1993. The Nunavut Land Claim Settlement, covers an area greater than the three Maritime provinces combined (approximately 20% of Canada), and is the largest in North American history. Nunavut will become Canada’s third northern territory, formed out of the eastern part of the existing NWT. The total population of Nunavut is approximately 24,500 and the Inuit constitute about 83% of the population (Census of Canada, 1996; Government of the NWT, 1994). The agreement resolves

historical and legal claims to the lands and resources in this vast area of Canada (Jull, 1993; Mulroney, 1993). In 1999, the Nunavut government will gradually assume responsibility for some activities now exercised by the Government of the NWT. The settlement of land claims and the emphasis on self-government will have a significant impact on the development of programs and services. It means more local control over the design, development and delivery of services, including education (Government of the NWT, 1994).

I sought the participation of one representative community within each divisional board of education in Nunavut. The 3 divisional boards in Nunavut include the Baffin, Keewatin, and Kitikmeot Divisional Boards of education. Community selection was based on cultural and economic factors and grades available. Participating communities included Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay, the 3 largest communities in each of the 3 regions. Figure 1 is a map of Canada's Northwest Territories, outlining the Nunavut Territory, and the communities involved in the study.

Iqaluit (formerly known as Frobisher Bay)

Baffin Island is the fifth largest island in the world and its largest community, Iqaluit, is home to 10% of the Canadian Inuit population (Lewis, 1991). Iqaluit is the regional centre for the Baffin Region, and the future capital of Nunavut with a total population of approximately 4,220 (Census of Canada, 1996).

Iqaluit, or Frobisher Bay was established in 1942 as an American airforce base in south Baffin. It has become a major center of administration, transportation, medical services, and intermediate education (Coates & Powell, 1989; McElroy, 1975). Military



Figure 1. Map of Canada's Northwest Territories (GNWT, 1997)

development continued until the end of World War II and the major population increase occurred during the 1950's when the Canadian government established the first elementary school for families who had settled and remained after the withdrawal of the military units (Lidster, 1978).

The Baffin Divisional Board of Education (1996) provided graduation statistics for Inuksuk High, the high school in Iqaluit. Graduation rates from 1981 to 1995 averaged out to be approximately 16 students per year and ranged from a low of 7 in

1981 to a high of 30 in 1988 (SD= 5.91). Furthermore, the majority of these students were graduating with a General high school diploma. The school includes grades seven through twelve and has a population of approximately 400 students.

Rankin Inlet (or Kangiqliniq)

Rankin Inlet, located on the shores of Hudson Bay is the transportation and communications centre of the Keewatin (Kivalliq) region and was established with the North Rankin Nickel Mine in 1955 (Coates & Powell, 1989). The total population for Rankin Inlet is approximately 2,050 (Census of Canada, 1996).

The graduation rate for the Keewatin Divisional Board has been reported to be approximately 20%, and there are approximately 140 students in Rankin Inlet's high school (includes grade 9-12) (C.Brown, personal communication, August 25, 1998).

Cambridge Bay (or Ikaluktutiak)

Cambridge Bay, centrally located on the south coast of Victoria Island is the regional centre for the Kitikmeot Region and has a total population of approximately 1,350 (Census of Canada, 1996). A permanent community did not take shape until the 1950's with the construction of a Distant Early Warning Line Station (Coates & Powell, 1989). The percentage of dropouts for the region and the school in Cambridge Bay were not available, but the number of students at the junior/ senior high school (includes grades 7-12) in Cambridge Bay is approximately 170 (G. Illaszewicz, personal communication, August 25, 1998).

Participants

Participants for the study were recruited with the help of staff from the high schools who identified students who had left the high schools before graduating. I contacted former students by telephone and asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. Other participants were recruited through posters, announcements in classrooms at the Arctic Colleges in which some participants were taking upgrading courses, and by word-of-mouth. They were informed that I was exploring the different reasons why Inuit students were leaving high school before graduating, and that questions about school, personal/social life, and home life would be asked.

In total, high school personnel provided me with a list of 107 students who had dropped out of school in the last 4 years. In Iqaluit, a list of 29 dropouts was received from high school personnel. For 9 of the dropouts phone numbers were unavailable, 5 dropouts were known to be out of town, 7 had refused to participate in the study or were unavailable, and 4 did not show up for appointments. In Rankin Inlet, a list of 36 dropouts was received from high school personnel. For 9 of the dropouts phone numbers were not available, 5 were known to be out of town, 10 had refused to participate or were unavailable, and 4 did not show up for appointments. In Cambridge Bay, a list of 42 dropouts was received from high school personnel. For 6 of the dropouts phone numbers were unavailable, 11 were known to be out of town, 17 had refused to participate or were unavailable, and 4 did not show up for appointments. For individuals who refused to participate, many were hesitant to provide any explanation as to why they did not want to participate, while others tended to report that they did not have the time to participate.

A total of 28 participants volunteered for this study. However, 3 volunteers were excluded from the analysis due to missing data. The remaining 25 participants included 12 (48%) males and 13 (52%) females. The age range for the sample was 18 to 39, with a mean age of 24 (SD= 5.83).

Participants were from 3 communities (Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay) in the Nunavut region. Eight participants (32%) resided in Iqaluit (3 males and 5 females), 9 participants (36%) resided in Rankin Inlet (5 males and 4 females), and 8 participants (32%) resided in Cambridge Bay (4 males and 4 females). See Table 1 for frequencies and the numbers of participants recruited from the high schools and the colleges.

Table 1

Frequency and Location for Participant Recruitment

	High School	College	Total	Missing
Iqaluit	4	5	9	1
Rankin Inlet	8	2	10	1
Cambridge Bay	4	5	9	1
Total	16	12	28	3

Procedure

A research license was obtained from the Nunavut Research Institute and approval of and commitment to this research project was sought from each divisional board of education prior to contacting the schools identified as appropriate for inclusion in the research.

Participants who agreed to volunteer for the study were given a letter of information (see Appendix A) and asked to give written, informed consent for participation (see Appendix B). The semi-structured interviews were audio-taped and conducted in a quiet location in the high schools, colleges, or in a local business office. All of the in-person interviews were conducted in English and none of the participants requested that a translator be present. After completing the interview and the 3 personality inventories, each participant received \$10.00. Participation in the study was strictly voluntary and treatment of participants was in accordance with the ethical standards set by the University of Calgary. If participants had any difficulties with the study and/or topics discussed in the interview, that I could not answer or deal with on my own, they were asked to contact a counselor in the community (see Appendix F). Questionnaires and personality inventories were given an identification number assigned by the researcher. Participant names, addresses, phone numbers, and signatures for consent were recorded separately.

Materials

Materials included the questionnaire for the semi-structured interview, the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale, 2nd Edition (Fitts & Warren, 1996), Alienation scale (Jessor & Jessor, in Seeman, 1991), and the Cultural Estrangement scale (adapted from Kohn & Schooler in Seeman, 1991).

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was adapted from The Student Questionnaire developed by Lutra Associates Ltd.(1992). The Student Questionnaire, which was structured around four main factors (home, personal life and friends, school, and their future) was designed and implemented to improve the understanding of those factors contributing to early school leaving in the NWT. Students from all cultural backgrounds who were at-risk for leaving school early and students who had left school in the past 12 months were studied. They also had the opportunity to examine school records, to speak with elected education authorities, school staff, government agencies, economic agencies, and social development agencies, and to speak with members of the general public. Student response to the questionnaire was positive and few experienced any difficulty understanding or responding to questions.

The Student Questionnaire placed more of an emphasis on whether students were in residences or at boarding homes. However, in the present study, most of the participants (24) had been able to stay in their home communities while in school. They also placed more of an emphasis on what the differences were between where they grew up (i.e., ages 5-10) and where they lived at the time of the survey. These questions tended to be rather confusing in having to go back and forth and were repetitive for some students. The Student Questionnaire also asked more questions about participant employment (e.g., status, likes and dislikes, how long etc.). Questions also centered around how participants would describe themselves, how they saw themselves and how

they think their friends saw them. These kinds of questions were addressed in the present study with the TSCS:2.

In the present study, items in the questionnaire were structured around three main factors and were ordered from most impersonal to most personal (i.e., school, personal/social, and home/family). The present questionnaire had more specific questions about school (e.g., program placement, whether they had had any special services, grades repeated, attendance, etc.) because access to school records was denied. Other types of questions were also added regarding whether participants had spoken with counselors, talents, whether they had considered and/or attempted suicide, etc. Many of the questions addressed in the *You and Your Future*- section of The Student Questionnaire were also amalgamated with the school questions on the present questionnaire.

Tennessee Self Concept Scale:2 (TSCS:2)

Fitts first began the development work on the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) in 1965, and in the 1988 edition of the TSCS, all the original items and research scorings were retained, while other research scorings were added. The primary goals of the TSCS:2 were to preserve those useful aspects of the TSCS, eliminate complex and confusing scoring materials, provide clearer guidelines in interpreting the test, provide an updated standardization sample, and extend the use of the test across a larger age range. The revised, shorter TSCS:2 scales (82 items, instead of 100 items) provide score values that are equivalent to their longer 1988 edition counterparts (correlations between the older and newer TSCS ranged from .82 to .97) (Fitts & Warren, 1996).

The TSCS:2 was chosen for its widespread usage (valid when compared to other psychological instruments and when distinguishing among various groups) and proven reliability (test-retest reliabilities ranged from .47 for Inconsistent Responding to .82 for the Total Self-Concept score (median .76)), and the availability of several subscores (Fitts & Warren, 1996).

The TCSC:2 was used to assess participant's overall self-concept, associated level of self-esteem, and strengths and weaknesses in specific areas of self-concept. The adult form of the TSCS:2 has 82 items consisting of self-descriptive statements. Participants respond to the items using five response categories—"Always False", "Mostly False", "Partly False and Partly True", "Mostly True", and "Always True". The basic scores include Total Self-Concept and Conflict, along with six self-concept scales and 3 supplementary scale scores: Physical, Moral, Personal, Family, Social, Academic/Work, Identity, Satisfaction, and Behavior (see Fitts & Warren, 1996).

Alienation Scale

This scale, designed for adolescents, measures generalized alienation in terms of uncertainty about the meaningfulness of daily roles and activities and a belief that one is isolated from others. Alienation is one of the four variables included in Jessor and Jessor's (1977) personal belief structure, and it implies a lack of social connectedness and purposiveness. This then leads to an increase in the prevalence of problem behavior, including lower expectations for academic achievement and possibly school dropout (Jessor & Jessor, 1977).

The Alienation scale is comprised of 15 Likert-type items (answers range from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”), with scores ranging from 15 (low alienation) to 60 (high alienation) (Jessor & Jessor, 1977). The scale has rendered good test-retest reliability over a 1-year interval (the lowest correlation was for high school students in years 1 and 2, which was .49). The Alienation scale had good internal consistency (Scotts Homogeneity Ratio= .23 and Cronbachs α = .81). The Alienation scale also correlated fairly highly (-.37 to -.60) with several other scales which should be negatively correlated with a general measure of alienation (Jessor & Jessor, 1977; Seeman, 1991).

Cultural Estrangement Scale

Cultural estrangement involves the rejection of, or sense of removal from, dominant social values. The Cultural Estrangement scale, is one of five scales that comprise a larger measure of alienation developed by Kohn and Schooler in 1983. The Cultural Estrangement scale was a four-item scale assessing whether one believes one’s ideas and opinions about important matters differ from those of friends, relatives, other people of the same religious background, and compatriots in general. Therefore, the scale does not distinguish between estrangement from primary and secondary groups (Seeman, 1991). The researcher has adapted the original scale where scores ranged from 0 to 4, so that total scores now range from 4 to 20, higher scores indicating greater estrangement. The 5-item Likert scale (answers range from “never” to “always”) provided a wider range of responses to items.

No direct information is available on the Cultural Estrangement scales test-retest reliability, although the whole alienation measure had a test-retest reliability of .52 (as reported in Seeman, 1991).

Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaire and personality inventories were analyzed using frequency data, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Fishers Exact Test in the analysis of cross-tabulations and Pearson r correlations were conducted to determine if there were relationships between variables. T-tests and one-way ANOVA's were also used to determine whether there were differences between mean scores on the personality inventories.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described the design of the study with its several points consisting of the study site, the sample, the procedure, the materials used, and the analysis of the data.

CHAPTER IV

Results

This chapter presents the analyses of data and is divided into five sections. In the first section, descriptive data is provided on the TSCS:2, Alienation scale, and Cultural Estrangement scale. In the second section, some of the frequency data from the questionnaire is then discussed. In the third section cross-tabulations are used to examine the relationships between a number of variables on the questionnaire with gender, self-concept, alienation, and cultural estrangement. Cross-tabulations by community are also explored. Lastly, correlational analyses and one-way ANOVA's were then conducted between the three personality inventories.

For all statistical analyses, the level of significance was set at .05.

Descriptive Statistics

Tennessee Self-Concept Scale: 2

Table 2 summarizes the present study's sample scale means and standard deviations for the TSCS:2. Table 2 also includes the mean and standard deviation scale scores for Fitts and Warren's (1996) US Native American standardization sample. For the TSCS:2 standard scores or t-scores are reported with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10.

When TSCS:2 sample mean scale scores for this study were compared with Fitts and Warren's (1996) US Native American standardization sample, all sample mean scale scores were lower, with the exception of the following scales: conflict, inconsistent

responding, faking good, and physical. T-tests indicated significant differences among means on 6 of the 15 subscale scores. These included the conflict ($t= 3.29$, $df= 24$, $p<.01$), self-criticism ($t= -3.13$, $df= 24$, $p<.01$), moral ($t= -3.95$, $df= 24$, $p<.01$), academic/work ($t= -3.27$, $df= 24$, $p<.01$), identity ($t= -2.25$, $df= 24$, $p<.05$), and behavior ($t= -2.86$, $df= 24$, $p<.01$) subscales. Furthermore, Fitts and Warren (1996) reported that for their Native American standardization group, both children and adults scored lower on Total Self-Concept and all the Self-Concept scales than other groups (Blacks, Hispanics, Whites, Asians, and others). They suggested that the scores might reflect Native American cultural differences in self-presentation.

Variances within the scales will now be discussed using the following classification levels: Scores ≤ 30 were considered to be *very low*, scores ranging from 31-40 were considered *low*, scores ranging from 41-59 were considered *average*, scores ranging from 60-69 were considered high, and scores ≥ 70 were considered very high.

Analysis of all the scales show that the overall mean scores were within the average range (41.00- 58.16), with the exception of the moral self-concept scale ($M= 38.64$), which was low.

Total Self-Concept Score (TOT)

The total self-concept score is the most important score on the TSCS:2, reflecting the individuals overall self-concept and associated level of self-esteem. Six participants had low TOT scores, and 3 participants had very low TOT scores. These participants were doubtful of their worth, and participants with very low TOT scores have probably

been experiencing long-standing personal difficulties (e.g., chronic depression or persistent self-defeating behaviors).

Table 2

TSCS:2 Sample Mean Scores Compared with TSCS:2 Standardization Mean Scores

TSCS:2	Present Study's Sample		TSCS:2 Norms		t
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Total Self-Concept Score	41.92	8.94	45.4	11.3	-1.95
Conflict	58.16	10.42	51.3	11.2	3.29**
Inconsistent Responding	56.36	11.12	53.7	9.5	1.20
Self- Criticism	45.24	8.89	50.8	11.5	-3.13**
Faking Good	46.36	9.30	45.2	9.0	.62
Response Distribution	43.60	10.50	47.6	12.0	-1.91
Physical	49.92	9.19	47.7	11.8	1.21
Moral	38.64	10.34	46.8	11.1	-3.95**
Personal	44.60	8.76	46.2	11.1	-.91
Family	42.00	5.99	44.1	10.0	-1.75
Social	45.04	8.08	46.9	10.1	-1.15
Academic/ Work	42.56	7.70	47.6	10.1	-3.27**
Identity	41.00	9.12	45.1	12.3	-2.25*
Satisfaction	46.08	8.47	46.2	10.4	-.07
Behavior	42.08	9.31	47.4	10.3	-2.86**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Conflict (CON)

Eight participants had high CON scores, while 4 participants had very high CON scores. These participants tended to agree to many positive attributes while at the same

time admitting to rather than denying negative characteristics. Furthermore, 2 participants had low CON scores and they may have been more defensive, focusing more on who they were not, than on who they were.

Inconsistent Responding (INC)

The INC score indicates whether there is an unusually wide discrepancy in responses to similar items. Four participants had high INC scores, and one participant had a very high INC score. Fitts and Warren (1996) suggested that their profiles be interpreted with caution.

Self Criticism (SC)

An average SC score generally indicates a normal healthy openness and capacity for self-criticism. However, 6 participants had low SC scores and one participant had a very low SC score. These scores suggest that these participants may be defensive and that they may deliberately be trying to present a favorable picture.

Faking Good (FG)

The FG scale is an indicator of the tendency to project a false positive self-concept. Based on individual scores, none of the participants had very high FG scores.

Response Distribution (RD)

The RD scale is a measure of certainty about the way one sees oneself. Six participants had low RD scores, while 3 participants had very low RD scores. These participants may have been more defensive and guarded by not committing to either “Mostly True” or “Mostly False” responses for a large number of items.

Physical (PHY)

The PHY self-concept score indicates the individuals perception of their level of health, physical appearance, skills and sexuality. Three participants had low PHY scores, indicating their dissatisfaction with their bodies, which may be real, or may be the result of a distorted body image and unrealistic expectations.

Moral (MOR)

The MOR self-concept scale examines moral worth, feelings of being a good or bad person, and satisfaction with one's religion or lack of it. Nine participants had low MOR scores, while 6 participants had very low MOR scores. Participants may have perceived themselves as impulsive or they may hold moral standards, which are unrealistically high.

Personal (PER)

The PER self-concept score reflects the individual's sense of personal worth, feeling of adequacy and personality. Five participants had low PER scores, while 2 participants had very low PER scores. These low scores suggest that participants may experience a variable self-concept, reactive to their circumstances, and to the opinions and behaviors of others.

Family (FAM)

The FAM self-concept scale is a measure of how the self is perceived in relation to others. Ten participants had low FAM scores, indicating a sense of alienation from or disappointment in their families.

Social (SOC)

The SOC self-concept scale is a measure of how the self is perceived in relation to others. Six participants had low SOC scores, suggesting a sign of social awkwardness related to a perceived lack of social skill. They may feel isolated, but are hesitant to take the risk in relieving their isolation.

Academic/ Work (ACA)

The ACA self-concept scale is a measure of how people perceive themselves in school and work settings and of how they believe others see them in those settings. Seven participants had low ACA scores, while 2 participants had very low ACA scores. This suggests that participants may have difficulty performing in school and/or work settings, or that they have unrealistic expectations about how they should perform.

Identity (IDN)

The IDN scale expresses “this is what and who I am, this is how I identify myself”. Ten participants had low IDN scores, while 4 participants had very low IDN scores. This indicates an actively negative self-view, which may be present despite a generally positive self-concept.

Satisfaction (SAT)

The SAT scale indicates the person’s level of self-acceptance (e.g., how I feel about myself). Six participants had low SAT scores, while one participant had a very low SAT score. These scores suggest that participants were not satisfied with their perceived self-image and/or they may have had elevated standards and expectations.

Behavior (BHV)

The BHV scale measures the individual's perception of his/her behavior (e.g., what I do or how I act). Eight participants had low BHV scores, while 2 participants had very low BHV scores. This suggests that impulse control may be a problem for these participants.

In summary, a number of participants scored low or very low on most of the subscales even though the mean scores for the group were within an acceptable range. It would therefore appear as though a number of participants had low self-esteem and that the specific areas in which they had low self-esteem varied.

Alienation and Cultural Estrangement

The mean raw scores on the Alienation Scale and the Cultural Estrangement scale were 37.60 (SD= 5.63) and 11.48 (SD= 2.80) respectively. None of the participant scores on these scales were extremely low or high.

Questionnaire Frequency Data

Frequency data for the whole questionnaire is presented in Appendix C. With the large number of variables explored, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explain all the results of this research. Instead, those findings that have the greatest relevance to school dropout will be reported and divided into the following 4 sections: Demographic Information, School Variables, Personal/ Social Variables, and Home/Family variables. For a number of questions, participants were allowed to provide more than one response.

Demographic Information

The grade in which participants had left school ranged from grades 7 to 11, with a mode of 10 (8 participants in total). The year in which participants had left school ranged from 1974 to 1997, with a mean of 1991 (SD=7.04).

Twelve participants knew they were in the General Diploma program, and 3 participants knew they were in a Vocational program, but 10 participants were unsure about the program they were in. It was not possible to determine which program these participants were in without access to school files.

School Variables

Participants were more likely to like school (14) than not (3), while some participants reported liking school sometimes (8). Participants seemed to like more things about school than they disliked about school (see Tables 3 and 4). There were also differences between males and females in the kinds of things they disliked about school. Females disliked certain subjects (11) much more than males (4).

Table 5 outlines the reasons why participants liked certain teachers. Participants liked teachers who were encouraging (13), friendly and caring (12), and understanding (11). On the other hand, the main reason why participants did not like other teachers was because they were mean/strict (see Table 6). Furthermore, females (9) were more likely than males (3) to report that they did not like teachers because they were mean/strict.

Participants experienced different problems at school, but many participants (13), more females (9) than males (4), reported that problems at home created problems at school (see Table 7).

Table 3**Frequencies and School Likes**

Seeing friends	24
A certain subject	24
Learning new and interesting things	23
Playing sports	23
A teacher/ the teachers	19
It was a friendly place to be	19
Participating in special events	16
It was a warm place to go	13
Other	
- the work experience gained in school	1
- meeting new people	1

Table 4**Frequencies and School DISLIKES**

	Total	Male	Female
A certain subject	15	4	11
Getting up in the morning	14	7	7
It was boring	12	6	6
A teacher/ the teachers	10	3	7
The rules	7	2	5
Did not understand the language	6	2	4
It was an unfriendly place	3	0	3
Other			
- problems with other students/ people	4	0	4
- teachers not understanding problems being faced at home	1	0	1
- not having Inuktitut classes	1	1	0
- I had problems understanding what was being taught in some classes	1	0	1
- the attendance policy	1	1	0
- working/ homework	1	1	0
- staying after school	1	1	0

Table 5**Frequencies and Reasons for Liking Certain Teachers**

Encouraging/ supportive	13
Friendly/ nice/ kind/ caring	12
The kind of person you can talk to/ always there for students/ understanding	11
Explained things well/ helpful	8
Patient	4
Non-judgemental	1
Didn't give them such hard work	1

Table 6**Frequencies and Reasons for DISLIKING Certain Teachers**

	Total	Males	Females
Mean/ strict	12	3	9
Get frustrated too easy, not patient with students	5	3	2
Blamed students for not understanding/ did not explain things well	4	3	1
Not understanding/ did not care about students/ not supportive	3	1	2
Attitude	3	2	1
Made you do things you were not comfortable doing/ creepy	2	0	2
Picked on students/ nagging	2	1	1
Did not teach us anything about the subject they were supposed to	1	0	1
Talked too much	1	0	1
Did not take student seriously	1	0	1

Table 7**Frequencies and Problems Experienced at School**

	Total	Males	Females
You had problems at home	13	4	9
The work was too difficult	10	3	7
You had detentions or got suspended/ expelled	5	2	3
You had poor relationships with teachers	4	2	2
The teachers treated you like a child	3	1	2
You had problems with friends	2	0	2
You did not like your courses/ classes	2	1	1
There were too many rules/ unfair rules	2	1	1
You did not get any extra help	1	0	1
You had no problems	1	1	0
The courses were not relevant	0	0	0
You were in a special program/ class	0	0	0
Other			
- skipping school	4	2	2
- bored	3	2	1
- I was older than the other students	2	1	1
- getting picked on by other kids	1	0	1
- getting too much homework	1	1	0
- I was always homesick	1	0	1
- problems understanding English	1	0	1
- I felt lost and confused after skipping 2 grades	1	0	1

See Table 8 for the kinds of changes participants would like to see in schools.

Table 8

Frequencies and Preferred Changes in the Schools

The course content	2
The teaching practices	2
The school atmosphere/ climate	1
Other services	
- more/ better Inuktitut programs	3
- more discipline/ be more strict	3
- better teacher recruitment programs	2
- having longer classes	1

Most participants felt they did as well as (18) or not as well as (6) other students in school, while one participant felt they did better than most other students.

Most of the participants reported having average school attendance (12), instead of good attendance (6), or poor attendance (7), although this could not be verified with school records.

All of the participants had been involved in extra-curricular activities offered through the school. Participants were most involved with trips on the land (22), sports (17), field trips (16), dances (14), and concerts/plays (14). Other participants were involved with exchange trips (8), students council (4), and school clubs (2).

Most of the participants reported that they quit school either because they were falling behind and the work was getting too difficult (12) or because they liked working

or had to work (11). Females (7) were more likely than males to report that they left school because the work they were doing was too difficult and they were falling behind, while males (8) were more likely to report that they left school because they liked working or had to work for financial reasons. The various reasons why participants reported leaving school are outlined in Table 9.

Twenty-one of the 25 participants believed that graduating from high school was something that they could do. Three participants felt that graduating was out of their reach, while one participant was unsure about whether or not they could graduate.

Eleven of the 25 participants were employed at the time of the study in various types of jobs (see Table 10).

Thirteen participants had gone to or were attending a college, while one participant had attended a trade school. Furthermore, fourteen participants had planned to go on to college or continue with college, while 4 had planned on attending a trade school in the future.

Table 9**Frequencies and Reasons for Leaving School**

	Total	Males	Females
The work was difficult/ you were falling behind	12	5	7
You liked having a paid job better	11	8	3
You had a child/ got pregnant	8	3	5
You were having problems at home	7	2	5
You were picked on by other kids	5	1	4
Your friends started to skip school/ leave school	5	3	2
You had to work at home or on the land	4	1	3
You did not feel like going	4	3	1
You had problems with a teacher/ principal	3	2	1
You got detentions/ suspended/ expelled	3	2	1
You started getting into trouble	2	1	1
You were getting too much homework	1	1	0
You failed a grade(s)	0	0	0
Other			
- bored/ not learning anything new	2	2	0
- I was sick	1	0	1
- young and stupid	1	0	1
- wasting her time and the teachers time	1	0	1
- dad wanted her out of school when she was pregnant	1	0	1
- peer pressure	1	1	0
- I moved out of town for a year and in the new community I could not go to school	1	1	0
- had to work and support child	1	1	0
- mental illness	1	1	0

Table 10**Frequencies and Type of Current Employment**

Cashier	2
Woodworking	1
Carving	1
Educating youth about HIV/AIDS	1
Assistant store manager	1
Security	1
Control operator for television station	1
Garbage/ sewer/ water truck driver	1
Cargo operator	1
Mechanic	1

Participants were financially supporting themselves in various ways (see Table 11).

Table 11**Frequency and Type of Financial Support**

Student financial assistance	7
Working full-time (for wages)	7
Working part-time (for wages)	3
Someone else supports you	2
Receiving social assistance	1
Carving/ sewing/ crafts	1
Hunting/ trapping/ fishing	0
Other	
- living at home	3
- unemployment insurance	2
- on education leave and husband is working	1

While 11 participants were unsure about whether they would be living in their home community in 10 years, 9 believed that they would stay in their home communities, and 5 thought that they might leave.

Most participants (24) believed that their lives would be different if they had graduated from high school. The one participant who did not think his life would be any different was happy in his job and he did not think having a diploma would have changed this.

Personal/ Social Variables

Most of the participants (13) had a best friend and other friends when they were in high school (see Table 12).

Table 12**Frequencies and Type of Friendship Network**

You had one best friend and some other friends	13
You had lots of friends, but no best friend	4
You had one best friend	3
You knew lots of people, but had no friends	2
You had a few friends	1
You preferred to be alone	1
Other	
- many best friends and other friends	1

More of the participants had friends who were in school (16) when they attended high school, than they had friends who were both in and out of school (6) combined, or out of school (2). Ten of the 25 participants reported that it did not matter to them whether their friends were in or out of school, although their friends who had left school encouraged them to do various things, and the results were similar for both males and females (see Table 13).

Table 13**Frequencies and the Activities Conducted by Dropout Peers**

	Total	Males	Females
Encourage you to stay in school	14	7	7
Encourage you to skip school	13	7	6
Tell you what a good time they were having	10	5	5
Encourage you to stay up late at night	9	3	6
Brag about their freedom	5	3	2
Encourage you to leave school	4	1	3
Tease you about school	3	2	1
Other	0	0	0

Participants reported that they were talented in many different ways, including arts/crafts/sewing/carving (18), sports (12), and hunting (12) (see Table 14).

Most of the participants (13) admitted to feeling lonely sometimes (8 females and 5 males), rather than never (8; 6 males and 2 females). Females also reported to feeling lonely often (1), or always (3).

None of the participants indicated that they had sniffed solvents, although 11 participants drank alcohol (7 males and 5 females), and/or 10 participants did drugs (7 males and 3 females) when they were in high school. The same participants did not necessarily drink and do drugs; some participants did just drink alcohol or did just do drugs when they were in high school. Participants tended to abuse substances with their friends (13), or by themselves (1), with uncles (1), or with anybody (1), in order to have

a good time (11) or to get high (10). The reasons given for abusing substances are outlined in Table 15.

Table 14

Frequencies and Talents

Arts/ crafts/ sewing/ carving	18
Sports	12
Hunting	12
Story telling/ writing	7
Singing	3
Playing an instrument	3
Acting/ drama	3
Academics	2
Other	
- carpentry	1
- cooking	1
- computers	1
- helping other people	1

When participants had a serious personal and/or academic problem they were more likely to keep it to themselves (15) than to tell someone (9), while one participant reported not having any serious problems to worry about. Females (9) were also more likely to keep their feelings to themselves, than were males (6).

Table 15**Frequencies and Reasons for Substance Abuse**

To have fun/ a good time	11
To get high	10
Because everyone else did	6
To feel good about yourself	5
Nothing else to do	4
To forget your problems	4
Because adults around you did	4
To be cool	2
Other	
- because she was depressed and it made her happy	1
- experimenting	1
- peer pressure	1
- habit	1
- liked it	1
- to be with friends	1

Eight participants knew someone who had committed suicide, 6 participants knew someone who had attempted suicide, and one participant had been a witness to a murder. The same numbers of males and females knew someone who had committed suicide or attempted suicide (4 and 3 respectively). Furthermore, 10 of the 25 participants had considered attempting suicide, and 6 of the 10 had actually attempted suicide. The same numbers of male and female participants (5) had considered attempting suicide, but females (4) were more likely to have attempted suicide than were males (2).

Home/ Family Variables

Most participants (16) lived with their mothers and fathers when they were in high school. Table 16 outlines the other family types reported by participants.

Table 16

Frequencies and Family Type

Mother and father	16
Grandparent(s)	2
Foster/ adoptive home	2
Mother	1
Boyfriend or girlfriend	1
Brother(s) and/or sisters(s)	1
Student residence/ boarder	1
Father	0
Mother or father and step-parent	0
Parents of boy/girlfriend	0
Group home	0
Other	
- uncle	1

Most participants (16) did not have and were not expecting any children when they left high school. Five participants (3 males and 2 females) had children, 3 female participants had children but put them up for adoption, and one other participant was pregnant when she left school.

Participants varied in their response to how often they felt they lived in a happy home (see Table 17).

Table 17**Frequencies and Happy Home**

Most of the time	9
Sometimes	6
Always	5
Never	4
Rarely	1

Many participant households never received social assistance or welfare (12), while other households received social assistance or welfare rarely (8), sometimes (4), or most of the time (1). Furthermore, many participants reported that there was always lots of food (12) in their household, while others reported that there was sometimes lots of food (6), just enough food (5), sometimes not enough food (1), or that there never seemed to be enough food (1) in their household.

Most of the participants (17) did not think that the adults in their house considered the work they were doing at home more important than going to school, while 5 participants reported that the adults in their household considered the work at home to be more important.

Fifteen (8 male and 7 female) participants had part-time jobs when they were in high school.

Only 4 of the 25 participants, all of whom were male, had discussed leaving school with family members.

The frequency with which parents or adults in the home visited or contacted the school varied (see Table 18).

Table 18

Frequencies and Parental Contact with the School

Only when requested	10
During parent-teacher interviews	6
Never	4
Every opportunity available	3
Other	
- the participant talked to the teachers and made her own decisions	1
- whenever necessary	1

A majority (21) of participant parents' were reported to have thought that finishing school was important and they showed an interest in the participants education. Moreover, 23 participants themselves, thought that finishing school was important.

Seventeen participants reported that Inuktitut was their first language (most of whom were female (11)), 5 reported that English was their first language (most of whom were male (4)), and the other 3 participants (2 males and 1 female) reported that their first languages were both Inuktitut and English. Furthermore, all participants reported that English was spoken in their household at varying degrees of fluency, while 23 participants also reported using Inuktitut at home. The majority of participants (16) did not think that having Inuktitut as their first language had a negative impact on the schooling. For 8 of the participants, the language of instruction at school also changed from Inuktitut to English at various grade levels.

Table 19 lists the variables participants identified to have a negative affect on their schooling. Family members' drinking (17), family arguments (12), and not having enough money (10) were most often reported as having a negative effect on schooling. There were small differences between males and females on a number of variables, but females were more likely to report that the following variables had a negative effect on their schooling when compared to males: adults in the household drinking, neglect, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and moves to a new community.

Table 19

Frequencies and Variables Identified as Having a Negative Effect on Schooling

	Total	Males	Females
Adults in your household drinking alcohol	17	7	10
Family arguments/ problems/ break-ups	12	6	6
Not having enough money	10	5	5
Suicide/death of a friend	8	4	4
Suicide/death in the family	7	3	4
You or a family member in jail	7	2	5
Your drinking alcohol	7	3	4
Your use of drugs	7	4	3
Being neglected (i.e., not enough food, sleep, care)	7	1	6
Being physically abused	6	2	4
Having a child or children	6	3	3
Being emotionally abused	5	1	4
Moving to a new community	4	1	3
Being sexually abused	3	0	3
Being away from home	3	1	2
Adults in your household taking drugs	2	2	0

In summary, participants experienced a number of school, personal/social, and home/family problems when they were in high school. At the same time, however, a number of variables assumed to influence dropout did not do so.

Cross- Tabulations

Fishers Exact Test was used in the analysis of cross tabulations to determine whether there was a significant relationship between two nominal variables. Because of the small sample size and small cell sizes, Fishers Exact Test was used instead of the Pearson chi-square test. Fishers Exact Test evaluates the same hypotheses as the chi-square test, but it is only suitable for comparing two variables with two levels. Therefore, total scores on the TSCS:2, Alienation scale, and Cultural Estrangement scales had to be collapsed into two groups. The middle score on each of the scales was the dividing point (see Table 20). The cross-tabulations were computed using the entire sample of 25 cases.

Table 20

Collapsed Scale Score Ranges

Scale Scores

Scale	Average- Low	Average- High
TSCS:2	0- 50	51- 100
Alienation	15- 37	38- 60
Cultural Estrangement	4-12	13-20

Collapsing scores on the TSCS:2 created problems in drawing conclusions because the range of scores was so broad. More practical conclusions could have been

made if scores could have been classified as very low, low, average, high, and very high. I would have then been able to use chi-square, however, with a small sample size I was restricted to using Fishers Exact Test.

Total Self-Concept

Fishers Exact Test was used to analyze the total self-concept score with other variables from the questionnaire and the alienation and cultural estrangement scales, but no significant relationships were found.

Academic/ Work Self-Concept by Thoughts re: Leaving School to Work

No significant relationships were found between the academic self-concept subscale and other variables from the questionnaire, alienation scale, and cultural estrangement scale. This may be the case because when the scores were collapsed into the Average-Low and Average-High groups, only 3 out of the 25 participants had Average-High Academic/Work Self-Concept scores. The only relationship that approached significance ($p = .07$) was that of academic/work self-concept, and whether participants had considered leaving school to work. None of the participants who scored Average-High on the academic/work self-concept scale had thought about leaving school to work. Conversely, participants with Average-Low scores (64%) were more likely to consider leaving school to work.

Alienation by Discussion re: Leaving School

The relationship between alienation and whether participants had discussed leaving school with family members was significant ($p = .03$). While none of the

participants with average-high alienation scores had discussed leaving school with family members, some of the participants (36.4%) with average-low alienation scores had.

Alienation by Heterosexual Relationship

The relationship between alienation and whether participants had a boyfriend or girlfriend was significant ($p = .04$). Participants with average-low alienation scores were more likely to be in a relationship in high school (82%) than were participants with average-high alienation scores (36%). None of the participants suggested involvement in any homosexual relationships.

Cultural Estrangement by Leaving School to Work

The relationship between cultural estrangement and whether participants had considered leaving school to work was significant ($p \leq .05$). Participants with average-low cultural estrangement scores were more likely to think about leaving school to work (82%) than were participants with average-high cultural estrangement scores (36%).

Gender by Employment Status

A statistically significant relationship was found between gender and whether participants were employed at the time of the study or not ($p = .05$). Sixty-seven percent of males were employed at the time of the study, while 23% females were employed at the time of the study.

Gender by Discussion re: Quitting School

A significant relationship was found between gender and whether participants had discussed leaving school with their families ($p = .04$). None of the 13 females had

discussed leaving school with their families, while 33% of males had discussed leaving school with their families.

Because three communities were studied and there was no way to collapse them into 2 groups, they could not be analyzed using Fishers Exact Test. However, some of the more notable cross-tabulations without any kind of statistical analyses will be discussed.

Community by First Language

For all 8 participants in Iqaluit, for 8 of the 9 participants in Rankin Inlet, and for 4 of the 8 participants in Cambridge Bay, Inuktitut was their first language .

Community by Considering Suicide

Four of the 9 participants in Rankin Inlet had considered attempting suicide, and 3 of the 8 participants in both Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay had considered attempting suicide.

Community by Suicide Attempt

None of the participants in Iqaluit had attempted suicide, while all 4 of the participants who had considered attempting suicide in Rankin Inlet, and 2 of the 3 participants in Cambridge Bay had attempted to commit suicide.

Correlations

Self-concept was moderately, negatively correlated with alienation ($r = -.58$, $p < .01$). Therefore, as would be expected, as self-concept scores increased, alienation scores decreased or vice-versa. There was no significant relationship between self-

concept and cultural estrangement ($r = .15, p > .05$) or alienation and cultural estrangement ($r = -.30, p > .05$).

One-Way ANOVAs

There were no significant differences among group means between males and females or between communities on the TSCS:2, Alienation Scale, or Cultural Estrangement Scale (see Table 21).

Table 21

One-Way ANOVAs for Gender and Community by Scale

	Gender	Community
TSCS:2	F(1, 23) = .05, $p = .83$	F(1, 22) = .20, $p = .82$
Alienation	F(1, 23) = 1.35, $p = .26$	F(1, 22) = .44, $p = .65$
Cultural Estrangement	F(1, 23) = .36, $p = .56$	F(1, 22) = .93, $p = .41$

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided descriptive data on the TSCS:2, Alienation scale, and Cultural Estrangement scale; frequency data from the questionnaire; cross-tabulations with the questionnaire, TSCS:2, Alienation scale, Cultural Estrangement scale, gender, and community; correlational analyses and one-way ANOVA's between the 3 personality inventories.

To summarize, participants dropped out of school for a variety of reasons, but mainly because they were falling behind and the work was getting too difficult, or because they liked to work or had to work for financial reasons. Participants also

confronted a number of obstacles in their schools, in their personal and social lives and in their home lives. These obstacles were concerned with the kinds of things participants disliked about school and their teachers, and the kinds of problems they were having at school. Personal/social variables included the influence of dropout peers, loneliness, substance abuse, and suicide. Home/family variables were concerned with the fact that most participants worked part-time while they were in high school, that there was no discussion with family members about leaving school, that Inuktitut was the first language for many participants, and that other problems at home including alcoholism influenced school dropout.

Although self-concept scores tended to be low, conclusions cannot be made about whether or not it contributed to students' decisions to dropout. No relationships were found between self-concept and variables from the questionnaire, alienation scale or cultural estrangement scale. However, participants with high self-concept scores had lower alienation scores. In order to make students feel more comfortable in the school environment, or feel less alienated, it may be important to increase/improve their sense of self-concept/self-esteem. Furthermore, the most alienated participants did not discuss leaving school with their families and did not have a boyfriend or girlfriend. Participants with lower cultural estrangement scores were also more likely to consider leaving school in order to work.

Males and females provided different reasons for leaving high school and confronted different obstacles at school, in their personal and social lives, and in their

home lives. However, there were no significant differences between males and females on the self-concept, alienation, and cultural estrangement scales.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Chapter V begins with a discussion of the main findings of this study and their relation to previous research. The four research questions and the relevant findings for each are discussed. Educational implications and recommendations are then outlined. This chapter closes with suggestions for future research and with an overall summary of the study.

Findings

There were four main research questions in this study. The first objective was to outline the reasons why Inuit students left high school before graduation. The second objective was to examine the kinds of obstacles Inuit students confronted in school, in their personal and social lives, and at home with their families. The third research question was concerned with whether or not self-concept, alienation, and cultural estrangement played a role in student's decisions to leave high school. The fourth objective was to determine if there were any gender differences on the above listed variables. Taken together, an attempt was made to explore dropout amongst Inuit high school students in Nunavut.

Research Question #1

The frequency data from the questionnaire indicated that participants left school for a variety of reasons. However, most of the participants reported that they quit school

either because they were falling behind and their school work was getting too difficult, or because they liked working or had to work for financial reasons.

Although researchers (Hull, 1990; Lutra Associates Ltd., 1992; Rumberger, 1983) suggest that individuals might leave school for financial reasons, none of the research has suggested that participants reported leaving school because they were falling behind and/or having difficulties with their school work.

Research Question #2

Frequency data from the questionnaire provided information with regards to the kinds of obstacles Inuit students were confronted with at school, personally and socially, and at home with their families.

When looking at school variables, most participants did not like certain subjects (especially English and Mathematics), they did not like getting up in the morning, they found school boring, and they did not like some of their teachers who were perceived as being mean or strict. Participants also experienced a range of problems at school and often found school work difficult or were falling behind, but more participants reported that problems at home created problems at school.

However, most participants reported liking school for a number of reasons and liked teachers who were encouraging, friendly and caring. A number of researchers (Cobourn & Nelson, 1989; Coladarci, 1983; Deyhle, 1992, Kleinfeld, 1995) also indicated that Native students preferred highly personalized relationships with warm and supportive teachers. Most participants also felt that they did just as well as other students in school and that they had average attendance, although this could not be verified

without access to school records. The majority of participants also believed that graduation from high school was a possibility for them. Bowker (1992) also found that her participants did not perceive themselves as poor students and felt that they had the ability to graduate from high school had they chosen that path. Despite the fact that participants had dropped out of high school, a number of them were employed at the time of the study and/or were upgrading their skills in college. Therefore, as researchers (Dehyle, 1992; McCaul, et al., 1992; Patrick, 1994) had suggested, dropouts do not always suffer the economic consequences as a result of dropping out. Most participants also intended to continue in college or to attend college in the future.

When looking at personal/social variables, most of the participants had friends when they were in high school, and most of their friends were also in high school. However, participants who had friends who had left school were encouraged both to stay in school and to skip school, and their dropout peers tended to tell participants what a good time they were having. This is in agreement with those studies conducted by Coladarci (1983), Kaplan, Peck, and Kaplan (1997), and Lutra Associates Ltd. (1992). A number of participants drank alcohol and/or did drugs with their friends in order to have a good time or to get high when they were in high school. Most of the participants had admitted to feeling lonely sometimes, and when they had personal or academic problems, they were more likely to keep their feelings to themselves than to tell someone. A number of participants had considered attempting suicide, while more than half of these participants had actually attempted suicide. These same participants had usually known someone else who had attempted or committed suicide.

Participants were confronted with the following obstacles in their home/family lives. Most of the participants had part-time jobs when they were in high school and very few participants had discussed leaving school with their family members. Most of the participants also reported that Inuktitut was their first language and that English was spoken at home with varying degrees of fluency. Because English was a second language for most of these participants, Hull (1990) and Keith (1995) have suggested that they were less likely to graduate. The most common factors that participants identified as having a negative effect on their schooling included adults in the household drinking alcohol, family arguments, and not having enough money. Lutra Associates Ltd. (1992) also reported that adults in the household drinking alcohol had a negative effect on student's schooling. Garnier, Stein, and Jacobs (1997) further report that exposure to substance abuse increased the chance that teens would abuse substances and experience more stressful life events, both of which were related to lower academic achievement. Low SES has also been reported to be the most pervasive family background characteristic associated with dropping out of school (Clifton & Roberts, 1988; Levin, 1995; Rumberger, 1983; 1987), but it was difficult to determine if participants came from a low SES background, or if they simply desired to have more money. This was difficult, because unlike Lutra Associates Ltd. (1992), I did not find a large number of participants reporting that they had received social assistance. Determining employment incomes based on participant descriptions of parental employment was also difficult.

On the other hand, most participants lived with both of their biological parents, were happy at home most of the time, did not have any children themselves, never

received social assistance, always had lots of food in their homes, and were encouraged to attend and finish high school by family members. These are the kinds of variables identified in the literature which would lead to success or graduation. However, they did not have the same impact with this group of Inuit high school dropouts.

Research Question #3

The descriptive data and cross-tabulations provided information on the roles self-concept, alienation, and cultural estrangement played in determining Inuit high school dropout.

Although, no significant relationships were found between self-concept and other variables from the questionnaire, alienation scale, or cultural estrangement scale, most of the mean scale scores on the TSCS:2 in the present study were lower than Fitts and Warren's (1996) Native American standardization sample. Furthermore, there were significant differences between mean scale scores on 6 of the 15 subscale scores. Sharpley and Hattie (1983) have reported that the generalizability of normed data on the TSCS was not supported. Therefore, to assume that the reported norms for the TSCS:2 can be used as a referent in the interpretation of test scores does not seem appropriate (Hoffman & Gellan, 1984). Test users may want to establish group or local norm tables before using TSCS:2 scores to draw conclusions. It may be a valid test of general self-esteem for some groups, but not all. For example, Rotenberg and Cranwell (1989) reported that comparing American Indian and White children on conventional measures of self-esteem might be inappropriate. The term self-esteem may have different psychological meanings for different groups.

Although positive self-regard is an important aspect of Inuit identity, individual recognition and public acknowledgement of personal achievement are not as central in Inuit culture as they are in the White North American culture. Thus, Inuit children's lower self-esteem scores may reflect a general cultural orientation toward personal humility (Wright & Taylor, 1995). Further, Native American children tend to show in their self-concepts less of an emphasis on formal education and possessions than on family ties, traditional beliefs, and intrinsic worth (Luftig, 1983; Rotenberg & Cranwell, 1989). Therefore, Lawrence and Brown (1976) reported that self-concept is not the best indicator of career maturity in groups other than White males.

Self-concept and alienation were also negatively correlated, so that participants with high self-concept scores had low alienation scores. It makes sense for individuals with high self-esteem to feel less alienated. Alienation was also significantly related to whether participants had discussed leaving school with their families, and whether participants had been in a heterosexual relationship in high school. The most alienated participants did not discuss leaving school with their families and they did not have a boyfriend/ girlfriend when they were in high school.

Cultural estrangement was significantly related to whether participants had considered leaving school to work. I am not sure why participants with lower cultural estrangement scores were more likely to consider leaving school in order to work. However, if high cultural estrangement scores were related to participants considering leaving school to work, it could be said that participants might have disagreed with the value and belief systems imposed on to them from the schools (Loughrey & Harris, 1992;

Sanders, 1987; Seeman, 1971; 1975). There is no simple interpretation for the significant relation found between the low cultural estrangement scores and participants considering leaving school to work.

Research Question #4

Despite the fact that there were no significant differences between males and females on the self-concept, alienation, and cultural estrangement scales, males and females provided different reasons for leaving high school and confronted different obstacles at school, in their personal and social lives, and in their home lives. Females were more likely to leave school because the work was getting too difficult and they were falling behind, while males were more likely to leave because they liked having a paying job. Other researchers (Raddysh, 1992; Rumberger, 1983; 1987) have also found that males were more likely to leave school in order to work, while females were more likely to leave school because of pregnancy. Females seemed to confront more obstacles at school, personally/socially, and in their home lives. Females disliked certain subjects more than males did, and were more likely to report that problems at home created problems at school, that they felt lonely more often than males, that they were more likely to keep their feelings to themselves, and that they were more likely to attempt suicide. More females than males also had children or were expecting children when they left school, and were more likely to report that Inuktitut was their first language. Males were only more likely to drink alcohol and do drugs. Males were also more likely than females to have discussed leaving school with family members, and at the time of the study they were also more likely to be employed.

The results presented here must be viewed in light of the fact that many of the dropouts who participated in the study might represent a special group. Many of the participants were attempting to upgrade their skill levels in college. Different results might have been obtained from individuals who had dropped out of school and who were not in the process of upgrading their school related skills.

Furthermore, one of the major limitations was not having access to school files. It was not possible to verify whether students were in the general, advanced or vocational program. It was not possible to confirm whether participants had poor, average, or good attendance or lateness. We could not determine the kinds of remedial programs participants might have been in, or confirm the number of grades repeated or which grades were repeated. It also was not possible to verify where academic strengths and weaknesses lay.

Educational Implications and Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, recommendations are made for increasing Inuit high school student persistence. Understanding the factors that contribute to high school dropout, teachers, administrators, and counselors may be better able to identify and advise at-risk students. Although educators should not ignore the problems students bring with them to school, they must concentrate on how to make the system more responsive to student needs and to encourage family involvement in order to coordinate learning and development between the social systems (Bearden, Spencer, & Moracco, 1989).

Schools should require compulsory in-service sessions in cultural awareness for all teachers and some participants reported that they would like to see better teacher recruitment programs. Based on the frequency data from the questionnaire, most participants did like school, and they liked teachers who were encouraging/ supportive, friendly and caring, and understanding and available to students. Providing students with the opportunity to develop positive relationships with supportive teachers will likely help to increase graduation rates.

Some students reported that they would like to have more or better Inuktitut language programs. Providing students with the option to learn in either English or Inuktitut would be ideal, although it is not a possibility at the present time with the lack of qualified Inuktitut-speaking teachers in the higher grades and the lack of curriculum materials available. If nothing else, then stronger first language and/or bilingual programming need to be encouraged.

Some students may need an alternative to the small high school. Occasionally, students have family or other non-academic problems serious enough to warrant leaving their communities to attend high school elsewhere. Other students with a specific vocational interest may also need special equipment or training not available in small high schools. These students should be provided with the option to leave if possible and beneficial (Kleinfeld, 1985).

In order for dropout prevention programs to succeed, they must be flexible and contain certain elements that have value for individuals who want to participate in the program. Some of the elements might include: a mixture of educational and non-

educational services (curriculum should be related to skills needed in the workplace, and taught with different methods of instruction for different students); different programs for different dropouts (e.g., teenage mothers vs. students with low SES); accurate and timely identification of students who are at-risk of dropping out; and programs designed for early prevention, late prevention, and recovery in order to accommodate for older at-risk students (e.g., adult education or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) programs during the summer, in night school, or by correspondence) (Franklin & Streeter, 1995; MacLean & Janzen, 1994; Rumberger, 1983). Effective programs also need to feature student assistance services in order to address substance abuse, teen pregnancy and young parenthood, suicide prevention, and other mental and physical issues.

Suggestions for Future Research

The opportunity still exists for a tremendous amount of research to be conducted with Inuit high school dropouts and graduates.

To do any kind of quantitative study, a much larger sample size would be preferable. If it is not possible to work with a large sample, and conduct more quantitative statistics, a more in-depth qualitative study, with fewer subjects might be more appropriate. Include in the qualitative analysis, not only a study of the individual, but also a study of the individuals' environment (i.e., community, family, peer group, school, and classroom, etc.). Furthermore, instead of dealing with retrospective self-reports, a longitudinal study examining student experiences in school, in their social

relationships, and with their families would provide a researcher with more accurate information.

It is not possible to come to any definitive conclusions with the Inuit high school dropout phenomenon without knowing the high school graduate phenomenon. There may be no real differences between dropouts and graduates for example on self-esteem. Therefore, a comparison study between dropouts and graduates is needed.

Researchers may want to develop local norms for any measure used (e.g., the TSCS:2) so that more definitive conclusions can be made about different groups within a study. Because of cultural differences, researchers need to understand that the same variables used to identify dropouts in one culture may not necessarily apply to all cultures.

The future research potential in this area, and related areas (e.g., suicide), is promising, and necessary at the same time.

Summary and Conclusions

The overall purpose of the present study was to identify and examine variables which have led Inuit students to leave high school before graduation. I spent time in three communities in the Nunavut region of the Northwest Territories and individually interviewed Inuit students who had left high school before graduation. High school dropouts in the North have a unique history, and although they resemble dropouts across the country in many ways, their cultural and linguistic background made their stories unique.

Generally, Inuit high school dropout was a result of the accumulation of school, personal/social, and home/family problems. To summarize, participants dropped out of school for a variety of reasons, but mainly because they were falling behind and the work was getting too difficult, or because they liked to work or had to work for financial reasons. Participants also confronted a number of obstacles in their schools, in their personal and social lives, and in their home lives. Obstacles in the schools were concerned with the kinds of things participants disliked about school and their teachers, and the kinds of problems they were having at school, although females were confronted with more obstacles than were males. Personal/social variables included the influence of dropout peers, loneliness, an apparent history of substance abuse, and suicide.

Home/family variables were concerned with participants working part-time while they were in high school, no discussion with family members about leaving school, having Inuktitut as their first language, and other problems at home including alcoholism.

Although self-concept scores tended to be low, conclusions cannot be made about whether or not it contributed to students' decisions to dropout. No relationships were found between self-concept and variables from the questionnaire, alienation scale or cultural estrangement scale. However, participants with high self-esteem were less likely to feel alienated and the most alienated participants did not discuss leaving school with their families and did not have a boyfriend or girlfriend. Furthermore, participants with lower cultural estrangement scores were more likely to consider leaving school in order to work.

Although a number of variables assumed to influence dropout did not do so with this group, the dropouts tended to have serious problems beyond obvious academic problems. Therefore, effective dropout intervention and prevention require remediation that go beyond the traditional school. We need to coordinate the efforts of the school, family, and community agencies. Mental health and social service agencies in the community should be equipped with the necessary personnel and skills to help youth with medical, social, behavioral, psychological, and family problems (e.g., depression and substance abuse) (Altieri, 1991; Streeter & Franklin, 1991; Franklin & Streeter, 1995).

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APPENDIX A**Letter of Information****Exploring Dropout Amongst Inuit High School Students in Nunavut**

Dear Participant,

My name is Mary Ann Schofield. I am a graduate student in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Calgary. As part of a requirement towards a Master of Science Degree, I am conducting a research project under the supervision of Dr. Labercane. This letter is intended to provide you with information regarding this research project so that you will be able to make an informed decision regarding your participation.

The purpose of this study is to explore the different factors which have led you to leave from high school before graduating. Only Inuit students who are 18 years of age and older in the Nunavut Region will be asked to participate. As part of the study I will be contacting you to participate in a one-on-one interview. This interview may take from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes to complete. I will then be asking all of you to complete 3 short personality inventories. This may take an additional 30 to 45 minutes. After completing both the interview and the inventories you will receive ten dollars.

While your participation is urgently needed, the decision to participate is voluntary. Furthermore, you should be aware that even if you agree to participate in this study, you are free to withdraw at any time. Participation in this study will involve no greater risks than those ordinarily experienced in daily life. However, if any of the questions I ask you bring up feelings you have difficulty dealing with, counseling services will be made available to you.

Data will be gathered in such a way to ensure anonymity. Questionnaires and personality inventories will be marked with an identification number assigned by me. Your name, address, and telephone number will be recorded on a separate list. Once collected, the responses will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, and they will be destroyed two years after the completion of the study. Results reported in any published studies will omit any references to names or individuals in communities. Please be assured that your responses will be held in strict confidence.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (403) 220-7565, my supervisor (Dr. Labercane) at 220-7333, the Office of the Chair, Faculty of Education Joint Ethics Committee at 220-5626, or the Office of the Vice-President (Research) at 220-3381. If you cannot call me long distance please call the principal at the high school who will contact me and I can then call you back. Two copies of the consent form are provided. Please return one signed to me and retain the other copy for your records.

Thank-you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Schofield

APPENDIX B

Consent for Research Participation

I, the undersigned, hereby give my consent to participate in a research project entitled *Exploring Dropout Amongst Inuit High School Students in Nunavut*.

I understand that such consent means that I am 18 years of age or older. I will be asked to take part in one session where the researcher will conduct an interview with me. I will also be requested to complete 3 personality inventories. After completing both the interview and the inventories I will receive ten dollars.

I understand that participation in this study may be terminated at any time by my request or at the request of the researcher. Participation in this project and/ or withdrawal from this project will not adversely affect me in any way.

I understand that the risks in this study are not any greater than those ordinarily experienced in daily life. However, if I have difficulties with any of the issues brought up in the interview or with the surveys I will have access to counseling services.

I understand that the responses will be gathered in such a way to ensure the greatest anonymity and will be kept in the strictest of confidence.

I understand that data may be published in public reports with no reference to names or individuals in communities.

I understand that all raw data will be kept in locked file cabinets and destroyed two years after the publication of study results.

I have been given a copy of this consent form for my records. I understand that if at any time I have questions, I can contact the researcher at (403) 220-7565, her supervisor (Dr. Labercane) at 220-7333, the Office of the Chair, Faculty of Education Joint Ethics Committee at 220-5626, or the Office of the Vice-President at 220-3381. I can also contact the principal at the high school who will then contact Mary Ann for me.

Participants Printed Name

Participants Signature

Witness Signature

Date

2c. Have you ever repeated a grade or failed a grade?

Yes 10 No 1

If yes, what grade(s) 11 (X=6.2, SD=3.1), and how many times? 3 (X=1.0, SD=1.5)

2d. How often did you change schools? 4 (X=1.7, SD=1.4)

2e. Do you remember having or working with...

- (a) an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- (b) special needs teacher
- (c) resource room
- (d) tutorial program
- (e) homework program
- (f) leadership program
- (g) Community Occupation Program

2f. Did you have any problems that required...

- (a) hearing aides
- (b) speech therapy
- (c) occupational/ physiotherapy

3a. Overall, did you like school?

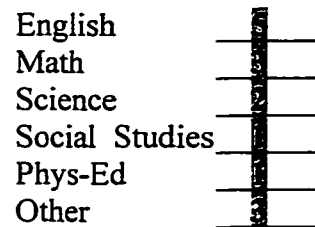
Yes 12 No 3 Sometimes 3

3b. What kinds of things did you like about school?

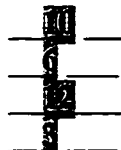
- (a) seeing friends
- (b) learning new and interesting things
- (c) playing sports
- (d) participating in special events
- (e) a certain subject (please name)
 - Math
 - English
 - Social Studies
 - Science
 - Phys-Ed
 - Other
- (f) a teacher/ the teachers
- (g) it was a warm place to go
- (h) it was a friendly place to be
- (i) other
 - the things we learned about in school
 - meeting new people

3c. What kinds of things did you **not** like about school?

- (a) getting up in the morning
- (b) the rules
- (c) a certain subject (please name)



- (d) a teacher/ the teachers
- (e) did not understand the language
- (f) it was boring
- (g) it was an unfriendly place
- (h) other



- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

4a. Think about a teacher you liked, or one who has had a positive influence on you. What did you like about him or her?

- [redacted] (13)
- [redacted] (2)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (8)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)

4b. Think about a teacher you did **not** like. Tell me three things you did not like about him or her.

- mean/ strict (12)
- getting angry too easily/ not patient with students (5)
- blamed the students for not understanding and did not explain things well (4)
- for understanding and not explaining (understand) (3)
- their attitude (3)
- made you do things you were not comfortable doing/ overly (2)
- picked on students/ bullying (2)
- did not teach us anything about the subject they were supposed to (1)
- talked too much (1)
- did not take students seriously (1)

5. In your last year of school, what were some of the problems you had at school?

- (a) you had no problems
- (b) you did not like your courses/ classes
- (c) the work was too difficult/ falling behind
- (d) you did not get any extra help
- (e) you had poor relationships with teachers
- (f) you had problems with friends
- (g) there were too many rules/ unfair rules
- (h) the courses were not relevant
- (i) you had problems at home
- (j) the teachers treated you like a child
- (k) you were in a special program/ class
- (l) you had detentions or got suspended/ expelled
- (m) other



- skipping school (4)
- moved (3)
- was under that the other students (2)
- getting picked on by other kids (1)
- getting in trouble from school (1)
- have always from school (1)
- problems understanding English (1)
- for fun and games/ after skipping classes (1)

6. In your last year of school, how did you spend most of your time in class?

- (a) listening to the teacher(s)
- (b) working by yourself at your desk
- (c) in small group discussions
- (d) other
 -
 -
 -
 -

7. Is there anything in the schools that you would like to see changed?

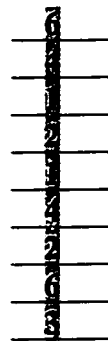
- (a) the school atmosphere/ climate
- (b) the teaching practices
- (c) the course content
- (d) other services
 -
 -
 -
 -

8. Compared to other students how were you doing in school, and why do you feel this way?

- Better than most other students*
- (a) got good marks
 - (b) school was easy for you
 - (c) others asked you for help
 - (d) you got along with your teachers
 - (e) you got along with your classmates
 - (f) you never got into trouble
 - (g) other (please explain)
-
- Same as other students*
- (a) you passed most subjects
 - (b) school was not too difficult
 - (c) you got along with most teachers
 - (d) you got along with most classmates
 - (e) you hardly ever got into trouble
 - (f) other (please explain)
 -
 -

Not as well as most other students

- (a) you failed a grade/ class
- (b) the work was too difficult
- (c) you did not get along with the teachers
- (d) you did not get along with your classmates
- (e) you were older than other students
- (f) you got suspended/ expelled
- (g) you missed a lot of school
- (h) you felt stupid
- (i) other (please explain)

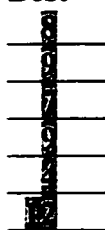


- smoked drugs (on campus)
- was always bullied
- not in the school
- was always being asked to do more money of people
- was always falling behind

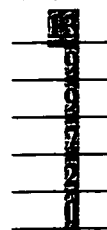
9. What were your best and worst subjects in school?

- (a) Mathematics
- (b) English
- (c) Sciences
- (d) Social Studies
- (e) Native Studies
- (f) Physical Education
- (g) other

Best



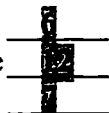
Worst



- tech center (sewing/ shop) (3)
- computers/ typing (2)
- music (2)
- physics (1)
- art (1)

10a. Overall, did you have...

- (a) good school attendance
- (b) average school attendance
- (c) poor school attendance



In an average week, how often did you miss school? 0-3 days

$\bar{x} = 1.18, SD = .98$

In an average week, how often were you late for school? 1-5 days

$\bar{x} = 2.02, SD = 1.62$

11a. Did you participate in any of the following special activities offered through the school?

- (a) sports 17
 (b) clubs 2
 (c) exchange trips 8
 (d) dances 14
 (e) concerts/ plays 14
 (f) trips on the land 22
 (g) other field trips 16
 (h) student's council 1
 (i) other (please explain) 0

11b. If you did *not* participate in any of the above activities, why not?

- (a) the school did not allow you to participate 0
 (b) your parents did not allow you to participate 0
 (c) you could not afford it 0
 (d) you were not interested 0
 (e) you did not like doing the fundraising 0
 (f) you preferred to be alone 0
 (g) your friends did not participate 0
 (h) other (please explain) 0

12a. Did the students help make the rules at your school?

Yes 2 No 7

12b. Were there any rules at your school that you found difficult to live with?

Yes 5 No 20

12c. If *yes*, what rules were they and why did you find them difficult to live with?

- attendance penalties (2)
- having to get up so early in the morning (3)
- having to be on time (1)
- not getting credit for volunteering for non-academic activities (1)

14a. Did you ever approach a peer counselor or school-community/ guidance counselor?
Yes 9 No 16

14b. If yes, did you use the services of a counselor to...

- (a) assist in selecting courses 2
- (b) discuss future plans 1
- (c) talk to you if you had school problems 1
- (d) talk to you if you had home problems 1
- (e) for any other reasons (please explain) 1

15. Did you think that graduating was something possible for you to do, or did you think it was totally out of your reach?

You could do it 2 It was out of your reach 3 Don't Know = 1

Why did you feel this way? _____

You could do it:

- could do it, but just got up for school enough, go home (1)
- would have finished school if I didn't have any other problems (1)
- I was a good student but had a lot of other problems (1)
- I am smart enough, and I can handle school (1)
- just think positive/ always wanted to finish school (1)
- wanted to finish but had to work (1)
- older brother graduated and he encouraged me to do the same (1)
- wanted to go back to school but didn't have the money (1)

It was out of your reach:

- I am a slow learner (2)
- my reading and writing is poor (1)
- I was always sick (1)
- couldn't finish with my kids and having to support them (1)

16. If anybody encouraged you to stay in school, who was this person and in what ways did they encourage you?

Who:

- family (parents, siblings, other relatives) (13)
- friends (6)
- teachers/ principals (6)
- school counselor (1)
- boss from work (1)

How:

- feel school is better than get a good job (2)
- all the school programs training me best in (1)
- family wanted to see their grandchild (3)
- the school is the future and with the training I have (2)
- encouraged to look for nothing so far from school stay in school instead of having to work and support child (1)
- to be a better person (1)
- finish school because I have a family (1)
- understand the program was better at home and said school could come back to school anytime (1)

17a. What kind of job or work have you always wanted to do?

- police officer (1)
- nurse (1)
- receptionist (2)
- graduate (2)
- cardiac nurse about HIV/AIDS (1)
- homemaker (1)
- nursing (1)
- artist (1)
- geologist (1)
- pilot (1)
- mechanic (1)
- air traffic controller (1)
- an day care or somewhere with kids (1)
- crisis shelter worker (1)
- cook (1)
- school counselor (1)
- accounting (1)
- store clerk (1)
- airline stewardess (1)
- art teacher (1)
- carpenter (1)

17b. Do you have a job, or are you doing any kind of work right now?

Yes _____

No _____

17c. If yes, what kind of job do you have or what kind of work are you doing?

- cashier (1)
- window cleaning (1)
- cleaning (1)
- educating youth about HIV/AIDS (1)
- assistant store manager (1)
- security (1)
- control operator for tele-communication (1)
- garbage sewer/water pump driver (1)
- cargo operator (1)
- mechanic (1)

18. Can you tell me any advantages and/ or disadvantages to having a high school diploma?

Advantages:

- get a good job/ higher paying job (1)
- feel better about yourself (1)
- so that people don't look at you differently so you don't get around feeling like a fool (1)
- being able to travel (1)
- get into college/ training programs (2)
- have an easier time with non-English and math (1)

Disadvantages:

- having to learn (1)

19a. Have you attended a trade school (1), college (3) or university (0)?

19b. If yes:

i. where did (do) you go?

- Arctic College (1)

ii. what were (are) you taking?

- academic upgrading (3)
- office administration (3)
- heavy equipment operator (3)
- business management studies (1)
- training (1)

iii. full-time 3 or part-time 1

iv. still attending? yes 2 no 2

v. how long was (is) your program?

- <6 months (3)
- 6-12 months (1)
- 1 year (3)
- 2 years (1)

19c. Do you plan on going to a trade school (4) college (4) or university (1) in the future?

university = 2, college = 4, trade school = 5

19d. If yes:

i. where would you like to go?

- unisore (8)
- Arate College (8)
- downtown somewhere (2)

ii. what would you like to take?

- academic upgrading (5)
- chemistry (3)
- medicine (2)
- Teacher Education Program (1)
- pharmaceuticals (1)
- wood working (3)
- RCM (1)
- business management studies (1)
- engineering (1)
- electrical (1)
- unisore (1)

20. How are you supporting yourself and your family?

- (a) working full-time (for wages) 7
- (b) working part-time (for wages) 3
- (c) receiving social assistance 1
- (d) someone else supports you 2
- (e) hunting/ trapping/ fishing 0
- (f) carving/ sewing/ crafts 1
- (g) student financial assistance 2
- (h) other (please explain)

- living at home (3)
- unemployment insurance (2)
- my situation here and husband is working (1)

21a. Do you think you will be living in your home community in 10 years?

Yes 4 No 5 Not Sure 11

21b. Explain why you think you will or will not live in your home community in 10 years. If you plan to leave your home community, will you live somewhere else in the NWT, or elsewhere in Canada?

In the NWT:

- like my hometown and don't want to be anywhere else (9)
- may not be in home community but will be in the NWT (8)
- may leave for a few years but will return (2)
- I can't afford to go anywhere else (2)
- safety here, there are police, doctors (1)
- friends and family are here (1)
- I grew up here (1)

Outside the NWT:

- I may not be in the NWT, I want to do a lot of travelling (1)
- live closer south and work in her English (1)

22a. Do you think your life would be different if you had graduated from high school?

Yes 24

No 1

22b. Why or why not?

- would have a good job/be working now/have a more challenging job (15)
- maybe I would be going to college (5)
- maybe I would be visiting BC, AB (2)
- I would have more confidence in myself (3)
- Maybe I would be travelling (2)
- maybe I wouldn't have bad friends and be married now (1)
- I would be a happier person (1)
- I would be upgrading my skills (1)
- I would be more independent (1)

23. If you could change anything about the school you went to, what would it be?

- changing some of the teachers/principals (7)
- change some of the curricula/assignments (2)
- change some of the rules (2)
- schools should be stricter, have more discipline (2)
- have a breakfast program in place (1)
- some of the students who need help in the classroom (1)
- student placement decisions, anti-bullying, discrimination against and mistreatment of students (1)
- more lunch programs (1)
- having the teachers teach in students' mother tongue (1)
- confidence in their curriculum (1)
- make school competitive with high level schools (1)

24. Is there anything else you would like to say about your school experiences?

This set of questions is about your personal life & your friends.

1. Which statement best describes your situation when you were in high school?

- (a) you had one best friend
- (b) you had one best friend and some other friends
- (c) you had lots of friends, but no best friend
- (d) you had a few friends
- (e) you knew lots of people, but had no friends
- (f) you preferred to be alone
- (g) other (please explain)

- **many best friends and other friends (1)**

2a. When you were in high school, were most of your friends also in school or out of school?

In school Out of school Both **N/A = 0**

2b. Did it matter to you whether your friends were in or out of school?

Yes No

2c. If you had friends who left school, did they...

- (a) encourage you to leave school
- (b) encourage you to stay in school
- (c) tease you about school
- (d) encourage you to skip school
- (e) brag about their freedom
- (f) tell you what a good time they were having
- (g) encourage you to stay up late at night
- (h) other (please explain)

3. In high school, did you have a boyfriend/ girlfriend?

Yes No

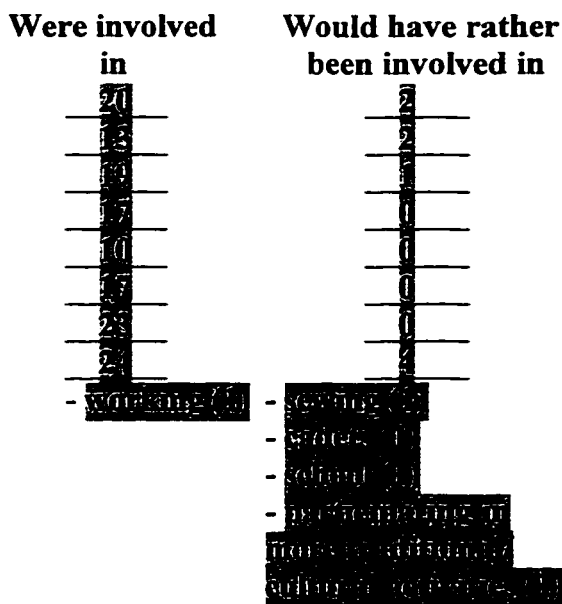
4. What kinds of cultural and/or recreational organizations did you belong to?

- (a) sports team(s)
- (b) Scouting/ Guiding
- (c) Cadets
- (d) church group
- (e) sewing club/ carving
- (f) drum dancers/ throat singing
- (g) other (please explain)

- **Spring Carnival (1)**
 - **Chorus committee (1)**
 - **Year Council (1)**
 - **United Nations (1)**

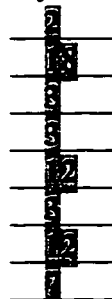
5. Listed below are different activities. Identify which activities you were most involved in during your spare time in high school. Then identify which activities you would have rather been involved in when you were in high school.

- (a) out on the land
- (b) being with grandparents/ elders
- (c) playing sports
- (d) watching TV/ movies
- (e) playing video games
- (f) being by yourself
- (g) being with friends
- (h) being with family
- (i) other



6. In which of the following areas do you feel you are most talented?

- (a) academics
- (b) arts/crafts/sewing/carving
- (c) singing
- (d) playing an instrument
- (e) sports
- (f) acting/drama
- (g) hunting
- (h) story telling/writing
- (i) other



- carpentry (1)
- cooking (1)
- computers (1)
- helping other people (1)

7a. When you were in high school did you ever feel lonely?

Never 8 Sometimes 13 Often 1 Always 3

7b. When you felt lonely what did you do?

- (a) go to the arcade
- (b) visit/talk to friends
- (c) go for a walk
- (d) talk to family
- (e) drink alcohol
- (f) do drugs
- (g) talk to a teacher
- (h) talk to a counselor
- (i) nothing
- (j) other

- kept my feelings to myself (a)
- got a job (b)
- got a friend (c)
- write in a journal (d)

8a. Did you drink alcohol, do drugs, or sniff solvents when you were in high school?

	Drink alcohol	Do drugs	Sniff solvents
Yes	11	11	1
No	24	24	24

8b. If yes, how often did you drink alcohol, do drugs, and/or sniff solvents, and when?

	Alcohol	Drugs	Solvents
Tried it only once or twice	1	1	1
Once or twice a month	1	1	1
Once a week	1	1	1
More than twice a week	1	1	1
On the weekends	1	1	1
During the week	1	1	1
Both (week & weekends)	1	1	1

8c. When you drank alcohol, did drugs, and/or sniffed solvents, who did you usually do it with?

- (a) friends
- (b) parents
- (c) family and friends
- (d) brother(s) &/or sister(s)
- (e) by yourself
- (f) other (please identify)

- anybody (a)
- males (b)

8d. *Why* did you drink alcohol, do drugs, and/or sniff solvents?

- (a) to get high 1
 (b) to feel good about yourself 5
 (c) to have fun/ a good time 1
 (d) because everyone else did 6
 (e) to be cool 2
 (f) nothing else to do 3
 (g) to forget your problems 4
 (h) because adults around you did 1
 (i) other

- reverse she was depressed and it made her happy (1)
- experimenting (1)
- peer pressure (1)
- habit (1)
- liked it (1)
- to be with friends (1)

9a. When you were in high school, and if you had a serious personal and/or academic problem, did you...

tell someone 1 or keep it to yourself 15 ? N/A=1

9b. **If you did tell someone**, who did you usually talk to?

- (a) close friend 7
 (b) parent(s) 3
 (c) minister 0
 (d) brother/sister 0
 (e) grandparent/elder 0
 (f) other relative 2
 (g) teacher 3
 (h) nurse/ doctor 0
 (i) community leader 0
 (j) school counselor 2
 (k) boyfriend/ girlfriend 2
 (l) probation officer 1
 (m) social worker 0
 (n) psychologist/ psychiatrist 0
 (o) other (please identify)

- residence supervisor (1)

9c. If you kept it to yourself, how did you cope with the serious problem?

- (a) run away 2
- (b) do nothing 1
- (c) use alcohol/ drugs/ solvents 1
- (d) get into a fight 3
- (e) get mad 1
- (f) other

- avoid it (3)
- try doing positive things (2)
- write in journal (1)
- keep busy (1)

10a. When you were in high school, did anybody you know...

attempt to commit suicide 6 commit suicide 8 other 1

10b. If yes, how did this make you feel?

- (a) afraid 1
- (b) numb 2
- (c) angry 2
- (d) hurt 8
- (e) sorry 10
- (f) guilty 7
- (g) helpless 9
- (h) other

- bad/ did not like the feeling sad (3)
- betrayed (1)
- confused (1)
- shocked (1)

10c. How did you deal with your feelings?

- (a) someone helped you/ you talked to someone 17
- (b) you kept them to yourself 1
- (c) you used alcohol/ drugs/ solvents 1
- (d) you ran away 1
- (e) you got into fights 1
- (f) other

- stayed in room until I stopped crying (1)
- accepted the fact that he would not do anything to stop it from happening (1)
- faith in God (1)
- carry on with life like normal (1)

11a. When you were in high school, did you ever think about committing suicide?

Yes 4 No 2

If yes, why?

- problems at home (5)
- drinking to the limit and depressed (2)
- problems with family issues (2)
- overwhelped with past, present, and future life to far and is difficult (2)
- problems with girlfriend (1)
- hard times supporting and staying in a job (1)

11b. When you were in high school, did you ever attempt to commit suicide?

Yes 6 No 2

11c. How did you deal with the situation when and if you thought about committing suicide?

- (a) someone helped you/ you talked to someone 5
- (b) you kept it to yourself 1
- (c) you used alcohol/ drugs/ solvents 1
- (d) you ran away 1
- (e) you got into fights 1
- (f) other

- thought about family and friends (2)
- went to the hospital (1)
- tried thinking positive (1)

12. If you could have changed one thing about your personal life when you were in high school, what would it have been?

- not dropping out (4)
- wanting a little longer to start a family/ have children (4)
- my attitude (3)
- stopped drinking/ doing drugs (3)
- not hanging out with the wrong crowd/ hanging out with (2)
- not staying out so late at night (2)
- going to school everyday (2)
- not being so shy (2)
- wish other kids did not use their so much (2)
- not starting to smoking (1)
- my parents (1)
- not getting involved in a relationship (1)
- not trusting so many people (1)

13. Is there anything else you would like to say about your personal life and/ or your friends when you were in high school?

- wish I had taken advantage of more of the opportunities I had at school. (1)
- I plan on going back to school. (1)

These last questions are about you and your home.

1. Who did you live with when you were in high school?

- (a) mother and father
- (b) mother
- (c) father
- (d) mother or father and step-parent
- (e) grandparent(s)
- (f) boyfriend or girlfriend
- (g) parents of boy/girlfriend
- (h) brother(s) and/or sisters(s)
- (i) student residence/ boarder
- (j) group home
- (k) foster/ adoptive home
- (l) other (please specify)

6
0
2
1
0
3
0
2

- Uncle (1)

2a. What did you like most about where you were living?

- (a) being with family/ staff
- (b) being with/ close to friends
- (c) having your own room
- (d) being cared for
- (e) having good food to eat
- (f) having few or no rules
- (g) other (please explain)

19
20
20
21
12

- camping (1)
- time alone (1)
- having (1)
- feeling safe (1)
- playing games (1)
- the freedom (1) and (1)
- the routine (1)

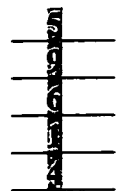
2b. What did you **dislike** most about where you were living?

- (a) being away from home
- (b) the rules
- (c) doing chores
- (d) lack of privacy
- (e) the staff/ family
- (f) living with so many people
- (g) other (please explain)

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

3. If you were asked to describe your household, would you say that you lived in a happy home?

- Always
- Most of the time
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never



4a. In high school did you...

- (a) have a child or children
- (b) get pregnant or get a girl pregnant
- (c) adopt a child
- (d) put your child(ren) up for adoption
- (e) did not have/ was not expecting any children



4b. **If you had a child/children** while you were in high school, who usually looked after them while you were in school?

- (a) your spouse or boy/girlfriend
- (b) your parents
- (c) your grandparents
- (d) your boy/girlfriend's parents
- (e) brother(s) and/or sister(s)
- (f) friends
- (g) day/child care center
- (h) other (please identify)

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

4c. If you had children and they lived with you when you were in high school, was child care a problem for you?

Yes No

If yes, what major problems did child care create for you?

- (a) caused you to quit or think about quitting school
- (b) you had to work to provide for your family
- (c) you did not have any time to spend with friends
- (d) you had disagreements with parents or others in the household
- (e) you could not find suitable childcare
- (f) child/day care was too expensive
- (g) other

5. How many years of schooling did the following people in your family have?

father = 12 years (X = 11, SD = 2.05)

mother = 13 years (X = 12, SD = 1.41)

older brother(s) = 12 years (X = 11, SD = 1.81)

older sister(s) = 12 years (X = 11, SD = 1.81)

others (please explain)

6. When you were in high school, describe in one or two words the kind of job or work the adults (people over 18 years old) in your household did.

Individual

Job

Father

- construction/contractor (3)
- nurse clerk (2)
- computer technician/programmer (2)
- server (1)
- own homeless shelter (1)
- carpenter (1)
- translator (1)
- mechanic (1)
- military (1)
- congressional staffer (1)
- newspaper (1)
- truck driver (1)
- contractor (1)
- fisherman (1)
- farmer (1)
- cargo operator (1)
- social worker (1)
- janitor (1)
- geologist (1)

Mother

- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (2)
- [redacted] (2)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)

Brother(s)

- [redacted] (2)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)

Sister(s)

- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)
- [redacted] (1)

Uncle

- [redacted] (1)

Boy/ girlfriend

- [redacted] (2)

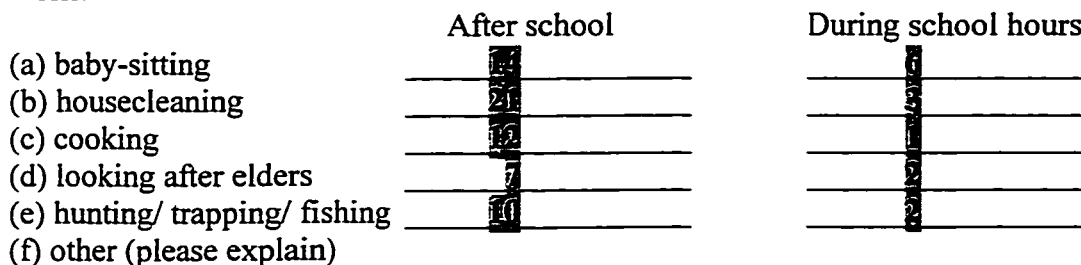
7. Did your household receive social assistance or welfare...

- (a) all of the time 0
- (b) most of the time 1
- (c) sometimes 2
- (d) rarely 8
- (e) never 12

8. In your household would you say that there was ...

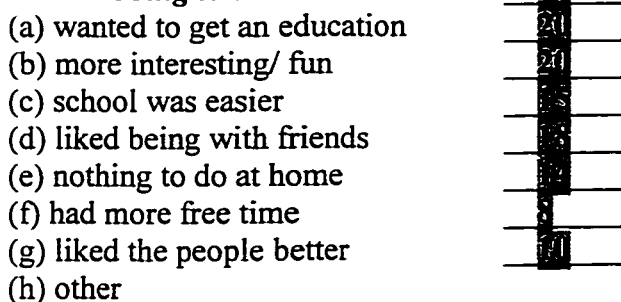
- (a) always lots of food 2
- (b) sometimes lots of food 1
- (c) just enough food 1
- (d) sometimes not enough food 1
- (e) never seemed to be enough food 1

9a. If you had chores or work to do around your house when did you usually do this work?



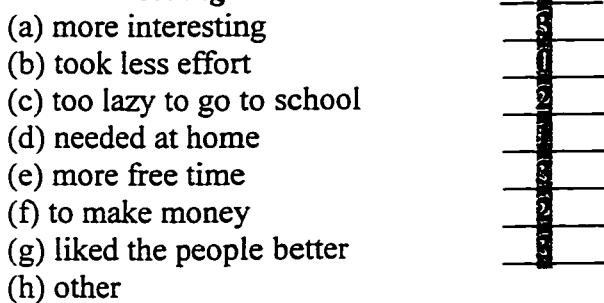
9b. If you had to help with work around the house, did you prefer spending time doing this work or going to school, and why?

Going to school?



- to get away from home (3)
- I don't like cleaning (1)

Working at home?



- I liked doing correspondence courses because the units were more convenient and I could work during the day (1)
- I preferred learning (1)
- being at home was more comfortable (1)

10a. Do you think the adults in your house considered the work you were doing at home more important than going to school?



12b. If you broke the rules in the household what kind of penalty or punishment did you expect?

- (a) got grounded
- (b) allowance was cut-off
- (c) not allowed to see your friends
- (d) got extra chores to do
- (e) nothing
- (f) other (please explain)

- mother (a)
- get grounded (b)
- not seeing friends (c)
- got extra chores (d)
- no phone with Howard (f)

13. Were any decisions made in your household, with regards to whether you should finish high school or leave school?

Yes No

If yes, please describe what was discussed and why you made the decision you made.

- parents would not allow to drop out of school and instead to going on school bus since they thought it was better
- parents said it was the choice and her dad made her quit school when she got pregnant
- old mom and she did not agree but he had helped on part for financial reasons (f)
- told her not to quit school in order to work but she did anyway (f)

14a. Did the adults in your household show any interest in your education?

Yes

- (a) they made sure you went to school every day
- (b) they always asked about how you were doing in school
- (c) they asked your teacher(s) how you were doing
- (d) they made sure you did your homework
- (e) they made sure you got up in the morning
- (f) they went to school events
- (g) they made sure you slept/ ate enough
- (g) other (please explain)

- dad helped with money (a)
- parents helped with the why when they could (a)

- No 1
- (a) they did **not** make you go to school
 - (b) they did **not** ask how you were doing in school
 - (c) they did **not** talk to anyone at the school
 - (d) they did **not** care if you did your homework
 - (e) they let you sleep in
 - (f) they did **not** go to school events
 - (g) they said negative things about the school/ teachers
 - (h) other (please explain) 1

14b. In your last year of high school, how often did your parents or any other adults in your household visit or contact the school?

- (a) never
 - (b) only when requested
 - (c) during parent-teacher interviews
 - (d) every opportunity available
 - (e) other (please explain)
- the participant agreed to the teachers and made his own decisions
 - whenever necessary

14c. Did the adults in your household think that finishing school was important?

Yes 21 No 2 You do not know 2

15. Did you think that finishing school was important? Why or why not?

- Yes 23
- (a) your parents finished high school
 - (b) education is important
 - (c) to get a good job
 - (d) to have more choices
 - (e) to earn lots of money
 - (f) so you do not live like your parents
 - (g) to be able to look after yourself
 - (h) to improve yourself
 - (i) you did **not** want to work at home or on the land
 - (j) other
- because even though I say finishing school is important (2)
 - I'm not a student
 - never finished school
 - to get a better job
 - to be able to look after myself

No 2

- (a) your parents did **not** go to/finish high school
- (b) education is **not** important
- (c) there are **no** jobs
- (d) you wanted to work at home
- (e) you did **not** want to go away from home for school
- (f) you wanted to learn traditional skills
- (g) you were getting married/ having children
- (i) other 1

16a. Was there a quiet place in your house where you could study or do your homework?
 Yes 17 No 3

16b. **If there was no quiet place** for you to study, how did this make you feel?

- (a) angry
- (b) frustrated
- (c) did not bother you
- (d) had to study at a friend's house or at school
- (e) did not bother studying or doing homework
- (f) other (please explain)

- did not bother me because I studied in my room

17a. What is your first language?

English 5 Inuktitut 17 Other 1

Both English and Inuktitut = 3

If English was not your first language, do you think this affected your school performance?

Yes 1 No 16

Why or why not?

Has affected my performance:

- I have problems reading (1)
- work was difficult to understand what teacher said for a short time (1)
- I did not know English very well (1)
- in the younger grades when I was in Inuktitut and I had problems when I switched over (1)

Has NOT affected my performance:

- my English is okay (1)

17b. What languages were (are) spoken in your household?

- (a) Inuktitut 25
- (b) English 25
- (c) other 1

18b. Describe how the above affected your schooling.

- not attending school during [redacted]
- kept up at night with [redacted]
- kept up with school when the above happened [redacted]
- not enough money for food/clothing/shoes [redacted]
- things made from recycled [redacted]
- parents' [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted]
- [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted]
- having a family member [redacted] in the family made the family [redacted]
- being [redacted] [redacted]
- when not being [redacted] [redacted]
- sibling fighting with [redacted]
- left family for a while and [redacted]
- going [redacted] when [redacted]
- parents [redacted] [redacted]
- parents' separation made [redacted] [redacted]
- fighting with [redacted]
- when father [redacted] [redacted]
- difficult learning [redacted]
- not when the [redacted] [redacted]

19a. How do you define success or a successful person?

- someone who is a good [redacted]
- someone with a good [redacted]
- someone who is [redacted]
- someone who has [redacted]
- someone who is happy [redacted]
- someone who makes [redacted]
- someone with a good [redacted]
- someone who is [redacted]
- someone who is smart [redacted]
- being able to [redacted]
- knowing [redacted]

19b. How do you think your parents define success or a successful person?

- someone working/ someone with a good job [redacted]
- having an education [redacted]
- someone with money [redacted]
- someone who [redacted]
- good/ stable family [redacted]
- someone who is [redacted]
- being a good person [redacted]

20. If you could have changed one thing about your home life what would it have been?

- parents being more understanding and listening 21
- no drugs 3
- wanting to be a doctor 3
- getting more positive education and parents 21
- parents not gambling 21
- parents being more strict 21
- having more fun 21
- staying positive, getting more education 21
- getting along with parents, better 21
- parents getting along, better and being more 21
- staying friends and doing more homework 21

21. Is there anything else you would like to say about your household or family and their influence on your schooling?

- wishes she had never got her education 21
- wishes her son had more respect for his education 21
- wishes she did not feel responsible for other family members and their problems 21

APPENDIX D**Alienation Scale***

1. I sometimes feel that the kids I know are not too friendly.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

2. Most of my academic work in school seems worthwhile and meaningful to me.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

3. I sometimes feel uncertain about who I really am.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

4. I feel that my family is not as close to me as I would like.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

5. When kids I know are having problems, it's my responsibility to try to help.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

6. I often wonder whether I'm becoming the kind of person I want to be.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

7. It's hard to know how to act most of the time since you can't tell what others expect.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

8. I often feel left out of things that others are doing.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

9. Nowadays you can't really count on other people when you have problems or need help.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

10. Most people don't seem to accept me when I'm just being myself.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

11. I often find it difficult to feel involved in the things I'm doing.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

12. Hardly anyone I know is interested in how I really feel inside.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

13. I generally feel that I have a lot of interests in common with the other students in the school.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

14. I often feel alone when I am with other people.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

15. If I really had my choice I'd live my life in a very different way than I do.

- (a) strongly agree _____
- (b) agree _____
- (c) disagree _____
- (d) strongly disagree _____

* scale presented in Seeman (1991)

APPENDIX D

Cultural Estrangement Scale*

1. According to your general impression, how often do your ideas and opinions about important matters differ from those of your relatives?

- (a) never _____
- (b) rarely _____
- (c) sometimes _____
- (d) often _____
- (e) always _____

2. How often do your ideas and opinions differ from those of your friends?

- (a) never _____
- (b) rarely _____
- (c) sometimes _____
- (d) often _____
- (e) always _____

3. How often do your ideas and opinions differ from those of other people with your religions background?

- (a) never _____
- (b) rarely _____
- (c) sometimes _____
- (d) often _____
- (e) always _____

4. How often do your ideas and opinions differ from those of most people in the country?

- (a) never _____
- (b) rarely _____
- (c) sometimes _____
- (d) often _____
- (e) always _____

* scale adapted from that presented in Seeman (1991)

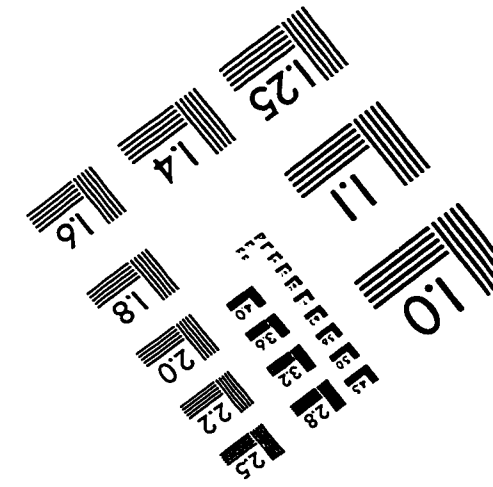
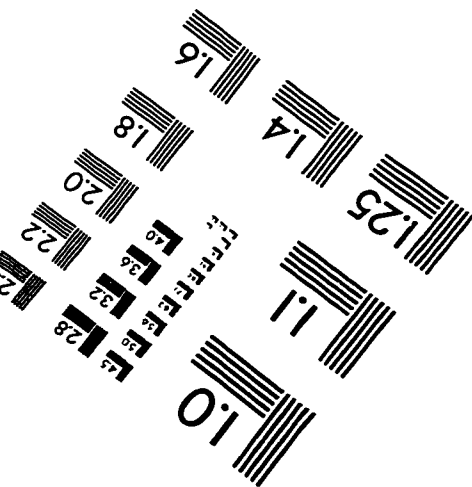
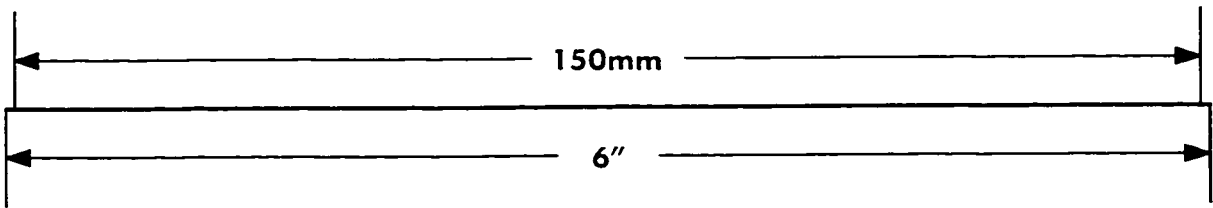
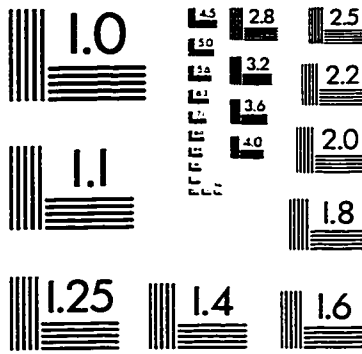
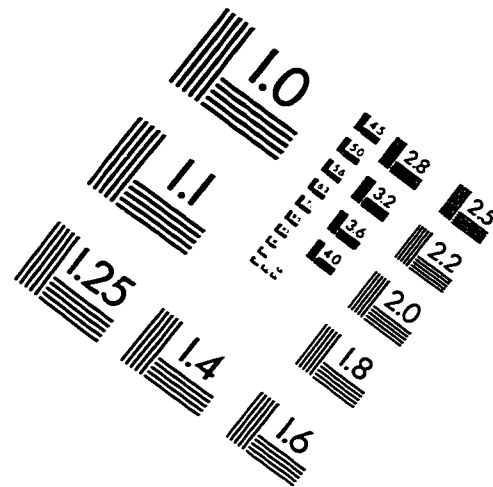
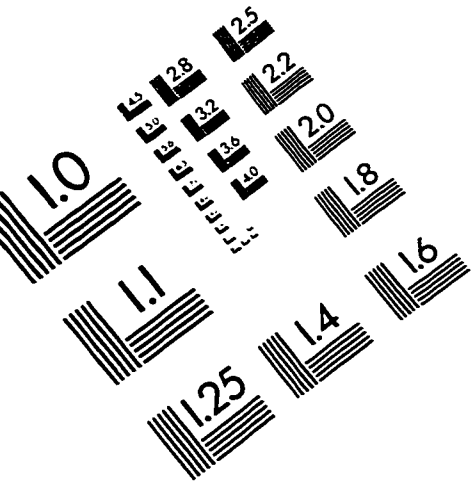
APPENDIX F**Debriefing Speech**

In this research project I was interested in finding out what kinds of factors might have encouraged you to dropout of high school. I have asked as many questions as possible in a wide range of areas. Some of these areas are more sensitive than others. I appreciate your honesty and openness in answering these questions. Please be assured that all of your responses will remain confidential. I would also appreciate it if you could keep this confidential. I will be here and interviewing other students for the next couple of days. Their answers might be affected if you comment on the types of questions I will be asking them. If you have any questions right now, I will be more than happy to answer them. If I cannot answer your questions adequately I would encourage you to see a counselor here in the community.

His/her name is: _____

Their phone number is: _____

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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