

# Example of essay on ptsd amongst aboriginals in residential schools

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



## **PTSD Amongst Aboriginals in Residential Schools**

Every day, the media and other information materials feature controversial issues about the social, psychological, ethical and economic issues concerning contemporary indigenous people and communities. It is a fact that, contemplating the contemporary challenges and problems faced by Indigenous Peoples involves an evaluation of the roots of many social, economic and political proceeds that cover their presence. PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is a condition that develops after an individual experiences traumatic occurrences at an earlier stage in life. The condition is fuelled by accumulation of emotions or feelings of remorse or anger as a result of experiences that happen at earlier stages in life (like childhood abuse, sexual molestation or serious injuries). Depending on the severity of the experiences, the individual may or may not develop the condition. However, different ideologies have been raised to explain this disparity in these statistics. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis of different aboriginal situations in residential schools is important in developing a precise thought to solve its controversial nature.

Studies of aboriginal communities with respect to original white natives in America, for instance, have revealed that they exhibit diversified spiritual, mental, emotional and physical and cultural beliefs that do not conform to those of the natives. In the context of indigenous communities, the diversity in their ways of life depicted from their cultural characteristics, history and way of life puts them in the line of traumatic situations that jeopardize their mental health. It has been documented and debated that aboriginal people who attend residential schools suffer more trauma than other non-aboriginal

people. This controversial nature of the aboriginal communities has brought about ideological differences between the two communities. Among other fields that are common to the normal way of life, health and mental issues has suffered in the context of these beliefs. Stories and informative media scripts have been overshadowed by political biasness. They display the issues concerning the aboriginal communities, not for the truth of how situations come to be, but based on the political ideology that displays these communities in unethical ways.

In the 20th century, American Indian children were abducted and forced to attend boarding schools run by the US government under Christian leadership. In this context, the children underwent traumatic experiences as they were forced to abandon their families and cultures to adopt Christian civilization. These traumatic feelings develop and mature with time and result to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In the residential schools, numerous violations of human rights have continued to be practiced against aboriginal communities. Studies of the social setups these schools exist in are still held up with post-colonial influences which ethically dehumanize the aboriginal communities. The policies are based on the American culture and don't consider the cultural and religious backgrounds of indigenous families. This has greatly jeopardized the environment in residential schools for the emotional recovery of aboriginal students.

According to the nature of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, its prevalence can be controlled or prevented by the provision of conducive and ethical environment that observes equality. Moreover, the school should have provisions that take into account the cultural diversity in the admission

policies of its administration system. It is of utmost important to control if not prevent the development of emotional and racial instances that yield discrimination. These aboriginal communities share common human rights in all social and economic environments. Several factors can be highlighted to explain the prevalence of such mental conditions especially in residential schools. These residential schools have constantly engaged in religious and cultural suppressive programs. These programs, other than discriminating indigenous communities, fuel emotional disparity among students. It is logical that different individuals are brought up from varying social backgrounds. Indigenous families continue to face discriminative treatment from the original natives. In fact, it is the social nature of services and conditions setup in residential schools that orchestrate these experiences. For instance, reports have spelt out that substantial rates of PTSD have been recorded for survivors of residential schools in Canada. One of the most interesting explanations to this health situation is that indigenous cultures have initiatives incorporated in them that protect individuals from traumatic stress and other emotional problems. It is possible that residential schools put indigenous students in a situation where they cannot access these cultural practices to help shape their emotions. Trauma and other frightening experiences have health repercussions coupled with tremendous consequences. Therefore, some practices in their culture could either be jeopardizing their chances of providing the best of healthcare to individuals or actually initiating greatest standards of it.

As a matter of fact, culture and health intersect with respect to human beliefs and relationships. In the context of indigenous healing, the aboriginal

communities have their own culturally-defined approach of dealing with health disorders. The difference in cultures for the two distinct communities brings about the situation in residential schools. The rules and services provided in these schools, including health care, are based on the beliefs of the original natives which does not put the cultures of the indigenous people into consideration. It is profound that the indigenous students are culturally educated on the right course of action in case they incur health problems. However, the situations in residential schools deprive indigenous students of the chance to practice on what they believe in. This actually applied to all elements of social, educational and economic lives. As already explained above, the way of living of a people are defined by the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical, community, health and environmental matters governed by their culture.

A historical analysis of residential schools and indigenous communities is essential in visualizing the contemporary situation and instances of PTSD. The establishment of The Boarding School Healing Project actually illustrates the various situations of discrimination that indigenous students faced in America. Native children were generally banned from speaking their native language. Those who defied this rule were severely punished. Records from testimonies by aboriginal students display incidences where their mouths were washed with soap for speaking their native language. Additionally, the schools were run cheaply where inadequacy in food was a common problem. Contrary to this, the aboriginal culture had enough economic options that ensured the availability adequate food for their children.

Moreover, the students suffered widespread physical abuse. It is reported

from recent studies that the administration did not protect the indigenous students from discrimination. Furthermore, sexual, physical, and emotional abuse was rampant. Studies and reports by humanitarian organizations have revealed that the schools ignored accusations of indigenous students against their teachers as a result of sexual and physical abuses. All these situations more or less depict some of the immoral and unethical actions that happen in residential schools. Psychological studies have analyzed situations and linked them with possible diseases and conditions that may arise as a result of certain factors. The psychological context of this issue relates the causative agents of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and the situations presented by the predicament of indigenous students in residential schools. Psychology identifies the effects of emotional and physical experiences and connects their consequential effect on the health status of the individual. Basing on the cultural setup of aboriginal communities, the fact that control provisions for emotional imbalance are setup actually shows that psychology is of essence.

However, the different cases of PTSD reported show varying waveforms for both aboriginals and non-indigenous people. The string of abuses suffered by the indigenous communities, in a general context, continue to this day in a way that gravely affects the rights of Native Americans. However, it is the prospects of the government that furthers their predicament. This is so because it takes time and effort before the the issues are noted and expressed as violations of human rights. Human rights violations often occur before international intervention is considered. To explain the context of suffering among these individuals, the Stolen Generation, a report about

Aboriginal children in Australia, narrates how children were forcibly removed from their families and placed in boarding schools far away from their families and communities.

The efforts put in place to protect the human and land rights of Indigenous Peoples is jeopardized and challenged further by the fact that their contemporary lives and history is not known by many. This situation is brought about by the predicament that faces the media in provisions of knowledge to the public about their history and challenges they face. This absence of enough information on their lifestyle welcomes controversies. The sufferings faced by indigenous students is attributed to this void, their issues are not raised with the seriousness it deserves. Additionally, the public perceptions of the challenges faced by indigenous communities are paralyzed by the cultural and environmental aspects of their survival. For example, in United States, the existence of tribal governments and tribal schools shows to what extent the rights of indigenous communities are undermined. In most of the residential schools, the indigenous students are perceived as the same. In this case, their efforts, intellectual capacity and potentials are undermined. In essence, the original languages, health practices, beliefs and cultural practices of indigenous people have been exposed to changes, which have seen them lost their originality. It is a good cohesive attribute of indigenous people that they can hold a strong sense of tribal identity, which has guided them through all the situations. As a matter of fact, they have developed indigenous schools which take into account their historical background and their cultural practices. This has been furthered by the existence of indigenous government, with leaders able to

distinguish public policies and public perceptions.

Analysts have proposed that indigenous people perform better when they have control over their lives. Essentially, they depict high social standards when allowed to follow their cultural way of life. This is undermined by putting them in constrictive environments with rules that do not conform to their beliefs. In the context of residential schools, these students feel discriminated when the freedom to practice their cultural, health and other ways of life are deemed inappropriate and out of order. This is ultimately linked with disorders and conditions like PTSD. It is a natural prospect that humans perform best when they are allowed to choose conditions that best suit their survival. This is the aspect of nature that is deprived of from these indigenous communities. Therefore, an effort to correct the unethical situations should not be geared to making them equal with other people, but to appreciate their way of life and help up bring their cultures.

In efforts to fight together in protecting the earth, indigenous communities have shown their commitment over concerns about the environment. A follow up of the historical and cultural background of all races reveals a turbulent relationship between humans and their environment. It is even more convincing that these individuals view the process of protecting their lands and the environment as sacred duties. There has been growing concerns on the environment the contemporary society poses for the future generation. Through such concerns as in the provision of healthy standards to all races, protection of land, animals, plants and other forms of nature, the human world shows its commitment in availing a better environment for the future generation.



In the context of indigenous communities, discriminative actions and the cohesive and moral nature of human beings, every individual is expected to act morally and within the humanitarian standards. This is to ensure that a better living environment is created for all humans irrespective of race, gender, religious beliefs and political orientation. This brings up the question of the significance of this topic in the contemporary world. It is an undisputable fact that humanitarian organizations and international community have done a great job in revealing the unethical practices that had befallen many states and bring justice to individuals. However, the social nature of the problem with indigenous communities makes it impossible to identify and correct immoral practices that result to these instances. It is therefore a call for each individual to provide a better environment for others in residential schools, churches and the social arena at large. The control or prevention of diseases such as PTSD should be availed and made possible for all. Instances of certain groups of individuals to be disadvantaged and put at risk of getting caught up in these conditions are actually demoralizing. In conclusion, the context of aboriginals and the challenges they face at different social platforms should no longer be a case of concern. A general effort geared at making these communities to be as comfortable as possible has been upheld by humanitarian organizations and should be supported by all. This analysis has highlighted a few of the tangible situations relating to the history, economic, social and cultural aspects that shape the lives of this indigenous population. In the context of PTSD and its prevalence among the indigenous population, especially in social situations like residential schools, it is conclusive that discrimination has adverse effects on the morale and

health of individuals. The condition discussed above is just an example of the various limitations that come as a result of their alienation in the contemporary world. Hence, the sounds that preach peace and harmonized coexistence should take into account the need to eliminate racism.

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