The Experiences of American Indian Students Regarding Their Perceptions of Postsecondary Education at a Tribal Community College in the Midwest

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Abstract

The problem addressed in this qualitative study is the need to improve American Indian students' persistence college. The focus of this research was to understand the ways in which the life experiences of 12 American Indian students influenced their persistence in a tribal college. By using a descriptive case study approach, qualitative data were collected from 12 on-site interviews and institutional academic documents. Interview data were validated with methodological triangulation protocols that employed inductive and typological analysis techniques. Case study documentation was analyzed through interpretive analysis. Findings point to the need to establish a level of engagement between instructors and students because instructors play such a vital role in students' success. The results identified 4 themes that encapsulated and defined the roles that faculty, family members, college location, and resources of the college play in contributing to the persistence of American Indian students. Suggested future studies include investigating the economic impact that this Midwestern tribal community college has had on not only the tribal community but also the adjacent communities and to replicate this study with non-Native students to compare results. Quantifiable data were produced that might strengthen the need for tribal colleges and universities.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

American Indian students have a broad array of school experiences that reflect competing cultural values. These experiences have sometimes been interpreted as validating or subverting the connections of American Indian students to their culture (Adams, 1995; Blondin-Perrin, 2010). This multiplicity of experiences has been the basis for a wide range of attitudes and beliefs among American Indian students about school and education (Trafzer, Keller, & Sisquoc, 2006; Tyler, Boykin, Miller, & Hurley, 2006; Wexler, 2006). These attitudes have played a significant role in creating the cultural background of the educational experiences of American Indian students. These experiences and attitudes also have had an effect on the perceptions and performances of American Indians in postsecondary education (American Indian Higher Education Consortium [AIHEC], 2007; Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2010; U.S. Department of Education [USDoE], 2010).

The Western educational system for American Indian students is based upon the concept of creating a homogeneous society (Seeborg & Sandford, 2003). For example, Kanu (2006) researched instructional practices that influenced the academic success of Native Canadian high school students and concluded that Native Canadian students have difficulty moving from the K-12 system to postsecondary education (Bosse, Duncan, Gapp, & Newland, 2011; Lomawamia & McCarty, 2006; White, Bedonie, deGroat, Lockard, & Honani, 2007). Kanu identified the disjuncture between home cultures and the postsecondary environment as contributors to the failure of Native Canadian students in postsecondary education.

Efforts by the dominant culture to replace the beliefs, values, languages, and social and political structures of indigenous people resulted in identity conflicts in indigenous communities (Kanu, 2006; Marr, 2010). Different cultures can coexist, but Westerners did not see the two cultures (American Indian and Western) as equal (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). According to Adams (1995), the general perceptions of the dominant society were that American Indians were inferior because their cultural practices were different from the dominant cultural practices. Solutions to the American Indian problem were based upon several objectives, with assimilation being the primary goal. Westerners thought that American Indians needed to be civilized if they were to share the continent with them (Warren, 2007; Whirlwind Soldier, 2002). The dominant society's preferred method of assimilation was education (Adams, 1995; Giago, 2006; Marr, 2010).

Traditionally, many American Indian nations had educational systems that focused on delivering the knowledge and skills needed for their societies to function. Parents, relatives, elders, and religious and social groups were partners in these educational systems (Adams, 1995; Cajete, 1994; V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). Today, significant differences between the societal beliefs, practices, and values of American Indian cultures and the European colonists and their descendants remain (Cajete, 2006; Giago, 2006; Warren, 2007). American Indian cultures often are more based upon cooperation and the sharing of traditional knowledge, whereas Western culture is rooted in personal achievement, innovation, and competition (Buckmiller, 2010; Penland, 2010).

Chapter 1 continues with an overview of the American Indian struggle with education. It highlights and includes a discussion of the need for and significance of the

study. The chapter also presents the theoretical framework, study design, definitions of key terms, and alignment with the research question.

Background

The focus of this case study was to examine American Indian students' experiences in postsecondary education. These experiences have multilayered meanings that exist through memories (Trafzer et al., 2006). Previous exploration of this phenomenon has been problematic. Anecdotal explorations have been conducted by non-Native authors, reflecting Western ways rather than American Indian knowledge and perceptions of education (Huffman & Ferguson, 2007; Kanu, 2006).

In this conflict of cultures, European immigrants were considered voluntary minorities because they used the homogeneous model of education to benefit themselves immigrating from similar societal structures. Voluntary minorities or immigrants came to the United States looking for a better life and used education to gain upward mobility (Reyhner, 2006). American Indians were perceived in sociological terms as involuntary minorities based upon educational practices that were followed to assimilate Indians into American society (Reyhner, 2006).

Culturally different students attending public schools have had difficulty navigating these educational systems (Akiba, 2010; Deyhle, 2008; Han & Scull, 2010; Huffman & Ferguson, 2007; Kleyn, 2010). Their definitions of the world have been based upon their societal values, and the implementation of these values has been different for each ethnic group (Grover & Keenan, 2006). This cultural mismatch has contributed to the mistrust that American Indians have in a system that does not recognize or show respect for their cultural traditions (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008). The

boarding school phenomenon is a prime example of cultural mismatch, disrespect for another culture, and American Indian learning styles (Marr, 2010; Okagaki, Helling, & Bingham, 2009; Slivka, 2011). Currently, their attitudes and perceptions have led to poor academic performance (USDoE, 2010).

Different cultural beliefs and values have caused conflict between home and school for American Indian students (Currie, Wild, Schopflocher, Laing, & Veugelers, 2012; Flynn, Duncan, & Jorgensen, 2012; Guillory, 2009; Kanu, 2006; Minikel-Lacocque, 2013; Ovink & Veazey, 2011; Penland, 2010). These conflicts among home, school, and work continue to have a negative impact on students' academic performance (Bosse et al., 2011; Kanu, 2006). To analyze American Indian students' performance, I needed to better understand students' attitudes toward education and the factors influencing these perceptions. American Indian students' perceptions about postsecondary education have been based in part upon attitudes developed from familial, community, and secondary school experiences (E. C. Deloria, 2009).

Early accounts of American Indian life were written by non-Indians (V. Deloria, 1997; Peat, 2002). The dominant society's point of view led to inaccurate portrayals of the roles of American Indians in U.S. history. American Indian authors found it difficult to publish their works because the audiences for which they were writing were culturally different (E. C. Deloria, 2009), further widening the gap between the two cultures and creating the impression that American Indians were inferior to the dominant society. These differences in culture stifled American Indian authors' writing about the experiences of their peoples within the dominant culture because their stories could not be told in the ways that they were meant to be told. At the same time, American Indian

authors knew that their own people would not have approved of having their private stories made public (E. C. Deloria, 2009). Evidence has shown that this cultural discontinuity or its absence has played a role in student success (Kanu, 2006; Penland, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

The problem that I examined was the need to improve American Indian students' persistence in college (Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2010; Hunt & Harrington, 2008). American Indian students' experiences in postsecondary education have been difficult to assess and have been influenced by family and community members, peers, and teachers. Understanding how these different experiences have influenced students' perceptions of higher education has been difficult (Bosse et al., 2011; Burk, 2007; Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999).

This case study required the use of data from artifacts and personal interviews to provide information to construct and describe American Indian college students' experiences. These data will help to fill the gaps in the literature regarding the challenges that American Indian college students experience (Hare & Pidgeon, 2011; Kajner, Fletcher, & Makokis, 2012; Obiakor & Afolayan, 2007; Okagaki et al., 2009). The data were important to this study because even though tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) have a higher percentage of American Indian students, their attrition rates are higher than for some 4-year colleges (AIHEC, 2007; Fox, Ngai, & Allen, 2006; USDoE, 2010). A tribal nation's well-being depends on its ability to strengthen its economic, cultural, political, social, and spiritual processes in the tribal community, and TCUs can play a major role in this component of nation building (Brayboy, Fann, Castagno, & Solyom,

2012; Flynn et al., 2012; Huffman, 2011; Institute for Post-Secondary Education Policy [IHEP], 2007). Although academic underpreparedness and financial concerns are important factors contributing to a lack of academic success (Park, Densen, & Bowman, 2013), I focused on American Indian college students' experiences.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this single-case study was to examine American Indian students' experiences and determine how these experiences influenced their academic progress and persistence in the college setting (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Currie et al., 2012; Dodson, Montgomery, & Brown, 2009; Fryberg & Markus, 2007; Ovink & Veazey, 2011). I conducted individual interviews to collect data to understand the connection between American Indian students' experiences and postsecondary success (Park et al., 2013). Gaining this understanding might serve as the foundation for making fundamental changes to provide educational experiences for American Indian students to be successful in the postsecondary setting (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Penland, 2010; Reddy, Devi, & Reddy, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

Constructivism is a learning process that helps people to make sense of their world based upon their beliefs and knowledge. Dewey (as cited in Mayer, 2008) and Vygotsky (1978) maintained that prior knowledge and experience influence the ways in which students respond to new information. The role of cultural knowledge, according to Vygotsky's definition of constructivism, is important to understand Dewey's constructivist perception of how individuals acquire knowledge (Hyslop-Margison & Strobel, 2008). Dewey argued that cultural artifacts are important to understanding

human behavior and that those individual differences in beliefs and perceptions have meaning only within cultural contexts.

Dewey (as cited in Mayer, 2008) and Vygotsky (1978) pointed out that individual histories are a function of what their cultures represent; their communities also share an understanding and perpetuation of those cultures. People reproduce activities within their environments based upon conceptual and material contexts of their culture that were important in past activities (Mayer, 2008). Vygotsky considered the social influences of students' understanding of Western education as a tension between students' cultures and their lived experiences (Mayer, 2008). A constructivist approach maintains that students from different cultural backgrounds construct beliefs and knowledge through artifacts and social interactions within communities (Vygotsky, 1978). Dewey and Vygotsky agreed that prior knowledge and experiences influence how students respond to new information.

Constructivists like Dewey (as cited in Mayer, 2008) and Vygotsky (1978) believed that people who are socially and culturally connected construct knowledge through particular perspectives shaped by various implied beliefs. These social and personal experiences cannot be separated from family, community, socioeconomic status (SES), education, and culture. Constructivism is similar to the traditional way that American Indians learn through modeling. Dewey and Vygotsky believed that the role of culture is central to the human understanding of cultural forms that elevate human thought.

The Western philosophy of education sees people as passive participants, but Vygotsky (1978) perceived individuals as actively interacting in their surrounding

environment, constructing knowledge and perceptions of their world (Battiste, 2008; Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev, & Miller, 2003; Seeborg & Sanford, 2003). At different life stages, knowledge and perceptions are developed in context as individuals actively interact within a social structure (Vygotsky, 1978). Individual perceptions of the world are formed from internal knowledge interacting with the social and cultural contexts of the community (Dewey, as cited in Mayer, 2008).

This case study was based upon constructivism, which describes learning as interactive and social in nature, with education being the social environment in which individuals create and construct their understanding of the world (Deulen, 2013; Sutinen, 2008). Individuals function by constructing, interpreting, and modifying the information encountered in relation to their place in the world (Sutinen, 2008). Constructivism underscores the problem that students from different cultures have with new ways of thinking. Most students have preexisting belief systems resistant to conceptual changes. Students become uncomfortable or unaccepting when new concepts do not fit their conceptual knowledge (Hyslop-Margison & Strobel, 2008). Dewey (as cited in Mayer, 2008) and Vygotsky (1978) were attentive to the connection between the nature of learning and public education for individual development and social progress.

Participant interviews and interpretations contributed to my understanding of American Indian students' perceptions of higher education. The experiences that the participants went through in school and their perceptions of postsecondary education were evident in their interview responses. The interview transcriptions and artifact field notes helped me to understand how American Indian students gained knowledge and what TCUs could do to help them. I was able to tie this construct into this study based

upon how TCUs served these American Indian students. These constructs contributed to the theoretical framework on how TCUs could better serve American Indian students.

This qualitative case study followed a constructivist framework and recognized the dynamic nature of American Indian cultures. Constructivism is a learning theory based upon the premise that new knowledge is built on prior knowledge through social and cultural interactions (Deulen, 2013). Researchers applying a constructivist paradigm have hypothesized that people learn by connecting cultural artifacts from community to individual and from individual to community (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008; Deyhle, 2008; Yazzie-Minz, 2008). Qualitative researchers have sought to understand how individuals make sense of everyday experiences and how these individuals act on their perceptions of the realities around them (Hatch, 2002).

Research Question

The purpose of this single-case study was to examine how American Indian students' life experiences influenced their academic progress and persistence at a Midwestern TCU (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Currie et al., 2012; Dodson et al., 2009; Fryberg & Markus, 2007; Ovink & Veazey, 2011). Using a qualitative methodology to research the problem of how to best serve American Indians in higher education helped me to answer the research question guiding this case study: What were the experiences of a sample of American Indian students at a TCU in the Midwest?

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the life experiences influencing the persistence of American Indian students at a Midwestern TCU. The principal reference in a case study is the case, not the methods by which the study

operates. A case study is a system bounded by coherent and sequential issues that are specific to the case (Stake, 2005). Data were collected from tribal government archived documents as well as interviews. Each tribe has documents that contain information on education, and the government documents include not only education policies, practices, and statistics but also testimony from elders.

To uncover the participants' memories of their educational experiences and how they made sense of such experiences, I chose to conduct structured interviews (Flynn et al., 2012; Patton, 2002). Because I am an America Indian, I was able to relate to the participants' experiences, something that would not have been possible for a European American researcher to do. Qualitative research is useful for gaining insight into and understanding the participants' memories based upon their own frames of reference (Stake, 1995).

I conducted formal interviews using open-ended questions to obtain the data for this qualitative case study. The structured interview process is flexible, allowing the questions to follow different directions; the use of probes and follow-up questions helped me to direct each interview back to the initial questions. Face-to-face interviews are interpersonal events shaped by interpersonal dynamics (Merriam, 2009; Shank, 2006). In qualitative research, the interview is the primary way to discover and portray multiple realities (Stake, 1995). The interview process was guided by open-ended questions meant to obtain descriptive explanations of key episodes of the participants' life experiences.

According to Yin (2009), a case study methodology is used when researchers want to obtain an in-depth understanding of a real-life phenomenon. Such an understanding will encompass contextual conditions important to the case because they

are pertinent to the phenomenon under study. Therefore, using a case study was appropriate to obtain an in-depth understanding (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002).

Significance of the Study

This case study provides data that might help to clarify the external factors that influenced these American Indian students' experiences in postsecondary education. This research will add to the body of knowledge and contribute to the graduation rates of American Indian college students. Examining American Indians' perceptions of formal education could lead to the development of strategies to increase the number of American Indian students successfully completing postsecondary degrees.

Definitions of Key Terms

Researchers have used the following terms frequently in the relevant academic literature describing the connection between experiences and current attitudes, especially in the context of American Indians' educational practices.

American Indian. In the context of this study, the term *American Indian* was used interchangeably with the terms *Native American* and *indigenous person*. The definition of American Indian includes people enrolled in federally recognized tribes and their descendants, whose original territories are in the present United States (Adams, 1995; Giago, 2006).

American Indian culture. This definition refers in general to cultural elements that include beliefs, languages, social and political structures, and values prominent among American Indian communities (Okagaki et al., 2009; Villegas, 2007; Yazzie-Minz, 2008).

Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was established in 1824 as a component of the federal bureaucracy within the Department of Interior that oversees federally recognized Indian tribes (V. Deloria & Lytle, 1983).

Colonialism. Colonialism is an economic system that is the result of the invasion of a foreign land by a dominant group of people with the intent of establishing economic, intellectual, political, social, and spiritual domination over the people and their land. Colonialism results in a loss of sovereignty for the colonized population (Adams, 1995; Villegas, 2007; Warren, 2007). As indigenous people expose and counter the harmful effects of colonialism, the entire society can learn and benefit (Dr. G. Gatin, personal communication, August 18, 2011).

Cultural genocide. Cultural genocide occurs when the dominant society imposes its religious and cultural beliefs and values on the subordinate group. Education was one tool used to gain control over indigenous people by Western society, replacing American Indian worldviews with Western worldviews (Paulet, 2007).

Dominant culture. The dominant culture can impose its language, values, and ways of knowing on subordinate cultures through political power or economics (Adams, 1995).

Elders. American Indian elders are tribal members acknowledged as wise individuals by other tribal members. Native societies see elders as providing perspectives for significant solutions to problems. American Indian elders pass on traditions, model behaviors, and provide a moral compass (Fixico, 2003).

Indian boarding schools. The Act of July 1882 authorized the U.S. Secretary of War to establish vacant army posts and barracks for the education of American Indian

people of the United States. Children were sent to the schools to be assimilated into the dominant society by emphasizing the Western worldview and dismissing the American Indian culture (V. Deloria, 1997). The residual effects of boarding schools were manifested within the tribal experiences (Giago, 2006).

Mission schools. Similar to government-administered boarding schools, mission schools were established as early as the late 1700s and continued into the 20th century under the operation of religious orders. Mission schools followed church policies to assimilate and acculturate a people into mainstream U.S. culture (Giago, 2006).

Race. For the purpose of this study, race was considered a class of people unified by shared interests; habits; and, in recent history, blood degree. Currently, to be enrolled in an American Indian tribe, an individual has to have one-fourth blood quantum of a tribe. Some tribes have lowered the amount in order to increase membership. Those who have less blood are called descendants and do not receive the same level of help from social programs (Giago, 2006).

Sovereignty. Sovereignty is the right of a nation or a group of people to be self-governing. Indian tribes in the United States possess a form of sovereignty that resembles that held by states, counties, cities, and towns stated in treaties. The federal government recognizes tribes as independent and sovereign powers (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002).

Tribal colleges and universities (TCUs). TCUs were created over the last 30 years in response to the postsecondary education needs of American Indians. TCUs combine personal attention with cultural relevance to support American Indians, and they are essential for providing educational opportunity to American Indian students (AIHEC, 2007). There are 37 TCUs in 15 states.

Western culture. I used the terms *Western culture*, *Western philosophy*, and *Western worldview* interchangeably in this study to describe the dominant society's worldview. The effect of Western culture has been to replace the beliefs, languages, values, and the social and political structures of other cultural groups. Researchers have asserted that Western culture is based upon individualism, competition, and impersonal education (Adams, 1995; Cajete, 2006; V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Giago, 2006).

Summary

Chapter 1 introduced the study, provided background information about the topic that was studied, described the theoretical framework relevant to the study, and identified gaps in the literature that this research will fill. Also presented in this chapter were explanations of the nature and significance of this study, along with the data collection process. Chapter 2 presents the literature review that the data analysis and interview questions were based upon.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine American Indian college students' experiences. The information might serve as a foundation to promote the academic success of American Indian students. Some important issues need to be noted: (a) The academic performance of American Indian students lags behind that of their non-Indian peers (Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2010; USDoE, 2010); (b) the dropout rate for American Indians in public high schools for the 2008-2009 academic year was 6.3% but only 4.1% for European Americans; and (c) American Indians have lower rates of completion of postsecondary education than other minorities (race/ethnicity) based upon pedagogical and sociological barriers stemming from the influence of Western pedagogy and the special status of American Indians in American history (IHEP, 2007). This literature review includes an examination of articles, documents, and studies on American Indian students' experiences.

Documentation

I concentrated my literature search on American Indian education and American Indian education policy. This literature review focused on American Indians in higher education, effective instruction, learning theories, case study, qualitative studies, and related instructional studies. I looked for relevant literature using the EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and USDoE databases, as well as the JSTOR database via the Northcentral University Library. Books were purchased through Amazon, and some texts were borrowed through interlibrary loan. Key search words included *American Indian*, *pedagogy*, *testing*, *learning theory*, *constructivism*, *behaviorism*, *case study*, and *qualitative studies*.

Student Persistence in Higher Education

Students enter postsecondary education underprepared for college-level academics (Michael, Dickson, Ryan, & Koefer, 2010). As Michael et al. (2010) suggested, developmental instruction alone is not enough to ensure student persistence; personal adjustment to the college environment and culture are just as important. Peer mentoring and guidance (i.e., parental and counselor) are equally important for first-generation students and some second-generation students from the middle class (Shotton, Oosahwe, Star, & Clintron, 2007).

Peer mentoring is important to American Indians because it can help them to overcome potential barriers during the first year of postsecondary education. American Indians are less likely than continuing generations of students to seek mentors for support and encouragement (Shotton et al., 2007). Continuing generations refers to students whose parents attended some postsecondary education. According to Shotton et al. (2007), although this lack of connection could be cultural for American Indian students, the connections were based more upon American Indians' experiences in the dominant society rather than simply being American Indians. American Indian students' persistence in postsecondary education can be attributed to their adjustment to the academic and social systems of the institution. This has different effects on student success (Peacock, 2011; Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson, & Covarrubias, 2012). Some students attribute their success to parental guidance and support.

American Indian students should draw from relationships with family, peers, and tribal communities to move beyond the impact of mainstream education on their cultures (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). Instead of placing blame on indigenous students to adapt to

postsecondary education because of their lack of background knowledge and expectations of the dominant society's institutions, these institutions would be more effective in retaining American Indian students if they were to integrate American Indian epistemologies into their curricula and educational policies (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). The cultures of U.S. institutions of higher education are reinforced through ethnocentric curricula and mainstream pedagogies based upon a Western philosophy of education (Hare & Pidgeon, 2011). These mainstream curricula and pedagogies of public schools shape indigenous students' educational experiences. First-generation and low-SES students find it difficult to navigate the processes involved for post-secondary education without the guidance and preparations from secondary education. These students usually attend high-poverty schools that do not have the resources to expose students to the information or sources necessary to prepare them for postsecondary education (USDoE, 2012).

Parental Education

The percentage of American Indian children whose parents have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher has been reported as significantly lower (18% vs. 44%) that that of the parents of European American children (AIHEC, 2007; USDoE, 2010). Another statistic providing evidence of the gap between American Indian students and European American students is the percentage enrolled in low- and high-poverty schools. Low-poverty schools have student populations as high as 25% who are eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch; in high-poverty schools, 75% of students receive a free or reduced-price lunch. In low-poverty schools, American Indians account for 11% of the student populations, whereas European Americans account for 33%; in high-poverty

schools, American Indians account for 31% of students, whereas European American students account for 6% (USDoE, 2010). American Indian children have the highest rate of poverty in comparison to any other racial or ethnic group (USDoE, 2010), which has a negative effect on students' academic performances (USDoE, 2012).

According to the USDoE (2010), for the 1999-2005 academic years, first-time American Indian students seeking to earn their degrees at 2-year postsecondary institutions had a completion rate of 35%, but non-American Indians had a completion rate of 53%. Although most results were negative, a few results were not. For example, data from AIHEC (2007) for the 2003-2007 academic years indicated that although the number of American Indians and non-American Indians enrolled at 4-year TCUs decreased, the number of degrees conferred increased by 14%. Understanding the reasons for American Indians' negative perspectives toward education will help to develop strategies to increase the academic performance of this cohort (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008).

A number of historical and present factors have contributed to American Indian college students' attitudes toward higher learning. An expanding body of literature specifically related to American Indian education has discussed the impact of colonialism, federal policies, cultural responses, and educational philosophies on American Indian students' academic achievement, especially in postsecondary education (Bosse et al., 2011; Buckmiller, 2010; Wexler, 2006). Although these factors have been reported, there has been and continues to be a gap in the literature regarding American Indian students' perceptions of education.

Historical Perspective of American Indian Education

Historical literature describing the expected role of education in the larger interaction between the dominant European American culture and American Indian cultures has provided a useful context for examining changes that have occurred in American Indian education. The focus of American Indian education, beginning with the first Western European contact to the present, has been to assimilate American Indians into the dominant society (Blondin-Perrin, 2010; V. Deloria, 1997; Seeborg & Sandford, 2003). When warfare proved to be too costly a way to assimilate American Indians, education became the catalyst for assimilation by replacing native cultures, languages, and values with Western European cultural norms (Adams, 1995).

Language is a meditational means for understanding how the social institution of race influences social activities. Language serves a dual role as a communication tool and as an influence on mental processes (Daniels, Cole, & Wertsch, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Fostering culture and language from one generation to the next can be a motivational factor in ensuring cultural continuity. Words reflect views within historical and social structures. Western-based curricula legitimize dominant languages while promoting the values of the dominant society (Burk, 2007).

History mainly has been written by non-Native males and has not always included the contributions of non-Native women and very rarely those of American Indians or others outside the mainstream culture (E. C. Deloria, 2009). Even though the contributions of non-Native women were ignored or dismissed by historians, these women shared a language and some cultural norms with their male counterparts and were able to leave behind written records and memoirs. In this way, a marginalized group of

people had an avenue to be heard and recognized (Giago, 2006). American Indian tribes did not share linguistic or cultural norms with the dominant society, making it difficult for an accurate story of their history to be told. Most European Americans accepted the vanishing "Red Man" stereotype that was exploited in dime novels, other printed media, and motion pictures (E. C. Deloria, 2009; Wilson, 2008). Still, some American Indian authors did manage to have their stories published (Giago, 2006; Lurie, 2006).

Although American Indians had oral traditions, this traditional way of preserving and passing on culture and language was foreign to the dominant society, was viewed as mythical, and was therefore dismissed (E. C. Deloria, 2009; Wilson, 2008). In response, American Indians did not trust anthropologists, many of whom failed to record indigenous knowledge correctly, and elders sometimes told fallacies as a way to protect their cultures and traditions (Giago, 2006; Lurie, 2006). However, American Indian researchers like E. C. Deloria (2009) and V. Deloria, Jr. (2006) continued collecting many stories that in isolation were merely stories, but when placed in a philosophical framework, became connections to the past practices and beliefs of American Indian ancestors. Some historians who wrote about indigenous people failed to become familiar with American Indian cultures and languages.

The 20th century. In the later years of the 20th century, general perceptions of American Indians by the dominant society changed from the romanticized fighting cowboys and Indians of the Old West to a form of ethnohistory. This new indigenous paradigm emerged from the need to understand the motivations of American Indians as they attempted to maintain their traditions after decades of forced assimilation (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006). Wilson (2008) divided this time into four phases:

traditionalizing, assimilation, early aboriginal, and recent aboriginal. During the first phase of traditionalizing (1900-1940), Western European exploitation was based upon perceptions characterizing American Indians as inhuman. As research continued, American Indians were categorized according to the degree to which they were acculturated or assimilated into the dominant society. Defining American Indians was left to researchers (Spindler & Spindler, 1984; Wilson, 2008), and interpreting the social structure of American Indians continued to be identified by non-Native scholars. During the assimilation phase (1940-1970), American Indians saw and heard their identities interpreted through text and teachers according to non-Native researchers as well as through early television shows.

During the next phase, the early aboriginal phase (1970-1990s), research began to have an Indian focus, but only what non-Native researchers found to be easily understood or thought of as exciting or exotic (Wilson, 2008). This phase was influenced by the civil rights movement. During the fourth phase, referred to as the recent aboriginal phase (1990-2000), Native people became more assertive (Battiste, Bell, & Findlay, 2002). American Indian scholars who were able to separate academic endeavors from their native lives included V. Deloria (1999), V. Deloria and Lytle (1983), and Medicine (2001). The dominant society began allowing American Indians to tell their own stories; this paradigm shift of more Indian scholars researching and writing about their own people changed the perceptions of the dominant society about American Indians (Deyhle, 2008). American Indian authors might have had an easier time than their non-American Indian counterparts collecting material between 1900 to 1940, but they could not publish

their works in the contexts intended (E. C. Deloria, 2009). In some cases, American Indian authors were published posthumously.

Although some American Indian authors did manage to have their work published, ethnographers recognized the need for American Indians to write about themselves (Medicine, 2001). Ethnographers were attempting to analyze American Indian and European American relations from American Indian perspectives because American Indians were developing methods to manipulate the system that was designed to control or eradicate them (Wexler, 2006). The assimilation phase (1940-1970) was rooted in government policy and saw the continued exploitation of indigenous land. Regulations imposed on indigenous people in the United States, Canada, and Australia governed all aspects of indigenous or aboriginal life. These imposed regulations were supported by the assumed need for outside guardianship for indigenous people as they were absorbed into the dominant societies (Wilson, 2008).

Western European colonizers often attempted to educate an elite subset of a colonized population to create an imperial hierarchy that could serve to control an indigenous population (Akiba, 2010; Paulet, 2007). In contrast, the United States, when attempting to colonize the people of the Philippines, used the boarding school model previously used to educate American Indians (Slivka, 2011). In the Philippines and other countries, the United States attempted to cultivate a Westernized worldview under the pretense of preparing indigenous people for self-governance (Paulet, 2007). The goal was to transform Filipinos so that they resembled Americans; the assumption was that Filipinos and American Indians were half-civilized people having no self-restraint.

Government officials referred to both groups as childlike people for whom education appeared to be the only answer.

In fact, education was believed to be necessary to end the savagery and government support. The expectation on U.S. soil was that once American Indian children spent 5 years in Western education, savagery would end, and government support would cease. This same expectation was applied in the Philippines because Americans believed that both ethnic groups were similar and that educating them would better serve the U.S. plan for colonization. The U.S. government did not want an educated elite subset; rather, it preferred an educated populace (Slivka, 2011).

The civil rights movement. When the emergence of the civil rights movement increased the public's interest in ethnic groups, American Indian-focused research became fashionable. The research, however, continued to be heavily influenced by Western worldviews (Wilson, 2008), and indigenous voices were not heard. Only exotic portions and easily understood portions of their culture from a Western perspective were researched and published. Indigenous values have been filtered through the values of dominant societies, and only those aspects of indigenous cultures deemed interesting or worthy of protection (based upon scientific, esthetic, historic, or curiosity values) have been considered (E. C. Deloria, 2009; Wilson, 2008). This reality exemplified the need for an indigenous research paradigm to better understand the needs of American Indian people (Cajete, 1994; Wilson, 2008).

American Indian voices not were often heard unless their material was in non-Native form, so American Indian authors were often placed in precarious situations. As insiders, if privileged information were shared and published, these personal accounts

would make the American Indian authors outcasts. These unpublished authors knew that even if they were to publish their works as fiction under pseudonyms, their sources would know the truth (E. C. Deloria, 2009). These same authors did not want their research published as scientific data because Western influence was to portray American Indians as objects of scientific research. Most American Indian authors wrote to preserve their heritage, but non-Native Americans were not ready for that type of literature. European Americans wanted fictional or romantic accounts of Indians. The scientific world wanted anthropological-based material, as apparent in the posthumous publishing of *Waterlily* (E. C. Deloria, 2009). Conflicting worldviews made it difficult for American Indian authors to tell their stories in a Native context without Western influence.

The history of American Indians, as written by non-Natives, assumes perspectives foreign to the subject. For this history to reflect their perspectives on this subject, American Indians, not non-Native scholars, must write their own stories, as was the common practice (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008; Villegas, 2007). The Western-dominated perspective of most historical literature regarding American Indians has reinforced the need for American Indian people to research and write about their own histories as a way to understand the real and perceived effects on future generations (Yazzie-Minz, 2008). These cultural models are based upon social constructs that affect how individuals react to different cultural settings (Fryberg & Markus, 2007; Grossmann & Varnum, 2011; Walton & Cohen, 2007).

Culture and Cultural Mismatch

Researchers have defined authentic culture as unified and consistent, but with a varied attitude toward life, an attitude that views the significance of any element of

civilization in terms of its relation to all other elements (Akiba, 2010; Han & Scull, 2010). The different cultural descriptions of the world are based upon individual roles and encounters with the physical world that are understood through the philosophical realm of metaphysics (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Walter, 2010). Metaphysics is a philosophical activity that considers each culture's vision of reality as being represented in creation stories, cosmologies, and ontologies. Within each culture, these activities are understood not to be a vision of reality, one possibility among many, but reality itself, that is, the way things are. The notions that the individual, not the community, is fundamental and that human beings oversee nature (and so are not part of nature) are basic underpinnings of Western pedagogy. Individuals within the Native worldview believe that all things in the world are connected and that individuals have a place as part of the whole, but do not have the power to control the whole (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Peat, 2002). American Indian metaphysics, according to V. Deloria and Wildcat (2001), uses abstract concept formations based upon service or experience, whereas Western metaphysics requires abstraction beyond human experience.

Often, different worldviews are based upon similar value systems, but how each ethnic group prioritizes these values and implements them is different. Understanding which worldview is relevant to a group is critical to understanding the acquisition and use of knowledge by group members (Grover & Keenan, 2006). Scholars have assessed the importance of alternative worldviews differently. Some examples are the following: (a) Indigenous science cannot exist apart from Western science; (b) there exists a distinctive indigenous science with an ability to inform indigenous people and enrich Western science; and (c) social perspectives and worldviews mistakenly separate

indigenous science, not that different worldviews interpret reality in different ways (V. Deloria, 2002).

Western science generalizes observations to universal laws and combines observations to make predictions about nature (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008). American Indian science sees individuals as parts of communities that reflect certain cultural aspects, history, time, and place. People should speak of metaphysics when contrasting Western and American Indian worldviews, instead of science or religion, as suggested by V. Deloria (2002). Concentrating on metaphysics produces new perspectives that recognize and value American Indian worldviews that originate from diverse tribal cultures and values. These new perspectives should honor American Indian social mores, which emphasize historical, political, and social contexts, and shape indigenous people's experiences, lives (positions within tribal structure), and futures.

Daniels et al. (2007) argued that children's psychic functions are created culturally from the first time that children participate in the institutions of home, day care, or school. Their relationship to the world changes as they acquire new methods of relating to the world and as new objectives and intentions are introduced to them. According to Vygotsky (1978), the changing social conditions produced by continual and contemporary interpretations can be problematic to individuals experiencing a cultural mismatch. This problem leads to the inability to form an identity that suits one's social world and creates a feeling of alienation (Kleyn, 2010; LeGrange, 2007; Tyler et al., 2006). Whether culture is incorporated to impede or improve learning, cultural discontinuity plays a significant role in academic achievement and underachievement (Kleyn, 2010).

U.S. universities and colleges reflect the dominant culture of independence. Students are expected to be independently motivated, solve problems alone, be independent thinkers, explore and learn more about individual interests, and learn to influence others (Stephens et al., 2012). These expectations are in conflict with the American Indian culture of interdependence, where tribal members are expected to do collaborative research and work, be team players, give back to the community, help their families, and be role models (Stephens et al., 2012). University settings or social environments reflect the dominant culture of students from middle-class backgrounds of independence focusing on personal choice, self-expression, and personal development shaped by opportunities that give a sense of self-importance and entitlement (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; Stephens, Hamedani, Markus, Bergsicker, & Eloul, 2009).

Culture, race, and language have a significant effect on education (Kleyn, 2010). The assumptions of the dominant society are that their culture is superior and that imposing it on other ethnic groups is beneficial to all people (Peacock, 2011; Peat, 2002). These assumptions turn cultural differences into cultural conflicts. For example, Western beliefs view nature as resources to be manipulated, whereas American Indians view nature as a world of relative meanings that work in collaboration (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). The Western approach to Indian education resulted in a marginalized people remaining oppressed (Cajete, 1994; Freire, 1970). This view perpetuated the struggle that American Indians continue to have with public education, which separates their traditional knowledge from school experiences and sets their traditional knowledge into competition with Western knowledge.

The boarding school experience did, however, place children in a position of having to make sense of their world and the new information that they encountered. The experience is an example of placing individuals into a foreign environment intent on assimilation, acculturation, and replacement of the cultures that the students had absorbed. Children were removed from their familial environments and placed in strange worlds that disenfranchised their cultural ways (Adams, 1995; Giago, 2006; Marr, 2010).

Other cultures. The effects of cultural disparity are evident in other cultures. For example, Cambodian Americans struggle with Western expectations of parental involvement in education because the traditional Cambodian worldview sees teachers as the authority figures in education and moral development. This worldview contrasts with the Western worldview that expects parental involvement in all aspects of the education and moral development of children (Akiba, 2010). Other Asian Americans, African Americans, indigenous people of America, and people from other countries have encountered educational practices foreign to them. Consequently, cultural discontinuity has become a reality for many culturally diverse students (Han & Scull, 2010; Romero-Little, 2006).

Cambodian culture focuses on fate as the determining factor in their children's future, Korean communities follow Confucianism as an educational method, and American Indians take a constructivist approach to learning (Akiba, 2010; Han & Scull, 2010; Paulet, 2007; Romero-Little, 2006). Western values often force Western schools into discounting and discouraging nonmainstream cultural activities. For example, schools organize schedules, holidays, or spring breaks around Christmas and Easter.

Working-class culture is different from middle-class culture, specifically in the contexts of economic capital (defined not only as income but also as access to existing sources of funding and other material); geographic mobility; and options of choice, control, and influence. Working-class culture is similar to American Indian culture in the contexts of poor SES; geographic location constraints; and few options of choice, control, and influence (Grossmann & Varnum, 2011; Stephens et al., 2012; Stephens, Markus, & Townsend, 2007). These characterize the socialization of children that life is not just about them and that people do not always get what they want. However, in the middle-class culture, children are socialized to have a sense of entitlement and self-importance, and to put self before others (Grossmann & Varnum, 2011).

How to ensure that all students, especially ethnic minorities, have academic success is problematic because whoever defines the problem dictates the actions to address the issues (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Each home, community, and school will look within to resolve academic failures. Cultural mismatch should and will come to the forefront in the process of making the connections between home and community values, which are based on ethnic heritage, and teaching styles and curriculum in school systems. For example, the dominant culture insists that classroom activities be conducted in the dominant culture and language (Burk, 2007; Cleary, 2008).

Lack of awareness and knowledge by teachers of American Indian cultures is the basis of the ineffective education of American Indian youth. Public schools are focused on socializing minority students with mainstream cultural values while disparaging minority students' cultural values and behaviors. Cultural factors should be central to providing American Indian students with culturally responsive schooling (CRS; Brayboy

& Castagno, 2008; Moore & Gilliard, 2007). This lack of knowledge results in incongruity between learning and teaching. The goal of CRS is that American Indian students will learn multiple worldviews. In order for CRS for American Indian students to be effective, teachers have to interact with the community and welcome community members into the school (Moore & Gilliard, 2007). The most common themes in the literature that discuss CRS for American Indian students have focused on learning styles and cultural differences (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008; Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008; Deyhle, 2008).

In mainstream universities and colleges, the cultural backgrounds of students matter (Fryberg & Markus, 2007). This college culture reflects the independence characteristics of the middle class more so than the interdependence of the working class (similar to American Indian culture), which creates a cultural mismatch for American Indian students. All students entering college are expected to act independently, and if they are from cultures other than middle class, they begin at a disadvantage, especially if they are first-generation college students. Their parents have not attended college and cannot advise them about this different environment's culture. Continuing-generation students, whose parents attended college and possibly obtained degrees, have the mind-set of independence and can make a seamless transition to the college culture (Stephens et al., 2012). This cultural mismatch between middle-class and working-class cultures is further communicated by educators (Peacock, 2011).

Cultural mismatch and education. Educators have defined cultural mismatch as a phenomenon between school and home that can result in either cultural misunderstanding or an exchange of ideas that can be understood by both. Cultural

mismatch or discontinuity occurs when one generation embraces the dominant culture, subsequently not passing cultural traditions to the next generation, such as was case with American Indian cultures (Obiakor & Afolayan, 2007). Economic survival can sometimes overshadow cultural survival when marginalized groups are looking for ways to adapt to the dominant society and support their families. This cultural discontinuity can be linked to academic difficulties for minority students (Tyler et al., 2006).

Misunderstandings and misinterpretations of cultural differences can lead to tensions between groups living in the same communities. In a comparison of other cultural norms to one's own, it is difficult to comprehend different behaviors and beliefs. This comparison leads to intolerance and can foster biased attitudes that different cultures might direct toward other cultures. Intolerance and racism are not based upon genetic or biological differences in most instances; rather, they originate from differences in cultural systems and the filters through which different groups of people understand their worldviews.

Further research is needed on the impact of racism on indigenous people and how indigenous people can resist assaults on their cultures (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008; Deyhle, 2008). Racism has many forms. Unconscious racism manifests in the unintentional actions of non-Native people when placed in proximity to groups of American Indians or other people of color. Institutional racism is evident in schools by the absence of tribal languages, history, and stories in school curricula. The "in-your-face" type of racism is overt, raw, and uncompromising. The most debilitating form of racism, however, is internalized racism. This racism is the most difficult to confront because American Indians have to confront themselves. How American Indians treat each

other and how they treat themselves is a form of self-hate that manifests from internalizing the many forms of daily racism (Peacock, 2011). Engaging in racism and undermining the cultures of others are conveyed through teachers and peers who have inherited prejudicial behaviors (Peacock, 2011).

Cultural mismatch, or the different cultural backgrounds and beliefs of students and teachers (Kleyn, 2010), might be contributing to the negative educational experiences of indigenous students and could lead to the perceptions that American Indian students have deficiencies, even though school practices are effective and sound. Most public school curricula reflect the influences of Western culture on learning activities (Burk, 2007; Tyler et al., 2006). Ethnic minorities could perceive that the public school system discourages their culturally based behaviors. Historically, cultural mismatch within the United States has led to continuing conflict, including warfare, stereotyping through the media, and education that forces different cultural beliefs and values on American Indians (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Duran & Duran, 1995).

Mainstream education was designed to produce cost-effective and efficient broad homogenization (Adams, 1995; Warren, 2007) that reflects Western beliefs and values. Western strategies for assimilation through education failed because Indian children did not learn this way. Cajete (1994) defined indigenous education by these characteristics: learning styles, community influence, and grounding. The learning styles of American Indians are based upon modeling, observation, and reflection through the integration of the needs of the individual with the needs of the community (Burk, 2007; Ngai & Koehn, 2011). Community influences include language, sharing, cultural traditions, storytelling (a vehicle for learning), and worldviews. Indigenous education is grounded in the

concepts of integration between individuals and nature, with nature permeating the learning. The basics of life are grounded in respecting people's ways of being, doing, and understanding.

Currie et al. (2012) found that Native students who practiced their culture experienced racism more frequently than other minorities in the United States. These experiences, though unpredictable, were stressful to these students. In comparison, Native students in Canada reported that they still experienced discrimination from educated people in the postsecondary setting, something that was an unexpected outcome. They believed that educated people would not manifest such discrimination (Mayes, 2007). Urban and periurban Indians have not and do not yet feel accepted by the dominant society, resulting in a social determinant for college students (Mayes, 2007). Periurban refers to the area immediately surrounding a city or town that is usually between the suburbs and the countryside. Most indigenous students live in urban areas to work as they complete their academic programs. The costs of attendance, financial aid, and remedial coursework in some instances are issues that some indigenous students have reported as detrimental to attendance (USDoE, 2012).

Frequently, non-American Indian scholars have misunderstood the role of American Indian elders as teachers passing on traditional arts and knowledge that include older ways of survival (Ngai & Koehn, 2011). Some teachers continue to mistake this knowledge as American Indian spirituality and religion (Gere, 2005). American Indians integrate spirituality into all aspects of life. To be effective, non-American Indian teachers should learn about the beliefs, ethics, and values of their students.

Han and Scull (2010) examined the academic and social struggles that a Korean student encountered in a mainstream classroom. Using culturally relevant and traditional pedagogy, along with an Asian philosophy, to analyze the qualitative data, Han and Scull found that the problem resulted in the concept that teachers could understand and work effectively with Asian American students by following certain methods (Burk, 2007). Teachers need to learn and appreciate their own cultures as well as those of their students to incorporate cultural materials into the curriculum; understand the social practices of ethnically different students to communicate effectively with them (Gere, 2005); and establish a relationship of trust with students' families to develop a home-school connection. Hand and Scull had findings similar to those reported in the 1928 Merriam Report about American Indian educational practices.

Several researchers have argued that Eurocentric thinkers dismiss indigenous knowledge in the same way that they dismiss anything that they do not understand. Indigenous knowledge is considered unsystematic and incapable of addressing the needs of the modern world (Cleary, 2008; Gere, 2005; Paulet, 2007). The belief that Western science is the only path to true understanding of the world is grounded in the underpinnings of Western worldviews taught in mainstream colleges and universities. Historical differences between Western and American Indian science education, for example, are important because they reflect differences in worldviews and highlight the cultural context of science education (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008). Brayboy and Castagno (2009) emphasized this contrast about culturally based education that meets American Indians' learning styles and found that American Indian students were more

successful using a culturally responsive pedagogy rather than the assimilative model historically used in American Indian education.

Cultural discontinuity. Cultural discontinuity results from curriculum content that is the most often based upon Eurocentric values, thus creating a cultural mismatch for culturally diverse students. Instruction based upon this type of curriculum often leads to teachers misinterpreting students' academic ability, intelligence, and social reactions. American Indian students who have strong connections with their cultural identities regard postsecondary education as a way to help their communities (Huffman, 2011). Another result of this cultural mismatch is that students experience a disconnection between school and home, especially when they attend schools that favor dominant cultures and values and degrade or devalue other cultures. Within the context of public schooling, there often are differences between students' culture and informal learning. Intentionally including the cultures of minority students can make learning viable; excluding students' cultures can make learning difficult. This bridge between home and school has a direct correlation to student deficiency or indifference (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011).

Student deficiency or indifference is further expounded when minority and low-SES students enter the college system. According to Saenz (2010), most minority students live in racially homogeneous communities and attend homogeneous high schools. Attending these racially diverse institutions might be the first time that minority students are experiencing other ethnic groups. More research is needed to develop an understanding of the relationship between racial and SES diversity and make college environments more supportive of improving student engagement (Park et al., 2013).

According to the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development (2008), American Indians must have educational goals that coincide successfully with the economic and political goals of their communities (Brayboy et al., 2012). American Indian education must be relevant to the struggles facing Indian tribes in their nation building (Champagne, 2007). As argued by Champagne (2007), skills and knowledge learned in mainstream colleges and universities will not help American Indians to address the issues faced by their tribes, unless they also learn about the contemporary issues facing American Indian nations.

Prior research has identified four characteristics necessary to nurture a more positive racial environment for underrepresented students (Minikel-Lacocque, 2013): (a) inclusion of administration, faculty, and students of different ethnicities; (b) curriculum that reflects the experiences of minorities, both contemporary and historical; and (c) mission statements of institutions of higher education mission statements that reflect commitment to cultural diversity (Solorzaro, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005). Missing from the list is the fourth characteristic, namely, programs designed to address racism, especially acts of racial microaggression, and the provision of support for minority students on predominately European American campuses (Minikel-Lacocque, 2013). Acts of microaggression include microinsults, microassults, and microinvalidations. Microinsults are conscious and intentional actions or slurs that are deliberate acts of racism. Microassaults and microinvalidations are more overt and place minorities in situations where they feel insulted, but do not know why, and the perpetrators are unaware that they are being offensive. This type of racism is so subtle

that neither victim nor perpetrator understands what is going on (Minikel-Lacocque, 2013)

Culture and Social Class

The discontinuity between school and student has long-term consequences for minority students, especially American Indians. According to Cholewa and West-Olatunji (2008), individuals from nonmainstream cultures are likely to earn lower wages. This connection can influence the quality of minority people's schooling experiences. This explanation of the achievement gap between the dominant group and minorities has as its focus culturally diverse or low-SES students; this focus is reported the most often. A reason for focusing on these groups is to remove the fault from the school systems, placing it instead on students' cultures, families, and communities. Some outcomes are the overrepresentation of minority students in special education programs, high incidence of disciplinary actions, and high dropout rates (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System [IPEDS], 2012).

American Indians have distinct cultural and ethnic backgrounds, sometimes unknown, sometimes known but unacknowledged, and sometimes known and acknowledged but disregarded by the dominant society. These socially based misunderstandings extend into the schools that American Indian children attend. Cultural mismatch or discontinuity contributes to the negative experiences of indigenous students (Kleyn, 2010). The literature on cultural mismatch has focused on the cultural backgrounds and beliefs of students and teachers and has used cultural discontinuity as the catalyst to explain students' poor academic achievement (Stephens et al., 2012). Attributing the perceived academic deficiencies of minority students to a cultural

discontinuity shifts the blame from teachers and schools to the sociopolitical context and families. Societal beliefs and school policies affect students' academic success or failure (Guillory, 2009; Hunt & Harrington, 2008). Underrepresented minorities struggle to integrate into colleges and universities (Brayboy et al., 2012), yet the reasons for these struggles have not been discussed and have been reported only as statistical data.

Social beliefs are formed through a concerted and cultivated upbringing, a culture that is preferred in American school systems and leads to smoother transitions and more opportunities for privileged (i.e., upper middle-class) students (Lareau & Weininger, 2003). The working class identifies with a natural growth upbringing that places minority students at a disadvantage because their culture is similar to the lower working class; American Indians are usually at a lower SES that European Americans (Martin & Spenner, 2009). Minority middle-class students still struggle to form and use positive social capital to be persistent in college (Ovink & Veazey, 2011). Privileged European American students will be more likely to benefit from their social capital because their belief system is based upon college attainment and expected success (Lareau & Weininger, 2003).

In the Western worldview, to understand something is to understand causes; in the American Indian worldview, to understand something is to understand relationships. In the Western worldview, scientific truth is expressed in universal terms, but in the American Indian worldview, scientific truth is based upon cultural teachings. The Western worldview evolved over centuries alongside European development. The American Indian worldview is based upon American Indian cultures, histories, and languages, all of which are known as indigenous epistemology (Cajete, 2006; LeGrange,

2007; Wilson, 2008). Educators in public schools unfamiliar with American Indian culture misunderstand American Indian behaviors and view American Indian students as passive consumers of knowledge (Warren, 2007).

Constructivism

The views of the community, family, teachers, and peers matter because they comprise part of the cultures that students bring with them, according to constructivism (Daniels et al., 2007; Nasir & Hand, 2006). Constructivism posits that learning is an individual and a cultural process that involves the passage of cultural artifacts from the individual to the community and from the community to the individual. The constructivist theory states that engaged learners participate in active processes based upon the premise that knowledge is constructed by learners in their social and cultural settings. Constructivism emphasizes that learning takes place when students are ready to learn. This readiness or maturation level gives learners confidence in their ability to use and master various skills. Students will construct their own knowledge, and educators cannot expect comprehension if students have not reached the appropriate maturation level (Daniels et al., 2007; Yazzie-Minz, 2008).

Vygotsky (1978) believed that children will perform at an advanced level through social interaction. Vygotsky developed the theory that influenced the understanding of cognitive development in children. The constructivist approach to learning is based upon people constructing their knowledge by making connections among their background knowledge, new information, and their environment (Daniels et al., 2007). Constructivism is a broad philosophical perspective that also describes a variety of educational philosophies and theories (Kozulin et al., 2003). The most basic definition is

that people construct their own understanding based upon communication styles, social interactions, and cultural norms (Nasir & Hand, 2006).

As learners are confronted with new and different conditions, they either reject the differences or acknowledge them and try to make sense of them (Blondin-Perrin, 2010). Several researchers have separated constructivism into two groups: those who see learning as an individual activity and those who see learning as a social activity (Vygotsky, 1978). During his time with the Blackfeet Tribe, Peat (2002) observed that the educational experiences of people could be interpreted through actions and internal processes, whereas the history of American Indians, as written by non-Natives, assumes perspectives foreign to the subject. For this history to reflect their perspectives on this subject, American Indians, not non-Native scholars, must write their own stories, as had been the practice (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008; Villegas, 2007). The different perspectives of most historical literature regarding American Indians have reinforced the need for American Indian people to research and write about their own histories as a way to understand the real and perceived effects of these histories on future generations (Yazzie-Minz, 2008).

In contrast, Vygotsky (1978) posited that individual development is social and that language plays a role in learning as individuals engage in verbal and nonverbal activities within their communities. Thus, dialogue (e.g., the storytelling of American Indian elders) introduces and passes on culture and language when used by more skilled members. An example of linking culture, language, and learning is the common practice among American Indian elders of specifying what time of year certain American Indian legends or stories may be told (Menominee elder, personal communication, March 30,

2012). Unlike the focus on individual learning illustrated by Western standards, Vygotsky proposed that working with older, more experienced persons improves the learning process. The elder individuals can show the younger ones new ways to solve problems by engaging in trial and error or by exploring different existing schema.

American Indian pedagogy is an example of constructivism because traditionally, children have learned through observation and modeling (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009). In this way, American Indians have perpetuated their cultural traditions to their own people and acculturated them into their communities. This culture transfer is accomplished by engaging elders and youth in joint activities meaningful to the goals of their communities (Tharp, 2006). Although American Indians are a small portion of the U.S. population, Tharp (2006) posited that their communities could be used as the environment from which public education could learn a way for all people to achieve, thereby perpetuating the best attributes of each society.

In early enculturation, children learn through experiences with the cultural practices, beliefs, customs, and skills of their communities, families, and schooling (Han & Scull, 2010). As culture unfolds during different levels of human development, individual learning is shaped by constructivist processes that are the product of cultural tools and forms. Therefore, learning is a cultural activity influenced by the interplay of global and local processes (Nasir & Hand, 2006). These activities and processes lead to cultural differences in societies.

Societal structures developed within societies suffering histories of oppression, such as those of the American Indian, play an important role in the academic achievement of members of these societies. Individuals and communities react to

oppressive conditions and histories, and they develop identities that make academic success within the dominant society problematic (Ogbu & Simons, 1998; Trafzer et al., 2006). Similarly, Freire (1970) asserted that academic underachievement is a psychological adaption of a culture group to socially based oppression. This resistance by a minority group is based upon their rejection of stigmatized racial identity structured by the dominant society and perpetrated by teachers and non-Native peers (Liebler, 2010; Nasir & Hand, 2006). This resistance has continued in the classroom through issues of social structure and power.

Differences in Epistemology

American Indian epistemology is learning about life through participation and relationship to community, including the whole of nature, as compared to Western epistemologies, which are based upon the premise that learning is autonomous. Differences between indigenous epistemologies and Western epistemologies, as identified by V. Deloria (1999), are significant contributors to the challenges faced by American Indians navigating postsecondary education. Ignoring American Indian epistemologies, philosophies, and theologies as primitive myths reduces American Indians to a level of ignorance in the assessment of those imposing Western standards (Richardson, 2007).

American Indians often approach formal education with resignation and appear to be compliant. Usually, ethnic minorities, when presented with negative images, internalize these negative messages, with the result being low self-esteem and negative self-images (Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008). These attitudes are derived from historical factors (Adams, 1995), yet American Indian students cannot dismiss feelings of

inadequacy and incomplete understanding after being subjected to Western worldviews (LeGrange, 2007).

An important difference between Western and American Indian attitudes regarding knowledge is that the Western worldview regards knowledge as impersonal, whereas in American Indian society, the traditional goal of knowledge is to ensure personal growth and then to develop professional expertise (V. Deloria, 1997; V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). Traditional Indian education acknowledges that experience shapes learning and that awareness of self is crucial for attaining knowledge. "Most of what we know is not a result of explicit pedagogy or teaching; it is learned through living" and thus becomes a personal experience (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001, p. 13). Some American Indian tribes believe that no one person could remember all the past information, religious revelations, and knowledge of the physical world. Beliefs and values of older generations are shared with younger generations through storytelling and memories of life experiences. Battiste (2008) argued that indigenous education should be reframed in an indigenous context, thus providing Native people with a sense of who they are and where they come from, both of which impact Native communities. Eurocentric education, which is based upon the beliefs and values of the colonizers, rejects indigenous worldviews, culture, and language.

The epistemology of American Indian knowledge effectively describes experience, that is, everything known about an experience is passed down by elders, generation to generation, all the while giving credit to the previous storyteller. Admitting that something is mysterious is acceptable in American Indian teachings, but it is not as acceptable in Western science (V. Deloria, 1999). Tribal elders pass on culture and are

sought for guidance in Native society. It is critical for American education to engage elders regarding their own tribal philosophical traditions and life experiences.

Traditional American Indian education is intrinsically connected to culture, elder knowledge, language, land, and teachers knowledgeable of students' cultures (Lambe, 2003). American Indian teachers blend extracurricular activities with academic instruction and help students and communities to preserve aspects of traditional life while showing students how to navigate and respond to the dominant culture (Barrett, 2007; Gere, 2005). American Indian learning occurs when learning is nurtured, not forced or dictated (Lambe, 2003).

Cleary (2008) asserted that attending "to the basic skills and teaching to the test" (p. 98) is the curriculum that leads to the academic failure of American Indian students. The Reading First initiative was based upon a universal model and targets schools teaching children age 5 to 17 years who are from families with incomes below the poverty line (USDoE, 2009). Students of English as a second language (ESL) or those who are culturally different and from a low SES are immediately placed at a disadvantage (Reyhner, 2005).

Chronically low reading scores lead to the question of how teachers determine that indigenous students are poor readers. Are American Indians deficient in reading proficiency, or illiterate, or at risk of reading failure? This question focuses on the conflicting epistemologies of American Indian cultural context of learning and the Western epistemology that reading is a technical skill (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009). For this reason, researchers have agreed that the whole-language approach to reading is the

most compatible with American Indian culture and beliefs (Yazzie-Minz, 2008). However, most schools do not practice whole language anymore.

Exposure to two different epistemologies causes a conceptual interference for American Indian students, making it difficult for them to make connections (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008). American Indian cultures do not separate science from other aspects of their lives, unlike what the dominant culture prescribes. Observations of natural events, classification, and problem solving are interwoven in American Indian cultures (Cajete, 1994). Science education conceptualizes epistemologies as either correct or incorrect, meaning that when epistemologies of American Indian students match Western science epistemologies, students are more accepting and learn more easily. For example, by imbedding Western scientific concepts into indigenous knowledge systems, American Indian students might find it easier to relate to Western epistemologies (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009). This blending of the two epistemologies could enhance American Indian learning.

Blending Pedagogy

A sociological dimension of American Indian pedagogy is the autonomy extended to all members of the social organization, including children, giving them a voice in making decisions that affect them personally. This nonhierarchical structure found in American Indian social organization is misunderstood by non-Natives. Joint activities between elders and youth that are meaningful to American Indian communities are the means by which American Indians perpetuate their cultural traditions and which helped to produce Euro-American Indians (Tharp, 2006). The term *Euro-American Indians* was

used to label the European American captives who stayed with their Indian families rather than return to their European American families.

Tharp (2006) identified successful examples of behavior influence and change that indicated the effectiveness of American Indian pedagogy. Two instances identified by Tharp highlight the effectiveness of a constructivist approach to learning that applies to any ethnic group. The first example involved the Cherokee Indian, Sequoia, who developed a complete orthography of the tribe's oral language. The tribal people were not taught in a formal school setting. The teaching occurred anywhere, at any time, and between adults and children alike with whatever materials were at hand. With this approach, 90% of Cherokee tribal members, by mutual assistance, became literate. Another documented instance of American Indian pedagogy involved the taking of European American captives. The dominant society's schooling failed for hundreds of years to educate American Indians in Western culture, yet during that same period, American Indians were successful in socializing their European American captives into Indian culture (Giago, 2006; Guillory, 2009).

In most instances, through conditioning based upon joint activities between captor and captive, a permanent alteration of captive behavior, identity, and values was achieved (Liebler, 2010). This condition was accomplished by using pedagogy based upon providing every opportunity for learning (modeling) and giving performance feedback with loving support and dialogue from the adopted family. The pedagogical processes are very similar in these two instances. Dialogue and activities used to reveal and emphasize society's values from elders to younger members are methods that American Indians used

to perpetuate their cultures and the way that they produced European American Indians (Tharp, 2006).

Villegas (2007) contended that programs aimed at vocational education (Reddy et al., 2011) and curricula based upon the Western philosophy of learning are still the U.S. government's plan for assimilation. Much earlier in the 20th century, the U.S. government acknowledged the ineffectiveness of American Indian education under Western influences. As early as 1928, the Merriam Report "called for a new attitude and approach to educating Indian students" (as cited in Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999, p. 35). Limiting parental involvement and tribal influence was seen as detrimental to American Indian education. The changes proposed in the report were to integrate Indian language and culture into the curriculum to address the effects of past assimilation-based practices. Recommendations of the report have not been implemented effectively in mainstream schools (as cited in Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999).

American Indian education should begin with the life experiences of the people who have lived long enough in a location to be Native (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001). These elders have resided in one place long enough to have forged memories from life experiences. Regardless of the current location of a tribe's membership, the existing conditions with the traditions of the tribe are the proper context for Indian education. In other words, the history and culture of a tribe should be the context of Indian education. The U.S. government still thinks, however, that culture-based education for American Indians is an indulgence requested by a persistent minority refusing to assimilate (Tharp, 2006).

Lomawaima and McCarty (2002) argued that many Americans view diversity as a threat to the nation's structure, with Indians seen as an example of the problem (Landis, Ferguson, Carballal, Kuhlman, & Squires, 2007; Villegas & Davis, 2007). Despite continuing assimilation efforts, American Indian cultures continue to survive inside the standardization of formal education that is gaining momentum across the United States (AIHEC, 2007; USDoE, 2010). Through research and critical analysis, a better understanding or new perspective about experiences will help American Indians to take ownership of their education and use it to their collective benefit. American Indian people need to understand the past and stay connected to that past to heal what was harmful in the past and propagate what was helpful (V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Trafzer et al., 2006).

As Western paradigms are deconstructed by indigenous people, Native paradigms based upon indigenous cultural knowledge should be the foundation for understanding and teaching indigenous culture (Romero-Little, 2006; Wexler, 2006). In reference to the amendment of Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Medicine (2001) asserted that this amendment was a prime example of the U.S. government's attempt to address the absence of culture and language in the classroom setting by mandating that culture and language be added to the curriculum. In her view, this amendment was a step forward, albeit minimal, in America Indian education.

Tribal Colleges and Universities

TCUs are key players in Indian education (Flynn et al., 2012; Fox et al., 2006) that have mission statements that support the goals of providing high-quality education and employment for tribal members, outreach programs, and the place to preserve

American Indian cultures and languages. Most TCUs create bridges and strong partnerships with K-12 school systems, state departments of education, and other tribal or state entities. To develop programs to increase American Indian students' academic success and perpetuate American Indian cultural traditions, Cajete (2006) reasoned that Western epistemology should be combined with the unique and diverse cultures of American Indians and their respective communities.

TCUs have a positive impact on tribal communities' development and the opportunities for American Indians to be successful in postsecondary education, as Huffman (2011) noted in his examination of transculturation theory, which is closely related to the potential for economic development and Native student persistence. In Huffman's study of American Indians returning to the reservation after earning their degrees, those graduates who held a strong commitment to serve their people and a strong cultural heritage had greater academic success.

TCUs have a better persistence rate of American Indian students than larger institutions because of the social networking that occurs in them (AIHEC, 2007). Location is an important factor for American Indians because of SES, programs offered at TCUs, and peer and faculty mentoring, all of which are important to student persistence (Dodson et al., 2009). Dodson et al. (2009) reported the importance of academic and social interactions offered at postsecondary institutions as integral to the success of minority students.

Persistence in postsecondary institutions for most first-generation students, especially minority students, is based upon campus social support, underpreparedness, and tribal support (Flynn et al., 2012). Minority students usually attend schools in low-

SES rural or urban communities that inhibit their academic achievement because of different education standards, lack of guidance (parental and school), and internal difficulty asking strangers for help (Flynn et al., 2012). Social support is an essential factor that makes the transition from familiar to different environments easier. According to Guillory and Wolverton (2008), little empirical research has been conducted on American Indian issues related to persistence at the postsecondary level.

Most American Indian college students do not realize that their K-12 schools did not prepare them for college until they enroll (Flynn et al., 2012; Guillory, 2009). Stronger K-12 schools on reservations and public schools with significant American Indian populations need more familial and parental involvement and will ensure student persistence, elements crucial to increased student success. American Indians who succeed often return home to help the next generation or to help their people by using their education in a capacity that creates value for the community. TCUs need to provide social support to American Indian students through academic programs that not only appeal to students but also reflect the communal culture of returning help to the community.

Undergraduate enrichment programs provide benefits, but the cultural or social benefits have been underresearched (Ovink & Veazey, 2011). Although underrepresented minorities bring certain levels of cultural and social capital to college, institutions of higher education have not attempted to increase students' acquisition of more culture and social capital through the university experiences (Ovink & Veazey, 2011). Einarnson and Matier (2005) found that because of the pervasive discrimination in college environments experienced by minority students, minorities are least likely to express satisfaction with

their educational experience. Universities need to focus on programs that retain minority students.

Although Western school-based efforts are well intentioned, if indigenous voices are not heard, and if indigenous knowledge, goals, and purposes are not accepted, the revitalization of American Indian languages and cultures will continue to fail (Flynn et al., 2012; Romero-Little, 2006). What can be accomplished without revitalization is not only a loss of culture but also a loss of the link between the past and the future for American Indians. This link between the past and the future holds the solutions to increasing American Indian success in postsecondary education (Flynn et al., 2012; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006).

Experience With Western Education

Villegas (2007) determined that colonialism and the dominant society's assimilation methods are at the root of all social problems faced by American Indians. As a result of colonialism and assimilation methods, Indian people do not have long-term relationships and lack parenting skills (Wexler, 2006). The boarding school system, whether BIA or mission schools, delivered destructive and shaming messages that American Indians were culturally and racially inferior, making American Indian families incapable of raising their own children (Slivka, 2011). Without their parents and grandparents as role models, Indian children did not learn how to interact with their own children and their peers (Marr, 2010).

The process of assimilation is twofold: strip the outer signs of Indian children's identities and indoctrinate them with behaviors, ideas, and values characteristic of non-Native civilization (Adam, 1995). Giago (2006) confirmed the stark reality of the

negative residual impact that boarding schools had on American Indian education through the forced assimilation into the dominant society by commenting, “The boarding school experiment lasted for nearly a hundred years and brought about more harm than good for Indian people. The experiment reached across Indian country and affected the lives of thousands of Indian children” (pp. 158-159). The boarding school experiment was one of several tools used to facilitate assimilation for different ethnic groups into the dominant society.

Education should be providing people with the tools necessary to be productive citizens (Nguyen, 2011). Education, a social service, is a right that is afforded to all people, but at different degrees of equality. Marginalized people occupy SES positions that include high unemployment, low wages, poor housing, and social exclusion from the dominant society (Nguyen, 2011). Education was the tool used by the first European settlers to try to resolve the problems created by the many different ethnic groups emerging from each new wave of immigration; indigenous people also were seen as a problem (Seeborg & Sandford, 2003). Many tribes were removed from original lands through forced emigration. According to Seeborg and Sandford (2003), age was important because educating immigrant children at an early age led them to attain higher levels of education, making them more likely to be proficient in English and have a higher degree of ethnic capital. Early intervention was a common practice of colonialism, using education as the catalyst for changing the character of the child (Kanu, 2006; Marr, 2010) and leading to the demise of indigenous cultures by placing a serious strain on the cultural practices of some indigenous people. The dominant group’s undermining of the beliefs, values, and social and political structures of indigenous people as well as

different groups of immigrants resulted in identity conflicts in ethnic communities (Marr, 2010).

The government plan for assimilating American Indians by restructuring their minds and personalities was manifested in mission and boarding schools (Giago, 2006; Grover & Keenan, 2006; Marr, 2010; Slivka, 2011; Tharp, 2006). This government plan for future generations of Indians to gain economic independence through emulating European American societal culture and values while abandoning their own failed for several reasons (Grover & Keenan, 2006): (a) The boarding school curriculum was inferior to that of public schools, (b) American Indian people went home to reservations rather than assimilate, and (c) the education that they received did not prepare them for employment on or off reservations (Huffman, 2011). To understand this phenomenon, there needs to be an appreciation of the ways in which American Indians experienced this unfamiliar world.

The off-reservation boarding school was the major assault against self-supporting means for American Indians and resulted in a weakened social structure. Assimilation failed because it branded American Indians as inferior and incapable of learning (Slivka, 2011). Some American Indian scholars have asserted that this doctrine of inherent inferiority persists for some American Indian students (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008; Laukaitis, 2006; Marr, 2010). The boarding school era produced generations of American Indians who distrusted the government, who failed to assimilate, and whose memories included lost culture and language and feelings of not belonging (Grover & Keenan, 2006). Assimilation of American Indians into the dominant society meant that they were

to change their value systems from one of generosity and sharing to one of individualism and materialism.

The first generation of American Indian children had a difficult time not knowing what to expect after being separated from their families for the first time. Other Indian children might have found the transition to boarding schools easier, having had an introduction to mainstream schooling (Adams, 1995; Bosse et al., 2011). The degree of non-Native contact experienced by American Indian children from different tribes accounts for the diverse experiences of this generation. Missionary activities of controlling minds of indigenous people through spiritual and religious conversion was one way that Western ideology, knowledge, and values sustained authority and control over indigenous people (Adams, 1995; Giago, 2006; Peat, 2002).

American Indians soon learned a way to use Western education to their benefit. Elders did not teach their children American Indian languages because they did not want the children to have a difficult time in school learning English (Deyhle & McCarty, 2007). Tribal members did not want their children to experience the same degradation of intellect and spirit for speaking their first language as they did (Trafzer et al., 2006). Under the guise of learning Christian hymns and prayers, American Indians translated the hymns and prayers into American Indian languages for the purpose of retaining their native languages (Deyhle & McCarty, 2007; Hodgson, 2000; Kleyn, 2010).

Education was a foreign and hostile body that cloistered American Indian children in unfriendly boarding schools that produced lost souls, unequipped minds, and a helpless nature, according to John Collier, former secretary of the American Indian Defense Association (as cited in Laukaitis, 2006). Collier used his position to reverse the effects

of education for extinction to education for community and cultural preservation. After Collier's appointment as commissioner of Indian affairs in 1933, his education reform took on the task of replacing boarding schools with community (i.e., reservation) day schools and public schools. Collier replaced the failing curriculum with one that promoted Indian culture and incorporated vocational programs that suited the Indian community (as cited in Reddy et al., 2011). Collier's work changed American Indian education through several reforms that emphasized technical and vocational programs. Although seen as progressive, this curriculum, which was based upon educating Native people, an economically powerless group of people, for manual labor, in reality, trained them to be subordinate to the dominant society (Laukaitis, 2006).

In Canada and the United States, indigenous people are recognized as distinct nations (Marr, 2010; Mayes, 2007). These two governments, however, also have systematically excluded indigenous people from mainstream society by isolating them on reservations in remote areas. Historical data on early pedagogical practices showed that they did not include American Indian students' culture and language, but did include stories portraying American Indians in negative images (V. Deloria, 1997; Trafzer et al., 2006; Whirlwind Soldier, 2002). American textbooks portrayed American Indians in negative ways that were similar to the images of cowboys and Indians in the movies and novels (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009; Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; V. Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Deyhle, 2008; Marr, 2010; Peacock, 2011).

Elders' Life Experiences

Several articles, texts, and tape recordings contain elders' stories about life before, during, and after the boarding school era (Adams, 1995; Grover & Keenan, 2006; Lurie,

2006). During this era, some people suffered forced removal from their homes by government officials and were placed in boarding schools; others were taken by government agencies and adopted or raised by non-American Indian parents. This latter group attended mainstream schools and had different stories from those who attended boarding schools. Those who attended boarding schools told stories that carried common themes such as feelings of abandonment, confusion, terror, and worthlessness. These reactions were expected from children left alone in a military style of living without the comfort of being able to communicate with their families or even with other children (Adams, 1995; Giago, 2006). Children from different tribes did not share common languages, and those who did were not allowed to speak their native languages (Hodgson, 2000; Romero-Little, 2006; Trafzer et al., 2006). Some examples of this literature were the stories told by Mountain Wolf Woman and anthologies of elders' testimonies beginning with the first contact with Europeans and continuing up to the present (Lurie, 2006).

Some positive themes were present in the testimonies. Some thought that learning how to function in the dominant society would help their children to be successful. Some elders who attended boarding school believed that using Western education and American Indian knowledge together made it possible for them to be successful in two worlds. Other Indians thought that these were the best years of their lives, having three meals a day, a warm place to live, lifelong friendships (sometimes with children from different tribes), and learning about other American Indian cultures (Marr, 2010). Another aspect sometimes overlooked is that some parents were not in a position to take

care of their children, so they sent their children to a warm, safe place (Anonymous boarding school attendee, personal communication, October 30, 2010).

Articles and stories in a variety of media and classroom textbooks have contributed to the dominant society's perceptions that American Indians are incapable of functioning in mainstream institutions and society (Blondin-Perrin, 2010; Hodgson, 2000; Marr, 2010; Whirlwind Soldier, 2002). For many American Indian children, school meant leaving their world behind and entering a world that was cold and indifferent to their families' cultures and filled with negative images of their race (Adams, 1995; Tharp, 2006). These children, whose families had been exposed to this stereotyping, sometimes entered school with low self-confidence, setting them up for failure; forcing them to leave behind familiar surroundings of family, language, and traditions; and finding themselves treated in their new surroundings as something shameful (Adam, 1995; Peacock, 2011).

Most written accounts of American history are based upon the dominant society's point of view, which then leads to an incomplete and inaccurate history of American Indians and their contributions to the country. Some of these contributions are military service, medicinal knowledge, and elder wisdom that parallels Western science (V. Deloria, 1997; Peat, 2002; Warren, 2007). Based upon the dominant society's representation of history, most citizens, even those who are highly educated, are unaware of what transpired between the federal government and indigenous people. This exclusion of people from mainstream society manifests in educational institutions in which a cultural mismatch has had a significant impact on American Indians' academic achievement (Kleyn, 2010).

Summary

The results of this study will serve as the foundation to develop programs to support the persistence of American Indian college students. Western efforts have failed to assimilate American Indians into Western culture and replace American Indian cultures using education as the tool (Grover & Keenan, 2006; Han & Scull, 2010). This effect left a residue of social problems passed down from generation to generation. These wounds will be healed by (a) understanding the students' life experiences, (b) helping students to become aware of the factors affecting their attitudes about school, and (c) using this awareness to combine Western and American Indian cultural-based education (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006). These data disclosed several new views on American Indian education relevant to the role that the predominant educational system plays in the success or failure of minority students, American Indians in particular. These results are the basis for educators to develop and implement strategic plans to retain American Indian students in postsecondary education.

The results of this qualitative study will help local, state, and federal governments to understand how to serve this diverse group of people. Chapter 2 presented a review of literature supporting the need for this study. Also presented in the chapter were supporting data relevant to historical content and recent literature. Chapter 3 describes the methodology that I used to collect and analyze the data.

Chapter 3: Research Method

I followed a single-case study method to analyze the experiences of American Indian college students at a TCU in the Midwestern United States (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). A single-case study method was appropriate because of the depth of understanding that it allowed me to obtain regarding American Indians' persistence at college. The phenomenon of the study drew the participants toward understanding what was important in their world according to their experiences, which might not have been the same as my world (Stake, 2005). According to Merriam (2009), case study research is defined by the unit of analysis, the method of the study, and the result. It is a process of inquiry about the case and a product of that inquiry (Stake, 2005).

The site for this case study was an accredited, tribe-controlled community college serving the Menominee Nation, neighboring tribal nations, and surrounding communities. The main campus is located on the Menominee Reservation in Keshena, Wisconsin, with a second campus in Green Bay, Wisconsin. In 2008, the college was approved for a change in degree status to provide a baccalaureate program in elementary education. Since then, the college has developed baccalaureate degree programs in business administration and public administration. In addition to these three baccalaureate degree programs, the college offers 15 associate degree programs, five 1-year technical diplomas, and three certificate programs.

Research Methods and Design(s)

The key question for this qualitative research was the following: What were the experiences of a sample of American Indian students at a TCU in the Midwest? The answers to this research question were based upon the individual experiences of

American Indian college students and generated data that were numerically unquantifiable, thus supporting the use of a qualitative design. Case studies are defined by an interest in individual phenomenon through narratives that optimize opportunities for the reader to acquire experiential understanding of the case (Stake, 2005).

A single-case study was reasonable because I conducted this study with participants with similar experiences who might have had different interpretations of these experiences (Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2009). This single-case study explored an occurrence within a real context and followed a descriptive approach to examine the lived experiences of American Indian college students (Yin, 2009). Understanding the knowledge shared by the participants in a case study design often is presented as rich narrative descriptions of individual experiences (Hatch, 2002).

A major step in designing and conducting a single-case study is defining the unit of analysis (Yin, 2009). This single case study was based upon the context of American Indian students' experiences at a Midwestern TCU. According to Yin (2009), analyzing case study data is difficult because the data are subjective and personal.

This case study about American Indian college students' experiences was defined through artifacts and interviews. The participants provided data that included insight based upon their personal perspectives. These accounts included contextual detail sufficient enough for the reader to relate to the participants' perspectives and to judge the quality of the findings based upon knowledge of other case studies (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 1995). Single-case study acknowledges that although social groups share the same social and cultural elements, individuals experience these same elements differently, resulting in multiple realities within homogeneous groups that are inherently unique because these

realities are constructed through personal experiences (Hatch, 2002). Researchers and participants construct reality subjectively rather than objectively because individuals construct their knowledge symbolically, not objectively (Stake, 2005).

Rationale for research design. The benefit of the qualitative design is its allowance for modifications as information is collected. Quantitative research requires the use of large, random samples, something that was unsuitable because of the specific sample that I needed (Stake, 1995). Researchers who conduct qualitative case studies seek to identify relationships among various factors and search for understanding of the phenomenon through interviews (Stake, 2005; Yin, 2009). This flexibility was conducive in helping me to gain a better understanding of the social phenomenon being investigated (Patton, 2002; Shank, 2006; Stake, 2010). My research reflected constructivist underpinnings because it presumed that individuals came to accept truths that were socially constructed and could fill gaps in the literature with descriptions and explanations of American Indian college students' experiences (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 1995; Wilson, 2008).

Population

The target population for this case study comprised American Indian students who were attending the College of Menominee Nation (CMN), which is on the Menominee Reservation, at the time of the study. These American Indian students had variety experiences based upon (a) age; (b) where they lived (i.e., on/off the reservation); (c) traditional or contemporary lifestyle; and (d) schooling. Researchers have defined case study research as personal interpretations of data used to uncover and interpret

meaningful events derived from individual experiences (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002; Hoepfl, 1997; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2009).

The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin (MITW) has more than 8,700 tribal members. Tribal membership is based upon individuals having one-fourth blood degree of a specific tribe and being listed on the tribal census roll. The process was developed by the U.S. federal government as part of the plan to assimilate. To determine eligibility for membership in a tribe, individuals must be able to: 1) establish a lineal ancestor – biological parent, grandparent, great-grandparent who is an American Indian person from a federally recognized tribe in the U.S., 2) identify which tribe (or tribes) an ancestor was a member of or affiliated with, 3) document the relationship to that person using vital statistics records and other records that a tribe may require or accept for purposes of enrollment, and 4) have the amount of blood quantum required usually one-fourth for most tribes (U.S. Department of Interior, 2014).

The tribe is situated on 235,523 acres, or approximately 358 square miles. The MITW has status as a reservation and a county. Of the 72 counties in Wisconsin, Menominee is the poorest. It has the highest rate of unemployment and ranks the lowest in overall quality of health (MITW, 2014). Fewer than half of the tribal members reside on the reservation because there is lack of housing, few employment opportunities, and an aging infrastructure that depends greatly on funding from the federal government.

The college averages 700 students, and all are commuters. The student body is approximately 62 % American Indian and 38% European American and other ethnicities. From this target population, I chose 12 American Indian students. The students range in age from 25 to 65 years. Gender breakdown is 74% female and 26% male. The college

has three baccalaureates degree programs, 15 associate degree programs, five 1-year technical diplomas, as well as three certificate programs (CMN, 2014).

Sample

I used purposeful sampling to choose participants who were American Indian students at CMN (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 1995). According to Patton (2002), qualitative research offers a useful framework for interviewing individuals with similar characteristics (Hatch, 2002). For this qualitative case study, to reach data saturation, I needed to interview 12 American Indian students from CMN (Hatch, 2002). A small sample allowed me to focus on the experiences of these 12 American Indian college students. Individual interviews promoted the collection of thick, rich narrative descriptions of the participants' experiences (Stake, 2005).

The inclusion of a homogeneous sample of individuals with similar experiences gave me a better understanding of the phenomenon of college persistence (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2002). Sharing the same American Indian culture gave the participants a voice in telling their own stories. In addition, choosing a small purposeful sample increased the credibility of the results and allowed me to collect in-depth descriptions of the participants' experiences (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2002).

The college retains student demographic personal records and academic progress for each semester that students are enrolled. I requested a list from the institutional research (IR) department at the college of 10 to 15 American Indian students not in the teacher education program to invite to participate. As the teacher education department chair, I teach several courses and advise students within the teacher education program. I decided to exclude teacher education students from selection to reduce any researcher

bias on my part and any presumptions that I had any influence over these students' grades or academic progress.

Materials/Instruments

I obtained my data from artifacts (i.e., historical American Indian education documents, tribal and government boarding school reports, personal accounts, and audiovisual artifacts) and face-to-face interviews. Creating a plan for the case study was essential to organizing the data collection phase (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 2005). The interviews were conducted in one of the library study rooms, where they were private and not subjected to any interruptions. Interview questions were aligned with the research question to explore the participants' experiences in relation to their persistence at the TCU under study (Stake, 2010).

Artifacts. The artifacts included data from the Graduating Student Survey (GSS; see Appendix A) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE; (see Appendix B; CMN, 2014). Documents included open-ended questions that provided qualitative data based upon American Indian students' descriptions of their experiences at CMN. Data from these documents related to the experiences of American Indian students at a Midwestern TCU. According to Yin (2009), conducting systemic research for relevant documents is an important part of data collection.

GSS. Sample questions from the GSS included the following: (a) What positive campus aspects, student services, and/or programs do you think contributed most to your educational experiences while attending CMN? and (b) What were some of the disappointing things you experienced while attending CMN? The responses to these questions provided insight into the strategies that the students were using to be successful

and what they perceived as barriers that CMN can address. I used these data to complete an analysis of the American Indian students' perceptions of their postsecondary education experiences.

CCSSE. The CCSSE facilitated the collection of descriptive data that portrayed the participants' experiences at a TCU for the reader. One example of a question from the CCSSE follows:

How much does this college emphasize each of the following?

a. Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying
b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds
d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially
f. Providing the financial support you need to afford your education
g. Using computers in academic work.

Data from the CCSSE were valuable in providing the reader with thick and rich descriptions of the students' experiences at CMN and augmenting the data gleaned from the interview responses (Merriam, 2009; Yin 2009). These data highlighted the American Indian students' involvement, persistence, and coping strategies to persist in college.

Determining the authenticity and accuracy of documents is part of conducting qualitative research (Merriam, 2009). The documents in my study were authentic and accurate. The students answered the interview questions about their experiences at the

TCU under study, and the artifact data were documented and categorized based upon the typologies created from the interview data. Two common procedures used to reduce misinterpretations of data are redundancy of data gathering and procedural challenges to explanations (Stake, 2000). In a case study, these procedures are called triangulation. Triangulation of these sources of data (interviews, artifacts, and literature review) allowed me to answer the research question (Hatch, 2002).

Persistence and coping strategies were some of the typologies that surfaced during the inductive analysis (see Appendix C) to code and categorize the data. These typologies were discussed, but not in depth, in articles discussed in the literature review. The artifacts and the interview responses provided insight into American Indian college students' academic experiences.

Interview. Interviewing is one of the most important sources for case studies in collecting information from the participants that researchers are not able to observe themselves (Stake, 2005; Yin, 2009). I asked the participants to complete a demographic form to confirm that only American Indian students were included in the study (see Appendix D). In qualitative case study research, "it is important to understand the perspectives of those involved in the phenomenon of interest, to uncover the complexity of human behavior in a contextual framework, and to present a holistic interpretation" (Merriam, 2009, p. 215). Using open-ended questions (see Appendix E) allowed the participants to structure their responses around issues linked to their social and cultural practices determined by local customs and beliefs, best described by members of the cultural group (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 2010).

Interview protocol. In qualitative studies, researchers use interviews to obtain information from the participants that is germane to the topic under study. The interviews were conducted in the college library study room. Before engaging in the interviews, I asked the participants to sign the informed consent to indicate their willingness to join the study. After transcribing the interview responses, I set up a debriefing session as part of member checking. The interview responses, combined with the unobtrusive data collected from the artifacts, revealed the meanings and the significance of those artifacts. Artifact data are gathered annually from students at CMN by the IR department and are archived for future use as source for the college's continuous improvement plan.

The single-case format of the study allowed me to conduct individual, in-depth interviews with the participants. They could express their thoughts and opinions about their life experiences without having to follow strict premade interview forms found in some qualitative studies (Yin, 2009). The face-to-face interviews gave me the opportunity to explore the participants' opinions and feelings about sensitive material (Stake, 1995). According to Patton (2002) and Stake (1995), interview questions are developed so that a homogeneous sample of participants can be asked the same questions in the same order.

Data Collection, Processing, and Analysis

Single-case study research comprises two types of data collection. In my study, I used interviews and artifacts to collect the data (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 2005). Case study research includes data from artifacts relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. Interviews are verbal reports that should be validated by the participants to reduce inaccurate reporting and bias (Yin, 2009). As the primary investigator, I had to be

flexible, remember the original purpose of this investigation, and remain willing to adapt to unanticipated events (Yin, 2009).

Artifact data collection. In this study, I collected nonnumeric artifact data from the GSS and the CCSSE (CMN, 2014). As mentioned previously, I had requested these documents from the IR department. These documents contain open-ended questions structured to gather information about students through written responses; the reports are published on the college website. The qualitative data that I sought included how the students spent their time (personal information); what they felt they had gained from their classes; how they assessed their relationships and interactions with faculty, counselors, and peers; what kinds of work they were challenged to do; and how the college supported their learning. These documents provided evidence that I was not able to observe directly (Stake, 1995).

An example of the type of questions asked on these surveys is this: What positive campus aspects, student services, and/or programs do you think contributed most to your educational experiences while attending CMN? Data from this question provided descriptors of what strategies the students used to be successful. Data collected from these documents included information on student perspectives and student persistence in higher education and provided information needed to answer the research question: What were the experiences of a sample of American Indian students at a TCU in the Midwest?

Permission was sought to access these documents through the appropriate departments and personnel at the CMN. After permission was granted to conduct the research, I sent invitations to prospective American Indian students at CMN. The first 12 responses were scheduled for interviews. I submitted a request to the IR department

requesting permission to conduct the study and ask for a list of American Indian students who were not in the teacher education program. During this phase of data collection, I asked myself these questions (Hatch, 2002): (a) Are there enough data, (b) Do the data support this domain? or (c) Do they run counter to my specific domain?

Interview data collection. Participants were interviewed individually in a library study room reserved for the purpose of providing confidentiality and privacy. Participants signed the informed consent from (see Appendix F). These interviews were scheduled for 1 hour each. I followed a guide that held my interview questions. There are several reasons to employ questions for interviewing: provide interview questions for researchers who might want to replicate the study, and keep the interviews focused and efficient in use of time (Hatch, 2002; Patton, 2002).

Artifact processing. Information gathered from the archived documents was documented and coded in patterns or themes (Patton, 2002). According to Hatch (2002), Stake (2010), and Yin (2009), these types of data are unobtrusive and are not influenced by participants or researchers. Archival documents are usually produced for specific audiences or purposes, something that I kept in mind when interpreting the usefulness and accuracy of the documents for this case study (Yin, 2009).

Interview processing. The interview questions contained topics that kept the interviews systematic and comprehensive and allowed me to maximize the time allocated to the interviews. The questions were semistructured, with several specific questions to ask all participants and a few broader, open-ended questions (Merriam, 2009). The interview sessions were recorded. I did not take verbatim notes, a procedure that can be

disruptive by causing anxiety for participants and distracting the interviewer (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002; Shank, 2006).

During the interview process, the participants felt comfortable and free to discuss sensitive issues. Using what Patton (2002) described as an illustrative example, the format elicited "open and honest judgment from people" (p. 366) and let the participants know that I was not judging them. The participants received copies of their individual interview transcripts to read and amend, if necessary.

Artifact analysis. Typological analysis is a constant comparative process, starting with the first identified category and continuing throughout data collection and the final analysis (Hatch, 2002). Typological analysis involves developing a strategy for analyzing these data by dividing information into categories as themes emerge from multiple readings of these data (Stake, 2005). This analysis acted as a model to form definitions and categories inductively and to discard nonsupportive data (see Appendix G) that did not fit any of the categories (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009).

Several readings were necessary to code the interview transcriptions and field notes from the archived documents. Artifact analysis relies on data gathered unobtrusively in the context of a study (Hatch, 2002). I had to remember the original research question and remain "open to multiple or unanticipated results that emerge from the data" (Berg, 2007, p. 318). The first coding focused on organizing these data into typologies based upon themes or patterns that often are drawn from artifacts during the collection of data (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 1995). Coding also suggests that a researcher might gain a clearer perspective by revisiting and reconsidering the collected data (Hatch, 2002; Shank, 2006).

Reading these data, creating domains based upon semantic relationships within the identified frames of analysis, and assigning codes are the beginning stages of inductive analysis (Hatch, 2002). Refining the salient domains, coding to keep a record of relationships found in these data, and deciding whether the domains are supported by these data or these data run counter to the domains are the next steps in inductive analysis (Hatch, 2002). Creating a master outline showing the relationships between and within domains, and by selecting excerpts from these data to support elements in the outline helped me write up the findings of my research.

Interview analysis. The process of structuring events, according to beginnings and endings, gave me a way to organize the data into themes based upon the participants' responses to the open-ended questions (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). Hatch (2002) and Merriam (2009) recommend that analysis in case study design begin with conceptualizing and developing a system to classify, categorize, and manage the collected data.

The interviews were transcribed and saved in a Microsoft Word file and then saved to a secure USB drive. Each participant received a transcribed copy of his or her own interview to check for accuracy. Each participant transcript was coded with a number. Corrections to the transcript took place at a second interview prior to data analysis. According to Merriam (2009), analysis involves combing, interpreting, and reducing the data that emerged from the interviews. This procedure for analyzing qualitative data consists of following multiple steps in order to have a detailed and systemic interpretation of these data to identify themes and categories (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009).

After the initial reading of the transcriptions, I prepared summaries of my reflections and identified tentative themes and ideas, with the result being the creation of a database for analyzing the data (Merriam, 2009). The database included phrases, terms, and notes that became the themes into which I sorted subsequent data (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). These data from the transcriptions reflected the purpose of this research and the research question (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2010).

These themes included the types of secondary education that the participants had and served as the basis for the data analysis and coding. In qualitative research, data analysis is not a prescriptive set of procedures; rather, the analysis is an interactive process directed toward generating descriptors and explanations (Stake, 1995; Van Manen, 2003). Analysis of these data began inductively and progressed to deductive after the themes were established from the interview transcripts and the field notes from the artifacts.

Assumptions

To demonstrate validity, I followed a meticulous approach to the design of the study, from initial questions to final analysis, to establish the credibility of the project. "Validity is affected by the researcher's perception of validity in the study and his/her choice of paradigm assumption," as suggested by Creswell and Miller (as cited in Golafshani, 2003). My assumptions and biases included a belief that the quality of education for American Indians is generally inferior, whether it is in public schools run by the dominant society or in schools that are run by tribes, and that past American Indian education policies continue to have an impact on American Indian students.

I assumed that the participants would respond honestly and openly during the interview process. I did not offer the participants any incentives for being in this case study. According to Merriam (2009), because all of the participants were purposely chosen, I assumed that all of them wanted to participate. In an effort to protect their identities, I did not use their names on any documentation connected to the study.

Limitations

I made a deliberate choice to limit the scope of this study to control the number of interviews while still ensuring that I had collected sufficient data. Some limitations were connected to events outside of my control. However, in this study, as a member of the target population, I was familiar with the topic under investigation (Merriam, 2009). As an American Indian, I had a personal bias inherent in the collection and reporting of the data based upon my own educational experiences. Another limitation was that although the findings of this case study cannot be generalized to the mainstream U.S. education system, the rich, descriptive case study points toward the application of the findings to other particular contexts (Stake, 1995).

Delimitations

The scope of this case study focused on one TCU as the site for this investigation. I used purposeful sampling to choose 12 American Indian students from approximately 700 students enrolled at CMN, 62% of whom are American Indians. Although the TCU is representative of the other 36 TCUs in the United States, a limitation to this case study was that non-Native colleges were not represented in the sample. Only selected artifacts and interviews with 12 American Indian students provided the data for this case study.

Ethical Assurances

Before I began conducting the interviews and researching the artifacts, I had to receive permission from the Northcentral University's Institutional Research Board and the TCU where I conducted the study. Once approval was granted, I provided consent forms to participants to sign indicating their agreement to be in my study (Creswell, 2007). All data will be kept on a secured flash drive for 5 years and then destroyed (Creswell, 2007).

Qualitative research explores the world from the perspectives of the participants selected from the target population (Hatch, 2002). All participants were asked to sign an informed consent form assuring their anonymity and the confidentiality of their interview responses, along with the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Case study research is intensely interested in personal beliefs and perspectives (Stake, 2005), so it was important for the participants to receive and check copies of their transcriptions for errors (and the opportunity to make changes) and a summary of the findings before the final study is published.

In 1979, the Belmont Report identified three principles for the ethical conduct of research using human participants (as cited in Privitera, 2014): respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Respect for persons means that the participants must be treated fairly and considered capable of making informed decisions. Participants must have the physical and mental capabilities to participate and comprehend their role in a study (Fisher, 2007; Privitera, 2014). Participants must be free of coercion and be protected from undue researcher influence.

Beneficence is another guiding principle in the Belmont Report (Fisher, 2007; Privitera, 2014) asserting that it is the responsibility of the researcher to anticipate and minimize any potential risks and benefits of participation. A risk-benefit analysis can indicate whether the benefits of participating in a study outweigh the risks. Although the principles of beneficence can be subjective and difficult to assess, researchers must anticipate potential risks and benefits to participants. Justice means that the treatment of participants is fair and equitable, thus ensuring equality in the selection of participants. The selection process needs to be monitored to determine that the participants are selected for reasons directly related to the research problem, not because of ease of accessibility or ease of manipulation (Fisher, 2007; Privitera, 2014).

Some considerations addressed by Shank (2006) to establish integrity from an ethical standpoint are "posturing and presentation of self, disclosure and exchange, making public the private, and disengaging and staying in touch" (p. 138). Posturing, or self-presentation, by researchers is critical to establishing trust and open communication while interviewing and observing the participants. As for the amount and type of information shared with participants, researchers should share enough information to establish rapport without influencing the participants' responses, that is, they need to give the participants a sense of reciprocity for sharing personal information (Stake, 2005). Setting clear boundaries for inquiry and continually assuring participants about the motives and intentions for reporting the research will promote rapport (Stake, 2005).

The qualitative case study design provides enough detail to indicate that recommendations offered by researchers make sense based upon the criterion that understanding is the primary rationale for the research (Merriam, 2009). Strategies for

establishing authenticity and trustworthiness in the current study were based upon worldviews and questions that agreed with the philosophical underpinnings of the investigation.

Summary

I used a single-case study approach for this qualitative study (Stake, 1995; Van Manen, 2003) to collect and analyze data on the perceptions of the participants about the experiences influencing their persistence at a Midwestern TBU. These experiences included the attitudes of the other tribal members, family members, community members, and peers. This investigation set the stage to explore additional aspects of American Indian cultural beliefs and their impact on American Indian students' perceptions toward education.

This chapter provided an overview of the methodology that included (a) an explanation of my choice of a qualitative approach, (b) a description of and rationale for qualitative research, (c) the research question, (d) participant descriptions and sampling strategy, (e) materials and instruments, (f) data collection and analysis, (g) my role as the researcher, (h) assurances of reliability and validity, and (i) ethical considerations. The following chapter presents the findings.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine American Indians' experiences that influenced their persistence at a Midwestern TBU (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Currie et al., 2012; Dodson et al., 2009; Fryberg & Markus, 2007; Ovink & Veazey, 2011). I used a case study approach (Stake, 1995) to collect qualitative data from individual interviews with 12 American Indian students enrolled in a Midwestern TCU; I also researched documents from the institution. The research question used to investigate the experiences of American Indian students at a Midwest college follows: What were the experiences of a sample of American Indian students at a TCU in the Midwest?

Results

The results and evaluation of the findings are presented in Chapter 4 to explicate the key outcomes from the interviews. Artifacts were used to validate the findings through the use of methodological triangulation using inductive and typological analysis steps (Hatch, 2002) and interpreting the data analysis through case study documentation. I evaluated the findings based upon the analysis of the responses to the interview questions (Stake, 1995). I used topological analysis and inductive analysis to identify reoccurring terms and phrases (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009) in the responses to the interview questions.

Participant Interviews

The 12 interview respondents were American Indian students enrolled at CMN, a TCU in the Midwestern United States. Pseudonyms were used to protect their identities. Three were nursing majors; five were business majors; and four were science majors

(biology, natural resources, and sustainable development). A summary of the 12 interview participants' demographic information as compared to CMN's student demographics is found in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Demographics Compared to CMN Student Population

Characteristics	No. in study	No. at CMN (Average enrollment)
Age 18-24	3	195
Age 25 +	8	455
1st generation	9	273
Female	8	429
Male	4	221
American Indian	12	410

Interview Respondents

Donna. Donna is in her 3rd year of college. She was raised on the reservation and chose CMN to further her career in nursing because it was close to home. Donna began her college experience as part of a cohort of first-time college students. This was a positive experience for her because she initially felt overwhelmed and frightened; however, she soon developed a routine and made friends. Donna was one of the older ones in the group and soon took on the leadership of having study groups, tracking homework, and coordinating transportation for some other students in the cohort. She received her associate degree in biological sciences, and this foundation allowed her to begin the licensed practical nurse program. Although Donna is not as comfortable or has the same level of support that she had from faculty and peers in her first 2 years, she has developed a persistent attitude and is determined to complete her nursing program.

Ray. Ray was raised on the reservation and attended a tribal elementary school and then public high school on the reservation. He is in his 2nd year of college. He went to a larger mainstream college directly from high school. He did not feel comfortable and

experienced culture shock because of the sizes of the classes and so many different students in the classes. He returned to the reservation, enrolled at CMN, served an internship, and developed an interest in science. Ray's experiences at CMN have inspired him to use his degree to help indigenous people.

The driving force for Ray to attend college was his mother, who had started college but had to drop out because she was pregnant. Work became more important because she was raising a child alone, and this made Ray determined go to college to make a better life for his mother. Attending CMN has been a positive experience for several reasons: It is close to home, it offers internships, and there is faculty engagement. Because it is close to home, Ray can take a part-time job to help with living expenses.

Verna. Verna is a single mom in her 4th year of college who was raised on the reservation. Verna also went to a mainstream college directly from high school. She stepped out after a year and a half. Verna returned to the reservation and went to work, but she always thought of going back to college. When she was hired at CMN is when she decided to return to school. Verna is quite forthright in stating that if the college were not on the reservation, she probably would not be attending.

A motivating factor for Verna was the fact that her sister had a bachelor's degree. Verna was scared to be in classes with younger students, but she soon realized that her life experiences helped her to make a positive contribution to the class. The biggest factors in Verna's persistence are faculty accessibility and the rigor of the coursework.

Robert. Robert is married. He is in his 3rd year in college and is a first-generation student. He was raised on the reservation and was motivated by his father to attend CMN because it is on the Menominee reservation. Robert is self-motivated and is very

confident in his academic capabilities. He feels that every aspect of CMN is geared toward helping students obtain their degrees and succeed. Robert's experiences at CMN have been very positive, and working at the college has helped him to gain insight into ways to navigate the college scene. Financial aid is the one resource that he feels has been the most helpful for him.

Leona. Leona is a single mom in her 3rd year at the college. She is a first-generation student and works full-time. Leona's experience is different from that of the other participants in that she began taking classes at CMN while still in high school. The high school did not have any courses at her educational level and suggested she take classes at the college. It was a change for her to attend classes with people old enough to be her parents. Now as a single mom, she can relate to what issues her first classmates were dealing with at the time. Leona has watched CMN grow from one building to several buildings and more course offerings. She believes that location, family, and technology are the factors contributing to her persistence.

Fred. Fred was raised on the reservation, has a family, and is in his 3rd year at CMN. A construction accident left him without the ability to make a decent living for his family. He decided to attend college to make a living wage instead of just a minimum wage. Faculty helped Fred to get over the shock of being in college after being out of school for a long time. Attending CMN has motivated Fred to consider how he can help changing the way that the tribal legislature leads the tribe. He has great pride in the fact that the college is on Menominee land and it right here for community members to attend and get a college degree. For Fred, faculty members have been a positive aspect of his

college experience, and the tutoring program has given him the confidence to persist in reaching his goals.

Randi. Randi is a 4th year, first-generation student. She was raised on the reservation and currently lives in a nearby community. Randi has a technical certificate in another field of study but wants to be a nurse. After being a stay-at-home mom for 10 years, she has found school to be an enjoyable experience. Randi enjoys her other work, but becoming a nurse is her educational goal. Faculty support and tutoring have been instrumental in her persistence.

Ariel. Ariel is a first-generation student in her 3rd year. She grew up on the reservation and did not want to leave her family to go to college. Ariel did not want to attend a community college. She felt that a community college did not have the same prestige as a 4-year mainstream college. Coming from a large family, Ariel felt responsible for contributing to the family's living expenses. She believed that if she were to leave home, her younger siblings would have to go without. She bought her own clothes so that her parents could provide for the younger children. She chose to attend CMN because it was close to home and family, and was affordable. She looked up to her brother, who is in the military, and he pushed her to continue her education.

Yvonne. Yvonne is returning to school after being away from it for about 30 years. She is a veteran and a first-generation student in her 3rd year of college. Yvonne was mainly in an urban area, not on the reservation. She was tired of dead-end jobs and decided to return to college to pursue a degree in nursing, something she did while in the military. The resource that she uses the most often is the tutoring services. She likes the fact that faculty are so accessible and that the college is close to home.

Margaret. Margaret is a first-generation student who was raised on the reservation. She is in her 7th year of college, not all at CMN. Margaret went to an out-of-state mainstream college with no real goals and did what most college students do; unfortunately, all of the fun stuff did not equate to college success. Margaret had to move back home for financial reasons. After having her first child, Margaret knew that she had to go back to school because earning a minimum wage was not enough. The college is very close by, and she also works there, a very nice fit for Margaret. Class size is important to her: The mainstream college had 300 students in a class, but CMN has perhaps 20, and at CMN, "the teacher knows my name." She believes that the most valuable resource here is the instructors.

Anthony. Anthony grew up on the reservation. He is a first-generation student in his 3rd year. Anthony has had a great deal of responsibility for such a young man. He had to take care of his father and younger brothers while trying to complete high school and attend college. The location and closeness to his family drew Anthony to enroll at CMN. He feels that the college has lots of benefits to help students to succeed. Community transit that helps with transportation, internships that provide job skills, the college atmosphere, and faculty accessibility are all factors that Anthony believes have given him a positive experience. He is looking forward to graduating soon and is grateful for all of the help he received from tutors and faculty.

Irene. Irene is a veteran who was raised on the reservation. She is in her 4th year at CMN and will graduate this year. She is awed by the fact that so many of the faculty have doctoral degrees and work at this small college. Irene likes the "give and take" that

she can have with any faculty member without reproach. She feels that the free tutoring services provided by the college are the single most important resource for students.

Document Review

The documents reviewed in this case study included testimonies from graduating students and continuing students. These documents were found on CMN's public website. I compiled the data using inductive analysis and topological analysis. Inductive analysis was used as a systemic approach to process the interview and artifact data that represented the respondents' perspectives of postsecondary education (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). These data provided descriptions of artifacts and participants that conveyed an understanding of American Indian experiences at a Midwestern community college. Cross-referencing artifact to artifact and artifact to interview identified the connections between these data (Hatch, 2002).

Evaluation of Findings

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine American Indians' educational experiences and determine how these experiences influenced their persistence and academic progress at a Midwestern TBU. Interview data analysis identified conceptual themes that were used for ordering data for analysis. Contradictory findings also were recorded using the same conceptual themes. Study findings validated and refuted existing literature on American Indian higher education. Four themes were identified that encapsulated and defined the experiences of American Indian students within the context of this study: instructor/faculty influence; family influence; location/home; and institutional influences: resources, tutoring, internships.

Theme 1: Instructor and/or faculty. *Instructor* and *faculty* were interchangeable terms used by the students. The accessibility and availability of instructors was the most prevalent reason given for persistence at the college. The respondents said that the instructors were sensitive to social issues in the community and personal issues affecting students' persistence.

Verna stated that the most beneficial aspect of CMN is having access to your instructors. "I think the biggest aspect for me is being able to have access to your instructors in the faculty." She explained that "I don't always set up a time with my instructors, but that has been one of my biggest supports has been even staying after class and going over something."

Fred agreed that the instructors take the time to explain and show you how to do things. He described his experience:

> My first year here. It was kind of a shock because I hadn't been in school for a while but the instructors were really helpful. If you struggled in an area they would take time to show you how to do things.

Ariel believed that the instructors understand the many responsibilities of students (some are parents or caregivers) and the social problems that plague the community and students. Ariel stated that the instructors make classes and assignments are interesting, noting that "no matter what the content is or the course is it's always the instructors that are engaging."

Theme 2: Family. The respondents identified family as one of the reasons for their persistence in college. In the context of this study, family included grandparents,

parents, siblings, and extended family members. The responses for this question described how family influenced their perseverance.

Ray said that the driving force for him was his mother:

> My mother was the main driving force for an education. She started college then she got pregnant with me and decided to go back to work, with the work she was doing it barely provided for the two of us itself and just growing up and being in that environment was another driving force for achieving a higher education and being able to provide for my own family someday.

Leona summed up her experiences like this:

> I decided to attend college because my father and mother didn't attend college and my grandmother pushed me and said that once I earned that diploma that no one will ever be able to take that away from me and the further I get in my education it will help me the further along in life.

Some participants felt that their responsibility as parents and role models for younger siblings motivated them to pursue an education. Anthony was motivated because he felt responsible for his son and younger siblings:

> I decided to attend college to try and better myself as a person and try to be a better role model for my son and my brothers. I would say what motivated me was to try to build a career and not just go from minimum wage jobs but to actually develop some kind of career where I could actually be successful and provide for my family.

Theme 3: Location. Home and location were interchangeable terms used by the respondents to justify why they attended CMN. The proximity of the campus to their

homes and the fact that for some of them, it was on their reservation, gave them a real sense of pride.

Irene wanted to complete the education that she had begun in the military, but not if it meant commuting 80 miles a day:

> I came back to Green Bay and took some classes at Green Bay and Lakeland when I worked for the Press Gazette, and then I moved back home and worked for the tribe. I would drive by the college every day and never came on campus. They offered a free accounting class to tribal members within the tribal programs. I signed up for the accounting class and I just continued to take classes after that.

Margaret attended a mainstream college after high school but returned to the reservation for financial reasons. She had attended without any goals and eventually skipped classes because it was not what she had expected. Margaret returned home and began at CMN because

> The big thing was it is in my back yard. I lived in Keshena and now I live in Shawano and its 7 minutes from my home, I've timed it. It's right here. It has everything I need to get my education done.

Robert expressed his reason for attending CMN:

> The location of this college really helped a lot. The fact that Dr. --- is the one that started this college and being that she is my cousin, I decided that she really shouldn't be able to steer me wrong too much. My dad really insisted on it because he put a lot of praise in what Dr. --- did with this college and that is a lot of pride that I am an enrolled Menominee. It is my college. That's why I decided that I should start there.

Theme 4: **Resources.** Resources, tutoring, and internships were mentioned by the respondents as experiences that were key to their persistence. The comments revolving around resources were interesting. Yvonne believed that the instructors were a huge factor in why she attends CMN, noting that "I was really pleased with all my instructors, with the course content, with their willingness to help and the ability to tutor in math, which is my albatross."

The relationships that students had formed with instructors were very important to them. Randi mentioned that tutoring and internships were important to her retention, stating that

> The commons is a huge help, the tutoring center, because there is always someone there to help you. If not staff, other students and you can sit around. We had the math tutoring, we had anatomy and physiology tutoring, we had medical math tutoring, and those are usually done on student level where other students are tutoring us vs. the instructors. I like the fact that CMN is really close.

Margaret summed up her experiences.

> I would have to say the teachers. I went to the teachers a lot and asked a lot of question. They obviously know what they are talking about, but if they don't they will help me find the answer. I think that is the most valuable resource here. There's the computer lab, the library, there's a lot of good resources here.

Anthony agreed with this sentiment:

> I would say the college's atmosphere here. Just with every service they have that helps you succeed. From the tutors, to the teachers, to transportation, they just have a lot of things here that can help you succeed. I feel that throughout my time

> here I have run into nothing but people that want to help me or any students that want to succeed if they have the will or the confidence and desire to reach their goals, they will help them get there.

Summary

This qualitative case study examined the experiences influencing the persistence and academic progress of American Indian students at a Midwestern TCU. Interview data were validated through the use of methodological triangulation that employed inductive and topological analysis steps (Hatch, 2002). Themes were identified through an analysis of the interview data.

Chapter 5: Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusions

The specific research problem examined in this single-case study was the need to improve American Indian college students' persistence in higher education (Faircloth & Tippeconnic, 2010; Hunt & Harrington, 2008). American Indian students' experiences in postsecondary education have been difficult to assess and have been influenced by family, community, peers, and teachers. Understanding how these different experiences have influenced students' perceptions of higher education has been difficult (Bosse et al., 2011; Burk, 2007; Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999). A single-case study method was used to analyze the experiences of American Indian students at a TCU in the Midwestern United States (Hatch, 2002; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009).

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine American Indian experiences and determine how their experiences influenced their persistence and academic progress at a Midwestern TCU (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Currie et al., 2012; Dodson et al., 2009; Fryberg & Markus, 2007; Ovink & Veazey, 2011). Participant interviews provided information specific to this case study. I also reviewed academic document from the CMN to gather contextual information. These unobtrusive data about student experiences and college resources added to the relevance of the interview data.

Implications

A potential limitation to this study was that it was a single-case study rather than a multiple-case study (Yin, 2009). Single-case studies are intended to offer theoretical generalizations (Stake, 2010; Yin, 2009). Research on current American Indians' personal experiences in postsecondary education at TCUs has been limited (Blondin-Perrin, 2010; Hodgson, 2000; Marr, 2010; Whirlwind Soldier, 2002). Particular care was

taken to ensure that the studied case was relevant to the research topic (Patton, 2002). Participants were eager to share their experiences during the interview process.

Another limitation was the relevance of the data gathered during the interviews based upon the possibility that some of the respondents would not speak openly about their experiences. This did not happen. Every respondent was open and attentive during the interviews and contributed information. Each respondent also was afforded the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. I was completely open with the respondents and explained the purpose of the study at the beginning of each interview session. Respondent were assured that their identities would be kept anonymous.

To mitigate the limitations of a single-case study, consideration was given to securing data that conflicted with or corroborated previous results (Hatch, 2002). Through purposeful sampling, data triangulation, and member checking, I was able to validate the interview data (Stake, 1995). Document data were validated using the multiple qualitative analysis techniques described by Hatch (2002).

I did not reveal the identities of any of the respondents. All of them were willing to sign the informed consent form prior to being interviewed. Any disclosures in the interview responses were anonymous, and no participants were at risk of civil or criminal liability or loss of employment. Approval for this qualitative case study was secured from the Institutional Review Board of Northcentral University prior to any data collection. The American Indian students were informed that their participation was completely voluntary and that withdrawing from the interviews would not carry any negative repercussions.

The study was guided by one research question: What are the experiences of a sample of American Indian students at a TCU in the Midwest? The results provided sufficient data to answer the research question. Overall, important inferences and logical conclusions were drawn from the study and are presented for review. The perceptions of these 12 American Indian students were influenced by their postsecondary experiences. The information gained from this study is relevant to the roles that faculty, family, and location and resources of the college contribute to the persistence of American Indian students (Flynn et al., 2012; Fox et al., 2006).

Triangulation of the data facilitated identification of the four themes of instructor/faculty influence; family influence; location/home; and institutional influences: resources, tutoring, and internships (AIHEC, 2007; CMN, 2014). This process was more relevant than the quantitative data found in the institutional and government reports. Data from documents such as institutional records, newsletters, and other quantified documents could not explain American Indians' perspectives effectively (IPEDS, 2012). The personal experiences explained and shared by these individuals were more relevant to what American Indian students experience in postsecondary education than broad sweeping quantitative research that only looks at numbers (IPEDS, 2012; USDoE, 2012).

Theme 1: Instructor/faculty influence. The role of faculty in student persistence was revealed in the responses. The participants overwhelmingly credited their CMN instructors as the major factor in their retention and success. One participant summed up his experience in this way:

> The instructors here they really set the bar. I just don't want somebody to read my number like at a big university. If you show, you show…if you don't, you don't.

> Here it's more, what's going on? Why aren't you coming to class, is there anything I can help you with. We have services here that deal with family problems.

Research has suggested that an instructor-student relationship is more important than a shared culture or social class (Abrams, Taylor, & Guo, 2013).

Participant responses demonstrated the importance of the relationship between instructor and student as a key factor in student persistence. Instructors were viewed as being very approachable and supportive to the needs of students. Participants credited instructors as the most influential factor for their persistence and academic progress at CMN. In this study, findings point to a need for establishing a level of engagement between instructor and student because instructors play a vital role in student success. Prior research by Hermes (2005) indicated that Native and non-Native instructors can be effective in the persistence of American Indian students, a finding consistent with a more recent study by Gaddis (2012) indicating that racial similarities are not a requirement for student success.

Theme 2: Family influence. The expectations of family were credited with being a motivating force affecting the respondents' reasons for attaining a postsecondary education. The findings suggest that family members were valued as support systems. Several participants revealed the motivating factor for pursuing a college degree was to live a better life, provide for their own children, and be role models for younger siblings. One participant summarized his reasons for pursuing a college degree:

> I would say what motivated me was to try to build a career and not just go from minimum wage jobs but to actually develop some kind of career where I could actually be successful and provide for my family.

Another participant responded:

> My aunt would always tell me that she would be proud of me whether I went to school or didn't or whether I had that high paying job or didn't, but she knew I would feel better of myself if I did go to college and get that education.

Findings point to family support as a success variable for student persistence in pursuing a college degree (Lamsam, 2014). Even though family members might not have attended a postsecondary institution, their belief in the value of and need for a postsecondary education were evident in the interview responses.

One particular incident was cited as a reason for pursuing a college degree:

> Just growing up in Neopit and just remembering how poor we were when we were children. The nuns, I think, had a lot to do with instilling education in us as children. That always just stayed with me. Sister would say, "You need to do this, and you need to remember this because one day you'll go to college, and you're going to have to go to college to get out of here. We were poor, everybody was poor in Neopit. That's what motivated me and stayed with me.

Although this was not a family member's advice, in a small community where teachers are a part of the community, teachers can be motivating factors for students. White Shield (2009) found that the strong connection American Indians have with community and home is misunderstood by mainstream society. Research has continued to

identify family support as a positive variable for American Indian student persistence in postsecondary education.

Theme 3: Location/home influence. Results indicated that the location of the college was a factor in the decision to pursue a college degree. Prior students have indicated that American Indian students are not comfortable in mainstream higher education institutions (Fox et al., 2006; Stephens et al., 2012). Based upon these reports, this study was conducted at a TCU located on an Indian reservation to gain an understanding of American Indian students' perceptions of postsecondary education. In this single case study, most of the participants gave location of the college as a reason for attending CMN; it also was close to home, was "their" school, gave them a sense of pride in knowing that it was a TCU, and it had a small campus.

"I'm really, really close to my family and I think that a lot of native students are. Students that were raised on the reservation, family is just really important, it's the glue in your life that holds everything together" was shared by one participant who did not want to leave her family. Understanding the cultural capital of the regional tribes serviced by TCUs is critical for TCUs to boost American Indian students' retention rates (Guillory, 2009).

Theme 4: Institutional influence (resources, tutoring, and internships). The findings suggest that student support services such as free tutoring and internships at the college were important to student persistence. These resources continue to be important to students lacking the preparation for postsecondary education.

One participant shared why she believed internships were important:

> The traveling and the experiences that they offer it gets us out of our comfort zone and it helps us meet professionals in other career and agencies in other fields of work… It helps us figure out how to talk professionally and how to approach people and how to speak with people within your field and how to come across smart and educated and to come out of your shell when you are meeting people. I think a student traveling is a good thing because a lot of students that go here are parents or they are first generation students and a lot of us have never left the reservation and it's scary.

It became evident during the interviews that internships gave the students a way to learn practical job skills. This mentoring of students whose cultural communities were not historically structured for mainstream postsecondary education gives American Indian students practical experiences for navigating higher education (Dodson et al., 2009).

The interview responses highlighted the participants' experiences (Merriam, 2009), suggesting that the perceptions of American Indian students regarding postsecondary education are influenced by personal experiences. In as much as historical trauma might have played a role in past generations of American Indian students, the students in the study cited contemporary issues as the major determinants to their persistence and motivation to pursue a college degree. Data from academic documents contributed to the quality of the findings (Merriam, 2009). Organizing all data into themes provided a trustworthy method for aligning the document data, interview data, and the research question (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009).

Recommendations

Knowledge gained from this qualitative case study might be used for recruiting students and training faculty to build partnerships with the communities that benefit students, communities, and the college. The results are an important contribution to data pertaining to the retention and graduation rates of American Indian students. The perceptions of these students might serve as the foundation to develop programs to retain American Indian students. Though aspects of this case study are applicable to other TCUs, some results also might be relevant to other postsecondary institutions (CMN, 2014).

Perhaps more than anything, knowledge attained from this study has the potential to help tribal communities and governments to look at postsecondary education as a valued resource. Small class sizes and instructors who believe in their students are two key elements to the success of American Indian students. One recommendation is that future research focus on the economic impact that CMN has had on not only the tribal community but also the adjacent communities. Another recommendation is to try to gain more support from tribal governments by investing in the tribal community's future through education. Support from family, community, and postsecondary staff will increase the persistence of American Indian students (Ward et al., 2014).

One recommendation is to research the viability of hiring CMN graduates, which speaks to the values of education, and the role of CMN in graduating employable people. Another recommendation is to replicate this study with non-Native students to compare results. Quantifiable data would be produced that could strengthen the need for TCUs.

Research on institutional opportunities for academic engagement have been found to influence both minority and dominant groups of students (Ward et al., 2014).

Conclusions

The intent of this study was to understand American Indian students' experiences to increase their success in completing degrees at CMN. This qualitative, single-case study examined the experiences of American Indian students through personal interviews and document reviews. By using a descriptive case study method (Stake, 1995), qualitative data were collected from 12 interviews and a review of academic documents. Research data were analyzed using induction and typological processes (Hatch, 2002). Interpretations also were based upon literature pertaining to the retention and graduation rates of American Indian students at other TCUs and mainstream colleges (AIHEC, 2007; Brayboy et al., 2012; IPEDS, 2012; USDoE, 2012).

From the four identified themes, recommendations were made to help CMN and other TCUs to understand the factors necessary to retain and graduate more American Indian students. Findings indicate that instructors are the major factor in the retention of these students and that support from family, community, and postsecondary staff increase the persistence of American Indian students (Ward et al., 2014). Race and culture were not dominant factors. Accessibility of faculty, class sizes, location of the campus, availability of tutoring, and the job skills gained from internships were factors mentioned by the American Indian students as keeping them in college. The findings indicate that TCUs benefit American Indian students, their tribal communities, and the surrounding communities. With that knowledge in mind, further research on the impact of TCUs on the workforce and the local tribal governments in these communities is warranted.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Graduating Student Survey

****CONGRATULATIONS** on completing your degree requirements at CMN! Please help improve CMN by completing this brief, but vital survey. Your Student ID is for record keeping purposes only. Your answers are all confidential and will be used to improve your alma mater's (CMN) academic programs, student services, and administrative services.*

NOTE: Please read the survey questions carefully and answer each question as honestly as possible.

Student ID#:_____

A. Your Experiences at CMN

(Mark only one answer on each row.)	Don't Know or NA	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1. Overall, please rate the quality of your Academic and Learning experiences at CMN:	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
2. Overall, please rate the quality of faculty in your Major/Degree/Certificate(s):	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
3. Overall, please rate the quality of courses in preparing you for employment or transfer:	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
4. Overall, please rate the quality of Student Services at CMN:	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
5. Rate the availability or ease of access to Student Services at CMN:	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
6. Rate the ease (access) of electronic student records (Empower system):	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
7. Overall, please rate the quality of the student activities at CMN:	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
8. Overall, please rate the quality of the Bookstore and products:	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
9. Overall, please rate the quality of Library Services at CMN:	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
10. Overall, please rate the quality of Information Technology Services at CMN:	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

11. Additional comments about any of the above: _____
_____
_____

B. Plans Following Graduation

1. (check **ALL** that apply)	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
What are you most likely to do upon graduating at CMN?	(Full Time)	(Part Time)	Undergraduate Course Work	Service	Continue to Raise a family	Activity (e.g., Peace Corps)	Know Yet	Professional School	

2a. Are you planning to attend more higher education in the future?	Yes*	No	Don't Know
	❒	❒	❒

2b. *If Yes: Where do you plan to continue your education:

CMN	UW-Green Bay	UW-Madison	UW-Oshkosh	UW-Stevens Point	Silver Lake College	Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	Northcentral Technical College (NTC)	Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC)	Other College/University (please list):	Other Technical College or Professional School (please list):
❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

Employment:

	Yes*	No
3a. Are you currently employed?	❒	❒

3b. *If Yes: Name of Employer: _____

3c. You're Position/Title: _____

C. Final Comments About Your Educational Experiences at CMN

(Mark only one answer for this row.)	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your CMN education?	❒	❒	❒	❒

(Mark only one answer for each row.)	Definitely	Probably	Probably Not	Definitely Not

2. If you had to start over again, would you still choose to attend CMN?	❒	❒	❒	❒
3. If you had to start over again, would you still choose the same Degree/Major or Certificate?	❒	❒	❒	❒
4. Was the value of your degree worth the cost of your investment at CMN?	❒	❒	❒	❒

5. Please describe your experiences regarding classroom environment, lighting, facilities, cleanliness, maintenance, or other administrative aspects at CMN.

6. What positive campus aspects, student services, and/or programs do you think contributed most to your educational experiences while attending CMN?

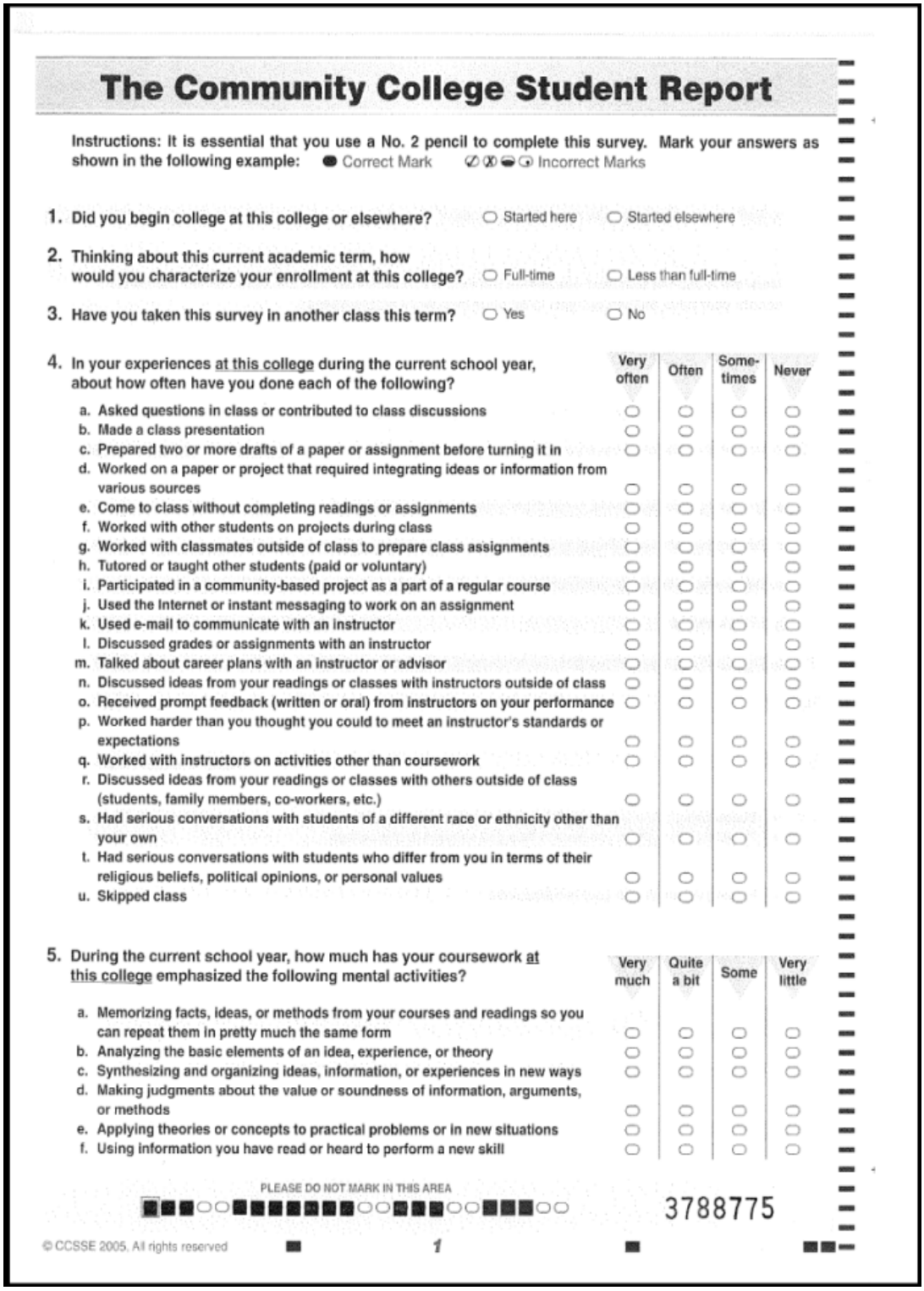
7. What were some of the disappointing things you experienced while attending CMN?

8. What one most important change could CMN make to improve the quality of students' experiences?

9. Name a person or persons at CMN (faculty or staff) who helped you the most or exemplifies the best level of service to students and why?

Thank you for **completing this** GSS survey!
Your responses are confidential and will help the College of Menominee Nation
deliver the best possible Services and Programs! (Form IR: GSS 0511 Ron Jurgens)

Appendix B: Community College Survey of Student Engagement



The Community College Student Report

Instructions: It is essential that you use a No. 2 pencil to complete this survey. Mark your answers as shown in the following example: ● Correct Mark ⊘ ⊗ ◒ ◔ Incorrect Marks

1. Did you begin college at this college or elsewhere? ○ Started here ○ Started elsewhere

2. Thinking about this current academic term, how would you characterize your enrollment at this college? ○ Full-time ○ Less than full-time

3. Have you taken this survey in another class this term? ○ Yes ○ No

4. In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?	Very often	Often	Some-times	Never
a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	○	○	○	○
b. Made a class presentation	○	○	○	○
c. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	○	○	○	○
d. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	○	○	○	○
e. Come to class without completing readings or assignments	○	○	○	○
f. Worked with other students on projects during class	○	○	○	○
g. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	○	○	○	○
h. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	○	○	○	○
i. Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course	○	○	○	○
j. Used the Internet or instant messaging to work on an assignment	○	○	○	○
k. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	○	○	○	○
l. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	○	○	○	○
m. Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor	○	○	○	○
n. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class	○	○	○	○
o. Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance	○	○	○	○
p. Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	○	○	○	○
q. Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework	○	○	○	○
r. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	○	○	○	○
s. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity other than your own	○	○	○	○
t. Had serious conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	○	○	○	○
u. Skipped class	○	○	○	○

5. During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities?	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	○	○	○	○
b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	○	○	○	○
c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways	○	○	○	○
d. Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods	○	○	○	○
e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	○	○	○	○
f. Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill	○	○	○	○

PLEASE DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA

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6. During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done at this college?

	None	1 to 4	5 to 10	11 to 20	More than 20
a. Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings	○	○	○	○	○
b. Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	○	○	○	○	○
c. Number of written papers or reports of any length	○	○	○	○	○

7. Mark the response that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work at this college.

Extremely challenging ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Extremely easy

8. Which of the following have you done, are you doing, or do you plan to do while attending this college?

	I have done	I plan to do	I have not done nor plan to do
a. Internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	○	○	○
b. English as a second language course	○	○	○
c. Developmental/remedial reading course	○	○	○
d. Developmental/remedial writing course	○	○	○
e. Developmental/remedial math course	○	○	○
f. Study skills course	○	○	○
g. Honors course	○	○	○
h. College orientation program or course	○	○	○
i. Organized learning communities (linked courses/study groups led by faculty or counselors)	○	○	○

9. How much does this college emphasize each of the following?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying	○	○	○	○
b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college	○	○	○	○
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	○	○	○	○
d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	○	○	○	○
e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	○	○	○	○
f. Providing the financial support you need to afford your education	○	○	○	○
g. Using computers in academic work	○	○	○	○

10. About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

	None	1 – 5	6 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30	More than 30
a. Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Working for pay	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Participating in college-sponsored activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Commuting to and from classes	○	○	○	○	○	○

11. Mark the number that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at this college.

Your relationship with:

a. Other Students

Friendly, supportive, sense of belonging ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation

b. Instructors

Available, helpful, sympathetic ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic

c. Administrative Personnel & Offices

Helpful, considerate, flexible ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid

12. How much has YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THIS COLLEGE contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Acquiring a broad general education	○	○	○	○
b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	○	○	○	○
c. Writing clearly and effectively	○	○	○	○
d. Speaking clearly and effectively	○	○	○	○
e. Thinking critically and analytically	○	○	○	○
f. Solving numerical problems	○	○	○	○
g. Using computing and information technology	○	○	○	○
h. Working effectively with others	○	○	○	○
i. Learning effectively on your own	○	○	○	○
j. Understanding yourself	○	○	○	○
k. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	○	○	○	○
l. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	○	○	○	○
m. Contributing to the welfare of your community	○	○	○	○
n. Developing clearer career goals	○	○	○	○
o. Gaining information about career opportunities	○	○	○	○

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13. This section has three parts. Please answer all three sections, indicating (1) HOW OFTEN you use the following services, (2) HOW SATISFIED you are with the services, and (3) HOW IMPORTANT the services are to you AT THIS COLLEGE.

	(1) Frequency of Use				(2) Satisfaction				(3) Importance		
	Often	Some-times	Rarely/ Never	Don't know/ N.A.	Very	Some-what	Not at all	N.A.	Very	Some-what	Not at all
a. Academic advising/planning	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Career counseling	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Job placement assistance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Peer or other tutoring	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. Child care	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
g. Financial aid advising	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
h. Computer lab	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
i. Student organizations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
j. Transfer credit assistance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
k. Services to students with disabilities	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

14. How likely is it that the following issues would cause you to withdraw from class or from this college? *(Please respond to each item)*

	Very likely	Likely	Some-what likely	Not likely
a. Working full-time	○	○	○	○
b. Caring for dependents	○	○	○	○
c. Academically unprepared	○	○	○	○
d. Lack of finances	○	○	○	○
e. Transfer to a 4-year college or university	○	○	○	○

15. How supportive are your friends of your attending this college?

○ Extremely ○ Somewhat ○ Quite a bit ○ Not very

16. How supportive is your immediate family of your attending this college?

○ Extremely ○ Somewhat ○ Quite a bit ○ Not very

17. Indicate which of the following are your reasons/goals for attending this college. *(Please respond to each item)*

	Primary goal	Secondary goal	Not a goal
a. Complete a certificate program	○	○	○
b. Obtain an associate degree	○	○	○
c. Transfer to a 4-year college or university	○	○	○
d. Obtain or update job-related skills	○	○	○
e. Self-improvement/personal enjoyment	○	○	○
f. Change careers	○	○	○

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18. Indicate which of the following are sources you use to pay your tuition at this college? *(Please respond to each item)*

	Major source	Minor source	Not a source
a. My own income/savings	○	○	○
b. Parent or spouse/significant other's income/savings	○	○	○
c. Employer contributions	○	○	○
d. Grants and scholarships	○	○	○
e. Student loans (bank, etc.)	○	○	○
f. Public assistance	○	○	○

19. Since high school, which of the following types of schools have you attended other than the one you are now attending? *(Please mark all that apply)*

- ○ Proprietary (private) school or training program
- ○ Public vocational-technical school
- ○ Another community or technical college
- ○ 4-year college or university
- ○ None

20. When do you plan to take classes at this college again?

- ○ I will accomplish my goal(s) during this term and will not be returning
- ○ I have no current plan to return
- ○ Within the next 12 months
- ○ Uncertain

21. At this college, in what range is your overall college grade average?

- ○ A
- ○ A- to B+
- ○ B
- ○ B- to C+
- ○ C
- ○ C- or lower
- ○ Do not have a GPA at this school
- ○ Pass/fail classes only

22. When do you most frequently take classes at this college? *(Mark **one only**)*

- ○ Day classes (morning or afternoon)
- ○ Evening classes
- ○ Weekend classes

23. How many TOTAL credit hours have you earned at this college, not counting the courses you are currently taking this term?

- ○ None
- ○ 1-14 credits
- ○ 15-29 credits
- ○ 30-44 credits
- ○ 45-60 credits
- ○ Over 60 credits

24. **At what other types of institutions are you taking classes this term?** *(Please mark all that apply)*
- ○ None
- ○ High school
- ○ Vocational/technical school
- ○ Another community or technical college
- ○ 4-year college/university
- ○ Other

25. **How many classes are you *presently* taking at OTHER institutions?**
- ○ None
- ○ 1 class
- ○ 2 classes
- ○ 3 classes
- ○ 4 classes or more

26. **Would you recommend this college to a friend or family member?**
- ○ Yes ○ No

27. **How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this college?**
- ○ Excellent
- ○ Good
- ○ Fair
- ○ Poor

28. **Do you have children who live with you?**
- ○ Yes ○ No

29. **Mark your age group.**
- ○ Under 18
- ○ 18 to 19
- ○ 20 to 21
- ○ 22 to 24
- ○ 25 to 29
- ○ 30 to 39
- ○ 40 to 49
- ○ 50 to 64
- ○ 65+

30. **Your sex:**
- ○ Male ○ Female

31. **Are you married?**
- ○ Yes ○ No

32. **Is English your native (first) language?**
- ○ Yes ○ No

33. **Are you an international student or foreign national?**

○ Yes ○ No

34. **What is your racial identification?** *(Mark **only one**)*

○ American Indian or other Native American
○ Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander
○ Native Hawaiian
○ Black or African American, Non-Hispanic
○ White, Non-Hispanic
○ Hispanic, Latino, Spanish
○ Other

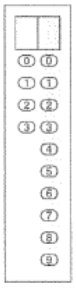
35. **What is the highest academic credential you have earned?**

○ None
○ High school diploma or GED
○ Vocational/technical certificate
○ Associate degree
○ Bachelor's degree
○ Master's/doctoral/professional degree

36. **What is the highest level of education obtained by your:**

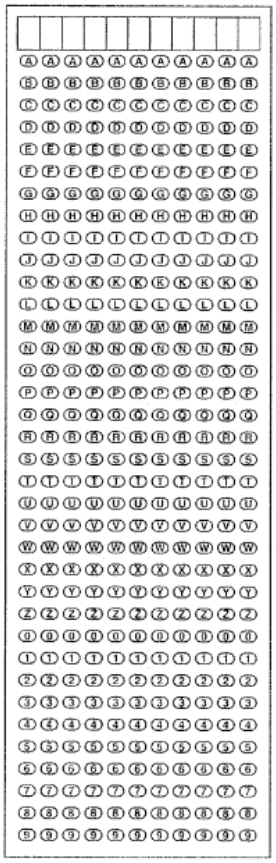
	Father	Mother
a. Not a high school graduate	○	○
b. High school diploma or GED	○	○
c. Some college, did not complete degree	○	○
d. Associate degree	○	○
e. Bachelor's degree	○	○
f. Master's degree/1st professional	○	○
g. Doctorate degree	○	○
h. Unknown	○	○

37. **Using the list provided, please fill in the bubbles that correspond to the code indicating your program or major. Using the first column, indicate the first number in the program code, using the second column, indicate the second number in the program code.**



38. Please provide your student identification number by filling in the corresponding bubbles. For example, in the first column, indicate the first number or letter in your student ID number, and so forth. (OPTIONAL)

(Please begin here)



Additional Items (Please respond to these items if requested)

1.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
2.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
3.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
4.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
5.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
6.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
7.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
8.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
9.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
10.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
11.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
12.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
13.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
14.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
15.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
16.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
17.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
18.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
19.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ
20.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	Ⓔ

Your responses will remain confidential and individual responses will not be reported.

Thank you for sharing your views.

SCANTRON Mark Reflex® MM252416-2:7 ED99

PLEASE DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA

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CCSSE 2011 Special-Focus Items
Promising Practices for Community College Student Success

Please mark your responses on the survey and not on this sheet.
Mark only one response for each question.

Question	Responses
1. During the current semester/quarter at this college, I completed registration before the first class session(s).	A= Yes, I was registered for ALL of my courses before the first class session(s) B= Mostly; I was registered for MOST of my courses before the first class session(s) C= Partly; I was registered for SOME of my courses before the first class session(s) D= No, I was NOT registered for ANY of my courses before the first class session(s)
2. The ONE response that *best* describes my experience with orientation when I first came to this college is...	A= I took part in an online orientation prior to the beginning of classes B= I attended an on-campus orientation prior to the beginning of classes C= I enrolled in an orientation course as part of my course schedule during my first semester/quarter at this college D= I was not aware of a college orientation E= I was unable to participate in orientation due to scheduling or other issues
3. During my first semester/quarter at this college, I participated in a structured experience for new students (sometimes called a "freshman seminar" or "first-year experience").	A= Yes, in my first semester/quarter at this college B= Yes, in my first AND in at least one other semester/quarter at this college C= Yes, but NOT in my first semester/quarter at this college D= No, I did not
4. During my first semester/quarter at this college, I enrolled in an organized "learning community" (two or more courses that a group of students take together).	A= Yes, in my first semester/quarter at this college B= Yes, in my first AND in at least one other semester/quarter at this college C= Yes, but NOT in my first semester/quarter at this college D= No, I did not
5. During my first semester/quarter at this college, I enrolled in a student success course (such as a student development, extended orientation, study skills, student life skills, or college success course).	A= Yes, in my first semester/quarter at this college B= Yes, in my first AND in at least one other semester/quarter at this college C= Yes, but NOT in my first semester/quarter at this college D= No, I did not
6. At this college, I participated in one or more accelerated courses/fast-track programs to help me move through developmental/basic skills/college prep coursework more quickly.	A= Yes, in my first semester/quarter at this college B= Yes, in my first AND in at least one other semester/quarter at this college C= Yes, but NOT in my first semester/quarter at this college D= No, I did not
7. During the current semester/quarter at this college, my instructors clearly explained a class attendance policy that specified how many classes I could miss without penalty.	A= ALL of my instructors explained a class attendance policy B= MOST of my instructors explained a class attendance policy C= SOME of my instructors explained a class attendance policy D= NONE of my instructors explained a class attendance policy

Do not mark on this sheet

Over →

CCSSE 2011 Special-Focus Items
Promising Practices for Community College Student Success

Please mark your responses on the survey and not on this sheet.
Mark only one response for each question.

Question	Responses
8. WHILE I was in high school, besides taking the SAT or ACT, I completed this college's placement test (ACCUPLACER, ASSET, COMPASS, etc.) to assess my academic skills in reading, writing, and/or math.	A= Yes B= No C= I don't remember
9. Before I could register for my first semester/quarter at this college, I was REQUIRED to take a placement test (ACCUPLACER, ASSET, COMPASS, etc.) to assess my academic skills in reading, writing, and/or math.	A= Yes, and I took it B= Yes, it was required, but I did NOT take it C= No, it was not required
10. Before enrolling at this college, I used online or printed materials provided by the college to help me prepare ON MY OWN for this college's placement test(s) (ACCUPLACER, ASSET, COMPASS, etc.).	A= Yes, AND I found them to be very helpful B= Yes, AND I found them to be somewhat helpful C= Yes, AND I found them to be not helpful D= No E= Not applicable; I did not take a placement test
11. Before enrolling at this college, I participated in a brief (8 hours or less), intensive brush-up/refresher workshop, designed to help me prepare for this college's placement test(s) (ACCUPLACER, ASSET, COMPASS, etc.).	A= Yes, AND I found it to be very helpful B= Yes, AND I found it to be somewhat helpful C= Yes, AND I found it to be not helpful D= No E= Not applicable; I did not take a placement test
12. Before enrolling at this college, I participated in a multi-day or multi-week brush-up/refresher program (often held during the summer before fall enrollment) designed to help me prepare for this college's placement test(s) (ACCUPLACER, ASSET, COMPASS, etc.).	A= Yes, AND I found it to be very helpful B= Yes, AND I found it to be somewhat helpful C= Yes, AND I found it to be not helpful D= No E= Not applicable; I did not take a placement test
13. The results of the placement test(s) I took at this college indicated that I needed to take a developmental/basic skills/college prep course...	A= In MORE THAN ONE academic skills area (reading, writing, and/or math) B= In ONE academic skill area (reading, writing, or math) C= None of the academic skill areas (reading, writing, or math) D= Not applicable; I did not take a placement test
14. Because my placement test results indicated that I needed to take at least one developmental/basic skills/college prep course, I was...	A= TOLD that I was REQUIRED to take MORE THAN one of these courses in my first term B= TOLD that I was REQUIRED to take ONE of these courses in my first term C= TOLD that I should or could take one of these courses, but I was NOT required to in my first term D= Not applicable; my placement test results did not indicate that I needed to take any of these courses E= Not applicable; I did not take a placement test
15. I was TOLD that I was REQUIRED to take a developmental/basic skills/college prep course in my first term, and I...	A= DID enroll in MORE THAN ONE of these courses B= DID enroll in ONE of these courses C= DID NOT enroll in any of these courses D= Not Applicable

Do not mark on this sheet

CCSSE 2011 Special-Focus Items
Promising Practices for Community College Student Success

Please mark your responses on the survey and not on this sheet.
Mark only one response for each question.

Question	Responses
16. Before the end of my first semester/quarter at this college, an advisor helped me develop an academic plan (a personalized plan with a defined sequence of courses for completing a college certificate or degree and/or for transferring to a 4-year college or university).	A= Yes B= No C= I'm still in my first semester/quarter; I have NOT YET developed an academic plan
17. Someone at this college contacts me if I am struggling with my studies to help me get the assistance I need.	A= Yes B= No C= Not applicable; I have not experienced academic difficulties at this college
18. During the current academic year at this college, I participated in required group learning (experiences such as interacting with a specific group of students inside or outside the classroom, studying together, and/or doing group assignments or projects)...	A= Never B= Less than 1 time a week C= 1 to 2 times a week D= 3 to 4 times a week E= More than 4 times a week
19. During the current academic year, I participated in tutoring provided by this college...	A= Never B= Less than 1 time a week C= 1 to 2 times a week D= 3 to 4 times a week E= More than 4 times a week
20. During the current academic year at this college, I participated in supplemental instruction/supplemental learning (extra class sessions with the instructor or an experienced student)...	A= Never B= Less than 1 time a week C= 1 to 2 times a week D= 3 to 4 times a week E= More than 4 times a week

Do not mark on this sheet

Appendix C: Inductive Analysis

Inductive analysis provides a systemic approach to processing large amounts of data that allows researchers to represent the social situations or perspectives of participants of a study. Data from artifacts and interviews will be combined and organized into themes as the researcher works from the particular to the general. These data will produce rich descriptions of the artifacts and participants to convey an understanding of the case study.

Steps to be used for inductive analysis according to Hatch (2002, p. 202) and Merriam (2009, p. 15):

1. Analysis on site;
    a. In the field when collecting data
    b. Themes and terms for categorizing data
2. Transcription of data;
    a. Transcribing and initial analysis of artifacts (documents)
    b. Transcribing and initial analysis of interviews
3. Focus analysis;
    a. Multiple reading of artifacts for constant comparison of emerging themes and categorizing of core codes
    b. Multiple reading of interview transcripts for constant comparison of emerging themes and categorizing of core codes. Through the readings and coding of these data, smaller themes will be combined, in order to have a manageable number of categories (Hatch, 2002)
4. Deeper analysis;
    a. Compare substantive findings with established concepts in the literature
5. Present analysis;
    a. Do participants agree with transcript of interviews?
    b. Do the findings answer the question?

Appendix D: Demographic Form

Demographic Information Participant Number____

1. GED___; HSGED ____; High school diploma _____
2. Age____
3. Female ___ Male___
4. Married ___ Dependents ___
5. Single ___ Dependents ___
6. First generation student ____
7. Highest education obtained by; Mother _____; Father _____
8. Year in college _____

Appendix E: Interview Questions

1. Tell me why you decided to attend college and what your educational goals are.
2. What motivated you to enroll in college?
3. Can you tell me what led you to take classes at CMN?
4. How would you describe your learning experiences in the first semester/year at CMN?
5. Have your feelings changed since starting with this college?
6. What aspects of CMN do you find to be the most beneficial?
7. Can you recall a time when you were a student where you experienced a feeling of being completely engaged in your coursework?
8. Please tell me about this experience.
9. From your own experience, what is the single most important resource this university can provide that will help you succeed?

Appendix F: Consent Form

What are the experiences of American Indian students regarding their perceptions of post-secondary education at a tribal community college in the Midwest?

Purpose. You are invited to be a participant in a study being conducted for a doctoral degree from Northcentral University in Prescott, Arizona. The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of elders' influences on students' perceptions of education. This study focuses on the life experiences of tribal elders and the perceived effects on subsequent generations of American Indian people and their perceptions of education.

Requirements for participation. A series of standardized, open-ended questions will be asked. These questions and your answers will be recorded during the interview. The interview will last approximately one hour.

Researcher. The following person is conducting the research project and may be contacted any time: Alphia Creapeau (XXX@yahoo.com; XXX-XXX-XXXX).

Potential Risk. You may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable. Although there are no known risks; some information may be too personal to share.

Potential Benefit. There are no direct benefits to you from this research. The results may eventually have benefits for other American Indians and institutions of post-secondary education that have a significant number of American Indian students.

Confidentiality. Data collected in this research is confidential. The data will be coded so that your name is not associated with the information. In addition, only the researcher will have access to the coded data.

Right to Withdraw. You may decline to answer any questions during the interview. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

I will be happy to answer any questions about the study. Please send any comments or questions to: Alphia Creapeau (XXX@yahoo.com).

Signatures
I have read the above description of the study and understand conditions for participation. My signature attests that I agree to participate.

Participant's Signature: _____Date_____

Researcher's Signature: _____Date _____

Appendix G: Typological Analysis

Participants will be asked to fill out this demographic questionnaire during the interview process. This questionnaire will be coded with numbers, not participants' names, for confidentiality and anonymity.

Typological Data analysis begins by dividing the overall data into categories based on predetermined typologies (Hatch, 2002). Theses typologies are generated from the research question and initial data analysis starts with typological groupings and is set with first reading all these collected data and dividing into predetermined categories (Hatch, 2002). Cross-referencing artifact to artifact, artifact to interview will be used to find associations and connections between these sources of data.

Steps to be used for typological analysis (according to Hatch, 2002):

1. Identify typologies to be analyzed
2. Read all data marking/coding to my typologies
3. Write summaries of the main ideas of data from patterns and themes found
4. Keep a record of summaries according to themes or patterns
5. Decide if patterns/themes are supported by data and search data for non-examples. Themes that may emerge from these data are negative or positive educational experiences in high school.