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Defining Well-Being from Inside The Navajo Nation: Education As Poverty Derivation and Poverty Reduction

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Defining Well-Being from Inside the Navajo Nation:

Education as Poverty Derivation

and Poverty Reduction

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

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Comparative and International Development Education

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ABSTRACT

Education as Poverty Derivation and Poverty Reduction:

Defining Well-Being from Inside

the Navajo Nation

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Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations

Comparative and International Development Education

Master of Education

The stated purpose of this study was to facilitate Navajos through a process of determining for themselves what poverty is, what indicators determine well-being, and what factors contribute to the phenomenon of poverty on the Navajo Indian reservation. The study used a Q-Squared Participatory Poverty Assessment to gain a better understanding of how the Navajo culture and Navajo people themselves view and operationalize wealth and poverty. Semi-structured participatory interviews performed with 22 Navajo Indians, in the reservation communities of Chinle, Arizona, and San Juan, New Mexico, discussed and determined what it means to be poor in Navajo households and communities, and defined various levels of well-being on the reservation.

The analysis provided themes which comprised four stages of poverty description: definitional, summative, experiential, and derivational. The main findings of the analysis and description process were that (1) wealth and poverty are defined by a combination of non-material assets and non-income material assets, rather than income, and that the most important of these are family and cultural values; (2) based on these established indicators of well-being, the Navajo do not see themselves as poor; (3) the difficulties experienced on the reservation include extrinsic factors in control of the state, while the benefits of reservation living are primarily intrinsic factors at individual levels; (4) there is a generational devaluation of Navajo values occurring on the reservation, where the Navajo consider themselves wealthy on account of their rich cultural heritage, but this decline in cultural values constitutes a “cultural recession” and an increase of own poverty on the reservation; and (5) this cultural devaluation and increase of poverty is caused by factors of instrumental and imperialistic education and globalization.

Keywords: Navajo Nation, poverty, education, development, globalization, human rights, Participatory Poverty Assessment

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Introduction.....	1
Poverty of Disadvantaged Indigenous Populations	1
American Indian Poverty	2
Navajo Poverty.....	4
Addressing Poverty	8
Addressing Navajo Poverty	8
Appropriate Poverty Measurements	10
Statement of Problem.....	10
Purpose of Study	11
Significance of Study	12
Summary	13
Literature Review.....	15
Navajo vs. Western Philosophies on Education and Poverty Reduction.....	15
Navajo Economic Behavior	18
Navajo Nation Approaches to Development and Poverty Reduction.....	20
Navajo Education.....	23
Approaches to Poverty and Development.....	28
Human Capital Theory: The Dominant Paradigm of Poverty Conceptualized	28
United States Poverty Thresholds.....	31
Globalization.....	33
Human Development: Addressing Functionings and Human Capabilities	35
Human Rights: Emerging Patterns of Responsibility in Development	38
The Right to Development.....	39
Human Rights and Education	42
Human Rights Education	43
Education for Poverty Reduction and Development	45
Method	48
Q-Squared, Qualitative, and Participatory Approaches to Poverty	48
Design	52
Q-Squared Participatory Poverty Assessment	53
Participant Selection	55
Selection Criteria	55
Sample.....	56
Chapters	57
Procedures.....	60
Phenomenology.....	60
Analysis.....	61
Interpretational Phenomenological Analysis	61
Summary	64
Results.....	66
The Definitional Stage	67
Non-Material Assets	67

Family	67
Culture, Tradition, and Language	69
Religiosity	73
Self-Sufficiency	74
Non-Income Material Assets	76
Livestock	76
Transportation	77
Infrastructure	78
The Experiential Stage	79
Difficulties on the Reservation	79
Unemployment	79
Benefits of Reservation Living	80
The Summative Stage	80
Individual Poverty: Lack of Poverty in the Navajo Nation	81
Generational Devaluation of Navajo Values	84
Self-Sufficiency	84
Work Ethic	85
Social Capital	87
Tradition	89
Language	91
The Derivational Stage	93
Current Formal Education	93
The Navajo Education System as Overly Instrumental	93
The Navajo Education System as Imperialistic and Culturally Corrosive	95
Need for Navajo Philosophies and Approaches in Formal Education	97
Informal and Intrinsic Education	98
Need Revitalization of Informal Education at the Household Level	98
Need to Reestablish Intrinsic Value in Education	100
Globalization	101
Summary	104
Discussion	106
Summary	106
Contributions for Addressing Poverty: Causes and Solutions	107
Locally Constructed Development Models	109
Stage Theory: Targeting Resources and Planning for Navajo Need	111
Globalized and Imperialistic Formal Education as Poverty Derivation	114
Holistic Education for Poverty Reduction	115
Navajo Philosophies and Approaches to Education	116
Harmony of Instrumental and Intrinsic, Formal and Informal	118
Reconsidering Navajo and Western Values for Development	122
Recommendations for Future Work	122
Conclusion	123
References	124
Appendices	141

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Educational Attainment by Ethnic Group.....	3
Table 2: Navajo vs. U.S. Health Indicators	7

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Income by Ethnic Group	5
Figure 2: Per-Capita Income by Region	6
Figure 3: Navajo Nation vs. U.S. Unemployment Rates	6
Figure 4: Persons Below Poverty Line by Ethnic Group.....	7
Figure 5: Income Levels by Region.....	59
Figure 6: Educational Attainment by Region	59
Figure 7: Labor and Poverty by Region.....	59

Introduction

Indigenous populations around the world are overwhelmingly faced with sub-standard living circumstances. By Western standards, these indigenous peoples are some of the most impoverished of any group. These conditions of poverty apply consistently to American Indians, and specifically to the Navajo Indian tribe.

Poverty of Disadvantaged Indigenous Populations

Indigenous peoples in both developed and developing countries are proportionally disadvantaged when compared with non-indigenous citizens (McNeish and Eversole, 2005; Junankar, 2003; Carino, 2005; Van Genugten and Perez-Bustillo, 2001). Specifically, being indigenous usually correlates with less schooling, low capabilities, low standards of living, and poor health, which include higher child mortality rates, higher levels of malnutrition, and lower life expectancy (McNeish and Eversole, 2005; Psacharopoulos and Patrinos 1994; Choudhary, 2002). These conditions of voicelessness, powerlessness, and deprivation affect over 300 million indigenous peoples worldwide from more than 5,000 different indigenous groups in more than 70 countries (UN, 2002; Tomei, 2005). In recent decades, International Conventions such as the United Nations Millennium Project, Copenhagen Consensus, and Education for All, have come to be concerned with the increasing levels of poverty worldwide, despite the enormous wealth created by globalization (Geo-JaJa, 2005). Unfortunately, many of these international movements are criticized as being far removed from the challenges and blind to the needs of indigenous communities, and at times seem to actually compound the problems of the indigenous poor (Doyle, 2009; Tauli-Corpuz, 2005). Rather than addressing the inconsistencies between poverty reduction goals, definitions, and approaches to alleviation, much of development continues to concern itself with issues of economic efficiency and market growth. Instead, focus needs to be brought upon individual rights and quality of life for the marginalized. Even

measurements and analyses of poverty remain dominated by economic forces. These oversimplifications limit definitions, understandings, and eventually possible solutions to poverty, ignoring important social, cultural, and political factors.

There is no solution or hope to formulate adequate poverty reduction strategies or development theory for the world's population, particularly for excluded, marginalized, and underdeveloped indigenous peoples, without first understanding their past experience and social history, cultural viewpoints, and philosophical foundations. In part, lack of historical antecedent has led to available thinking's failure to reflect the past of poverty and the past of indigenous people as a whole. More importantly, this ignorance as well as personal assumptions result into serious poverty and development misconceptions about indigenous underdevelopment and educational poverty in the world of globalization.

American Indian poverty. The American Indian population demonstrates many diverse characteristics, according to the 2000 Census, that are distinctly "fourth-world." These fourth-world regions and communities represent an enclave of underdevelopment within the highly developed and GDP world-leading United States. On average, American Indians appear to be the most marginalized of all U.S. ethnic groups. Despite considerably less attention on equity for Native Americans than say, for example, African Americans or Hispanic Americans, the indicators in areas of education, health, income, and employment, among others, are much lower for Native Americans. In 1999, per-capita income for American Indians on reservations was \$7,846, while that of natives living outside reservations was \$14,267, as compared to a per-capita income for Americans of \$21,587 (Anderson and Parker, 2009). Levels of educational attainment are also much lower for American Indian populations than for their non-Indian counterparts (Table 1).

Table 1

Educational Attainment by Ethnic Group

Population	Finished High School	Finished Bachelors Degree
	%	%
American Indians	54.22	4.85
European Americans	83.58	26.06
African Americans	72.26	14.26
Asian Americans	80.43	44.06

Source: Census 2000

Low education levels, as well as non-persistence of American Indians in tertiary institutions -- significantly lower than the general population -- are well documented (Jackson & Turner, 2004; Ah Nee-Benham & Stein, 2003; Steward, 1993; U.S. Department of Education, 1998). Evidence also abounds in the literature of American Indian students having lower rates of academic achievement (Bowker, 1993; Ah Nee-Benham & Stein, 2003; Ortiz and HeavyRunner, 2003; Lin, LaCounte, & Eder, 1988). Overall, American Indians have been shown to be the most at-risk ethnic group for school failure (O'Brien, 1992). The National Center for Education Statistics (1989) reports that American Indian and Alaska Native students have a dropout rate twice the national average, the highest dropout rate of any United States ethnic or racial group reported. About three out of every ten Native students drop out of school before graduating from high school both on reservations and in cities.

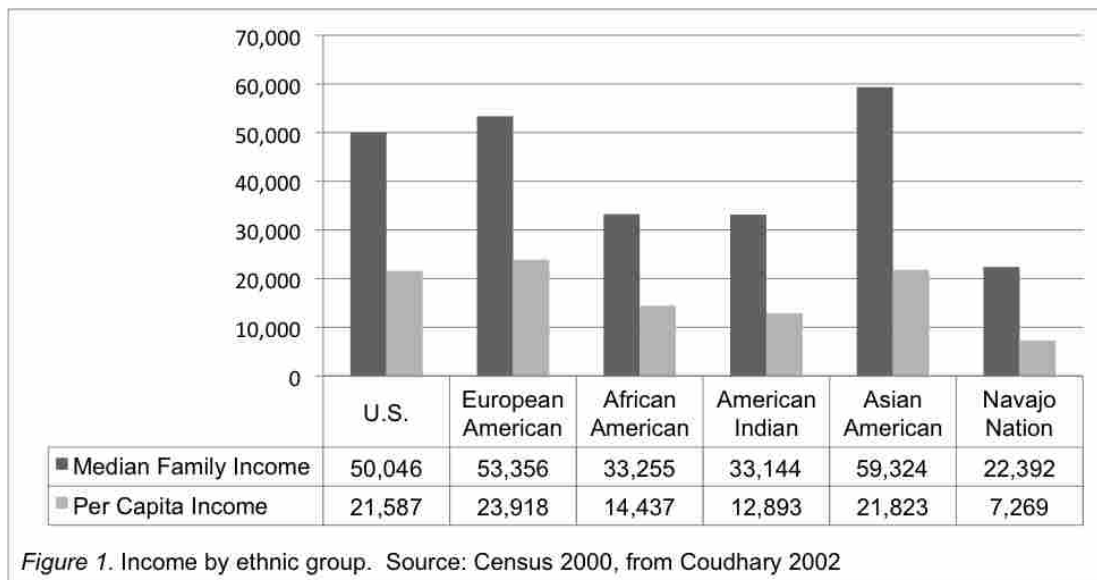
Most Native Americans experience lower levels of employment, life expectancy, and income when contrasted with other ethnic groups in the U.S (U.S Census 2007; Navajo Division of Economic Development 2008; Cornell, 2005). Some of these are livelihood function characteristics that inform this thesis. Other measures of poverty and human welfare, such as health, follow similar patterns. According to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, deaths are 7.7 times more likely from alcoholism, 6.5 times more likely from tuberculosis, and 4.2 times

more likely from diabetes for American Indians than for the general population (Choudhary, 2006).

Navajo poverty. The focus of this study is on the Navajo tribe, which remains poor by both income poverty and human poverty measures. Despite poverty reduction being in the forefront of political agendas and major international human rights and own development conventions for the last number of decades, Navajos have made little progress in economic and social rights, as they continue to suffer from higher poverty, lower education, and a greater incidence of disease and vulnerability than any other group.

The majority of the Navajo tribe lives on what is referred to as the Navajo Nation, a semi-autonomous region of the United States covering 27,000 square miles of northeastern Arizona, southeastern Utah, and northwestern New Mexico (University of Arizona, 2009), making up the largest Native American reservation in the United States. Of the reported 298,215 Navajo people in the United States, 173,987 (58.34%) live inside the borders of the Navajo Nation (U.S. Census, 2000), within geographically dispersed communities that are almost invariably distant from markets and commercial opportunities and service centers (Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development, 2008; U.S. Census, 2007). The Navajo Nation lacks any urban centers and is made up primarily of dirt roads. Most communities consist of small groups of housing units around schools, hospitals, trading posts, and chapter houses (University of Arizona, 2009). Of the roughly 48,000 homes on the reservation, an estimated 18,000—37.5%—are without electricity, accounting for 75% of all Native American households without electricity in the country (Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, 2010). Also, of Navajo Nation households, 15,000—32%—lack complete plumbing, and 13,000—27%—lack complete kitchen facilities (Census 2000).

In terms of economic activity the Navajo Nation can be considered one of the most, if not the most, marginalized ethnic group in the country (See Figures 1-4). Using the standard poverty measure of income, it can be demonstrated that more than 42.9 percent (Census 2000) of the Navajo Nation population live below the American poverty line, decreased from the previous number of 56 percent (Census 1990). The Navajo Nation also has the highest poverty rate of any ethnic group in the U.S, even among American Indians (University of Arizona, 2009) (See Figure 4). According to the Navajo Nation's 2005-2006 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, the Nation's unemployment rate in 2005 was 48 percent and the per capita income was \$6,217 (See Figures 1-3). In comparison, the region with the second highest unemployment rate in the country in 2005 was Washington D.C. with 7.5 percent (Choudhary, 2006). In 2001, the lowest state per-capita income was Mississippi with \$21,750.



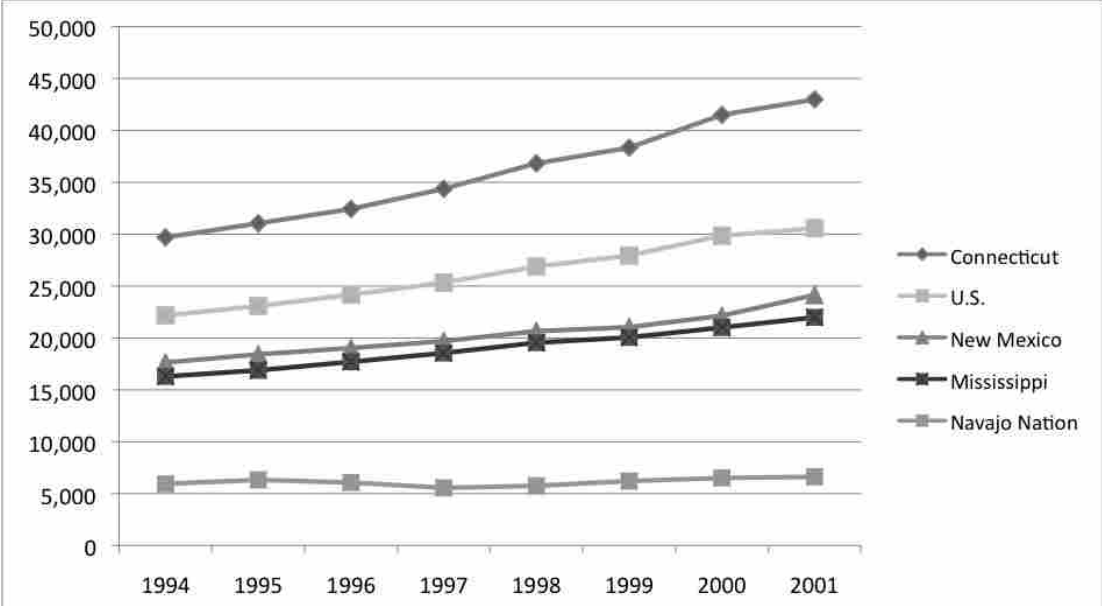


Figure 2. Per capita income by region. Source: Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

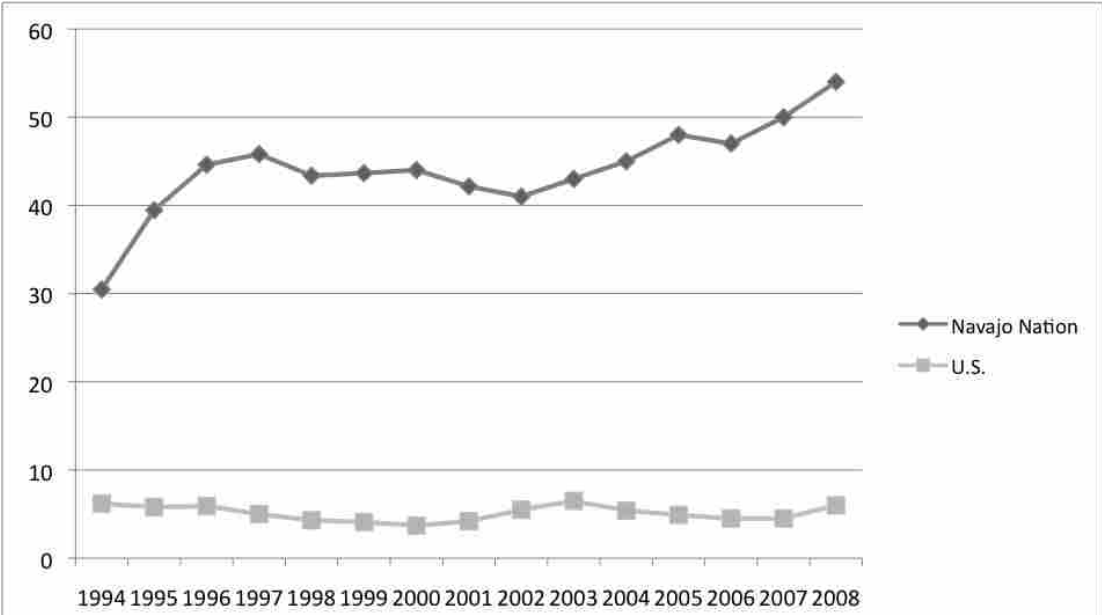
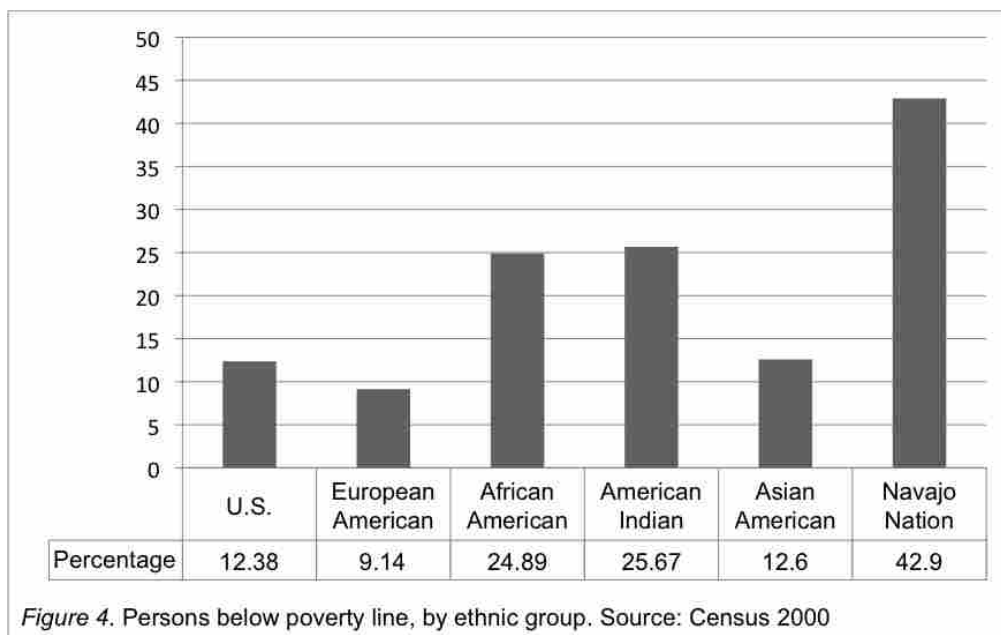


Figure 3. Navajo Nation versus U.S. unemployment. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Broadening the scope of poverty to factors outside economic activity, Navajo experience poor standards of living in nearly all spheres of life. Health and crime indicators for Navajo groups are similar to those for American Indians as a whole, with higher rates of homicide and suicide as well as mortality rates for adults and infants (Table 2).

Table 2
Navajo vs. U.S. Health Indicators

Region	Mortality Rate	Homicide Rate	Suicide Rate
	Per 100,000 Population		
Navajo Nation	629	19.7	16.8
United States	479	8	10.6

Source: 2005 Navajo Community Health Status Assessment, Choudhary 2002

The Navajo suffer much of the same low education levels as those in other Native American communities. Census 2000 found that of the population over the age of 25 living in the Navajo reservation, only 55.93% held High School diplomas and only 7.29% had Bachelor's degrees. These respective figures for the American population in the same year were 80.40%

and 24.40%. Of this same Navajo Nation population, an astounding 12.16% had no education, as compared with 1.44% of the U.S. population.

These results—persisting social ills and violations of social and economic rights—are contrary to the goals of the United Nations Declarations of 1948 and 1986. According to the traditional measures of poverty, and as illustrated in Figures 1-4 and Table 2, the people of the Navajo Nation would be considered a poor and vulnerable group (Ravallion, 1996), clearly an underdeveloped region in need of targeted poverty reduction. And given the tribe's unique culture, traditions, history, and worldviews, it is necessary to approach poverty from a wider perspective than the restricted neoliberal approach.

Addressing Poverty

The development community concedes that poverty needs to be mitigated at international as well as local levels. The dialogue, however, gets increasingly turbid when addressing what exactly poverty is, how it ought to be measured, and how to properly work toward its eradication. Bringing the social and cultural context of poverty to the forefront requires a good understanding of poverty's measures and definitions that are unique to a targeted group or environment (Todaro and Smith, 2003; Chambers, 2002; Wordofa, 2004; Bereday, 1961). Appropriately addressing poverty for the Navajo Nation requires knowledge on how Navajo define and measure poverty and well-being.

Addressing Navajo poverty. In regards to the Navajo, is the standard income based measure of poverty appropriate? When it is said that 42.9 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, does this mean that 42.9 percent are in a state of ill-being? In this case, the relevant question becomes, is poverty the same for Western nations as it is for developing regions? Does well-being have the same meaning for majority groups as it does for indigenous peoples? Should poverty for the Navajo be determined by income or some other measures?

Consequently, this research focuses on the determinants of poverty from multiple perspectives, accounting for multidimensional chronic deprivation in the Navajo Nation, as well as discussing possible solutions for delivering broad-based development. The study takes account of the economic and human rights relations between expansion of economic growth and poverty reduction and development on the Navajo Indian reservation, sometimes referred to as the Navajo Nation. The research is an attempt at understanding and explaining the structure and development of socioeconomic systems and its possibility to generate poverty, underdevelopment, or development in some of its parts.

The definition used for development in this case is as follows: “the comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process which aims at the constant improvement of the wellbeing of the entire population...the free and complete fulfillment of the human person” (UN Declaration on the Right To Development, Preamble and Article 1.2). Further explicated: “development is conceived as involving major changes in social structures and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of sustainable economic growth, the reduction of poverty and enlarging choices and opportunities” (Geo-JaJa and Azaiki, 2010).

Using this particular definition of development, the research also challenges the assumption that indigenous development can only be achieved via neoliberalism, a term that refers to development activity through free market economicism (Ball, 1998) by commodification or privatization of education. This approach has been unsuccessful in addressing the indigenous development problem (Morrow and Torres, 2000). The alternative approach that is championed here is a livelihoods approach. Referred to as the “hybrid economy model,” it emphasizes that the customary or non-market sector has a crucially important role to play in addressing indigenous poverty worldwide (Altman, 2009).

Appropriate poverty measurements. It is critical to establish an appropriate poverty measurement in order for an effective approach to integrate the poor into mainstream and local economies and social functioning. Current research suggests that different types of poverty identification and assessment can establish very different descriptions in regards to who the poor are, how many poor there are (Laderchi, Saith, and Stewart, 2003), and that narrow approaches to poverty definitions “could easily miss the poorest of the poor” (Ravallion, 1996, p. 1330). In addition, improper recognition of correct poverty indicators can lead to misinterpretations about what poverty *is* altogether.

Studies of indigenous peoples worldwide also recognize the centrality of the right to self-determination, and indigenous peoples' own diverse perspectives on development. These include a proper balance to be struck between market forces and pro-poor participatory development frameworks that allow for an uplifting of indigenous opportunities and raising of indigenous voices.

Statement of Problem

While the current picture of poverty in the Navajo Nation seems bleak, it is incomplete. The current method of measuring poverty in the Navajo Nation, by means of purely monetary measures, is not representative of Navajo poverty and thus is ineffective for any attempts towards eradication. Given significant differences between Western and Navajo cultures, the Navajo people have distinctively different needs, values, and interpretations regarding what constitutes well-being and what aspects are requisite for a quality life (Eversole, Ridgeway, and Mercer, 2005). Recognizing these differences, I propose that measuring poverty by income alone is incomplete in attempting to understand the quality of life experienced by those on the Navajo reservation. Without developing a poverty measure that reflects Navajo values, culture, and worldviews, it is impossible to capture the true magnitude of poverty and who the poor

actually are in the Navajo Nation. Thus, the understanding of these perceptions of poverty and its conceptualization is key for this study.

Currently, in connection with the Navajo Nation, poverty is being approached from a purely human capital perspective, being measured and targeted only through economic indicators (Choudhary, 2006). At the same time, rather than a decrease in poverty and increase in life quality, the human capital approach has led to a higher incidence of political, social, and economic human rights violations and failed living standards than those seen for other ethnic groups. The result is that poverty reduction efforts have failed to impact both economic conditions and human poverty. Non-localized policy efforts have only attempted to make Navajos think, speak, and behave in ways incongruous with their localities and rich cultural history (Roessel, 1999). Although understanding of and sensitivity to the complexities of problems surrounding Navajos is improving, this has not had any effect in reducing the following: problems of (1) severe and pervasive income poverty among the Navajo Nation's indigenous populations, (2) poor living conditions and severe health problems, and (3) low quality education and attainment, all of which are strongly correlated both with disempowerment and poverty. Also, despite increased political voice and influence, Navajos continue to experience complex problems of social injustice and marginalization that compromise economic, social and political development. Much of the literature suggests that if policymakers were to go beyond concentrating on equalizing human capital characteristics, much of the income differential between indigenous and non-indigenous populations would disappear.

Purpose of Study

This is an exploratory and definitional study, the purpose of which is to allow Navajo peoples to establish their own indicators of well-being and poverty rather than to accept the imposed traditional, strictly economic indicators. These locally derived definitions are then used

to assess the poverty situation on the Navajo reservation, comparing to the current income-based poverty descriptions from the human capital approach. Current research suggests that that the types of people identified as “poor” can depend much less on their individual characteristics than on the researchers’ understanding and view of poverty (Laderchi et al., 2003). Therefore, it is vital to establish an appropriate definition and measurement of poverty to accurately identify the groups of highest need, so they can be effectively targeted within planned interventions.

Recent poverty studies have begun to consider what it means to be poor from perspectives outside simple income measures (UNDP, 2006; Laderchi, et al., 2003). Policymakers have begun to recognize the benefits inherent in involving local peoples in the process of defining their own indicators for measuring quality of life and well-being (Narayan and Petesch, 2007). This enables a more thorough clarification of own poverty and well-being against that of standardized poverty lines. The result is a richer, more comprehensive, and multidimensional conceptualization of the nature of poverty that leads to better inform local stakeholders, Navajo leaders, and policymakers, thereby assisting them in targeting social and economic poverty in the Navajo Nation. This participatory approach also empowers individuals to be active participants, involved in own development for their own poverty reduction.

Significance of Study

This is the first study, of which I am aware, in which poverty for the Navajo is looked at and defined by indicators established by the Navajo themselves, rather than by outsiders. Rather than following the already constructed understandings of poverty, this research produces new insights into Navajo well-being that have not before been discussed. Along these lines, the study offers an alternative to the current neoliberal approach, which ignores respect for human rights in the Navajo Nation and mismatches policies with the greatly limited poverty measurement. In

addition, this study seeks to enhance the depth of the “what is poverty” discourse, by providing insight from a previously unstudied indigenous population on this topic.

The ultimate aim is for these localized insights to contribute to an increased state of well-being, a life of dignity and empowerment through which the Navajos will be able to claim their rights and voice, and to live their lives as they desire through enhanced capabilities. The findings will also serve to better inform local stakeholders, Navajo leaders, and policymakers, and assist them in targeting problems and alleviating poverty in the Navajo Nation.

Summary

This study has major implications for poverty reduction strategies through the development of capabilities and improvement in well-being for Navajo peoples. By discussing the issue of Navajo poverty, and placing poverty discussions within a multidimensional framework, I hope to increase understanding on what factors are critical for quality life for members of the Navajo tribe living on the reservation. Furthermore, this study recommends future policy directions for development frameworks capable of optimising welfare of Navajos whose livelihoods directly or indirectly depend on localized education. It is anticipated that the major output of this research is on important notions of equity, access to quality education, and distributional implication of rights-based development in poverty reduction, with a view for increasing livelihood functions and empowering indigenous people in the Navajo Nation.

This work increases understanding and awareness of the importance of the indigenous right to own development. There is a critical need for governments and individuals to accept their roles as duty bearers in the provision of rights for the indigenous peoples within their boundaries and understand that they are the entities responsible for eradicating social injustices (United Nations, 1986, article 8; Gibbs 2005). There is great need for governments to not only

recognize that these rights exist, but to actively protect them by means of lawmaking, political action, treaties, and other means.

This study maintains a new approach within academia, and specific to research of indigenous and marginalized peoples. Whereas traditionally, scholarly research is produced with the intent to inform a scholarly community and push the bounds of knowledge forward, the ultimate aim of this research is to answer, more importantly, to the Navajo people themselves. While I maintain the importance of contributing to a widening academic understanding of poverty and indigenous development, my real concern is not so much in the well-being of other scholars, but in the well-being of the Navajo people, and in potentially participating in the process of improving their life conditions. I hope this research will positively impact poverty and development policy on the Navajo reservation. Ultimately, the contribution of this work, while twofold in benefitting both scholarly and indigenous communities, is a collaborative social science model making me firstly responsible for the well-being of the communities and groups being studied (Denzin, Lincoln, and Smith, 2008). The ultimate goal of the study is to facilitate peoples in the Navajo Nation in identifying certain indicators by which to properly measure their well-being and capabilities, and, in turn, use these factors to develop a framework for effective targeting within livelihood promotion measures and locally applicable education strategies for a culturally sensitive development strategy.

Literature Review

In the last two decades, many studies have demonstrated policy failures in the areas of poverty reduction and capability deprivations (Todaro and Smith, 2003; Tilak, 2002; Toakley, 1998; Fagerlind and Saha, 1989). However, available evidence actually suggests that social indicators in both absolute and relative—ratio of Indigenous to non-Indigenous—terms have further widened, at least at the national level (Choudhary 2006, 2002; Navajo Division of Economic Development, 2008; Cornell, 2005). For nearly two decades, studies have shown economically driven methods of measuring poverty to produce significantly different results from studies accounting for poverty as made up of social, political, cultural, and economic factors. A study performed by Jodha (1988) in Rajasthan India found household well-being indicators to increase over time while those same households fell deeper poverty based on monetarily driven indicators. Similar results are found by Shaffer (1998) and Franco (2003). Robb (1999) found the poorest members in certain Armenian regions to be those not with the lowest incomes, but those who were most excluded from their communities. Laderchi et al. (2003) concluded that the number and type of people described as “poor” depends little on the characteristics of the “poor” and much more upon the definition used for poverty and the researchers’ epistemological view of poverty (Shaffer, 2005).

Navajo vs. Western Philosophies on Education and Poverty Reduction

While poverty everywhere involves people experiencing very real material and other deprivations, “the concept of poverty is used to cover a wide-ranging set of interrelated life-chances which vary and are valued differently in the diverse cultures and sub-cultures of the world” (Bevan and Joireman, 1997, pp. 316-317).

This research attempts to answer whether poverty is the same for the Navajo as it is in the typical globalized Western society. How do the Navajo consider and measure well-being? Can a Western model of education be applied effectively for poverty reduction in the Navajo Nation? In order to address some of these issues, it is important to recognize what differences and similarities may exist across the two cultures. This being said, when considering the Navajo culture, there are some fundamental differences in philosophy, learning, traditions, principles, and thinking. Benally (1994) explains that within Navajo thinking, “knowledge, learning, and life itself are sacred and interwoven parts of a whole” (p. 23), and while Western tradition tends to separate secular and sacred knowledge, within Navajo tradition these two principles are combined. Furthermore, Navajo tradition and well-being contrasts with the largely one-dimensional Western approach, recognizing a holistic balance and harmony to be obtained between (1) the development of the mind, (2) skills to enable survival, (3) appreciation of positive relationships, and (4) relating to one’s home and environment (ibid.). Understood as the principle of “Sa’ah Naaghái Bik’eh Hozhoo” when balance is found between these four principles, a person finds himself in harmony with the natural world and the universe (Diné College, 2008), and Navajo must learn to find this balance to “evolve into our true selves” and “become fully functional beings” (Benally, 1994). This principle has important implications when comparing Navajo and Western education, economics, and overall values: “Economics seems to be the focus of American education and *life*” (italics added), whereas the purpose of learning from a Navajo perspective is to “gather knowledge that will draw one closer to a state of happiness, harmony, and balance” (ibid.:30). Understood by Willis (1988) as the “harmony maintenance model,” this need to live a life of balance often supersedes economic decision making for Navajos.

In terms of education and poverty reduction, it also becomes important to understand how our goals influence societal thought and behavior, as it is common for a desired end to transmit or even create certain values within society. Education is especially influential in this regard. With education, we are communicating to our students as well as to our society what characteristics, skills, and knowledge are of worth in our world. When education becomes the means of obtaining a single end, i.e. economic growth, we convey the notion that this is the singular value of worth in our society. Thus, when education is used only instrumentally, for purposes of economic productivity and wealth production, inexorably economic productivity and monetary wealth become the transcending values in our society, and the primary means of determining one's success and even happiness. In this same vein, education is not only used to attack poverty, but to create it, because it is by education that we determine these culturally significant values and simultaneously create the indicators by which poverty is measured. In our own, economically-driven society, education is used to produce economically productive individuals, so clearly when other individuals lack economic productivity, they are considered to be poor.

Why the need for this discussion? Because, it is our nature, as economically-driven Westerners, who measure well-being by income only, to look at the high incidence of low income in a place such as the Navajo Nation and determine the region to be "in poverty." However, the people in this same region might justifiably look at the mainstream American society and determine us to be "in poverty" because we lack the life balance by which they measure well-being. I argue this to convey that declaring a certain proportion of the Navajo Nation to be under the American poverty line is completely arbitrary. Unless the people in question maintain an equal definition of poverty, it does no good to label them as impoverished. This is not to say that level of income maintains no significance in the Navajo Nation, simply

that the word “poverty” ought to be reserved for use within the maintained poverty standards and indicators relevant to a particular group.

In addressing these differences in values as well as important indicators, Choudhary (2006), while constructing the Navajo Nation’s Economic Development Strategy found economic development to be of little significance to many:

To my great surprise, I found out that most of the people (I talked to) do not think that economic development is something, which is needed in the Navajo Nation. To the ordinary people, better roads, good housing, electricity, closeness to water sources etc. are more important than creation of employment opportunities. When asked if they needed jobs, a number of the respondents did not quite understand even the question. What job - used to be the normal reaction. (p. 49)

These opinions have been found within formal empirical studies in addition to the anecdotal evidence. A study conducted by the Eastern Navajo Regional Business Development Office in 2001 found that 52 percent of Chapters in the Eastern Navajo Agency rated economic development to be of low priority (ibid.). And these findings are not simply a function of economic prosperity for the Eastern Agency. In 2004, this agency had the highest unemployment rate of any in the Navajo Nation with 65.72 percent.

Navajo Economic Behavior

The direct adoption of orthodox neoliberal policies into Navajo societies and economies, rather than lead to economic growth, has actually compounded problems and created policy failures. The main shortcoming of neoclassical theory, discussed more later on, in explaining Navajo economic behavior, is in the assumption of maximization of behavior and rational decision making (Boulding, 1966; Alchian and Allen, 1969). According to traditional economic theory, all men are understood to be rational beings, “utility maximizers with all forms of human

behavior explainable as some derivative form of this maximization process” (Willis, 1988, 122). This same theory fails to explain how or why individuals choose, for one reason or another, not to maximize their economic behavior (Gauri, 2003). However, sometimes far from being rational beings according to traditional economics, Navajo often, seeing goods and services as a trade off, resist economic opportunities for reasons of social and cultural protection (Diné Policy Institute, 2007a). This is not surprising, as some economists have begun to recognize that “people don’t always behave in selfish or even rational ways” (Fine, 2002), and there are serious flaws in any model that tries to assume such. Often, Navajo make economic decisions not based on which will provide the highest output, but on which will most diminish the threats to traditional life-style (Ruffing, 1978). The result of this has been little success in economic growth, but levels of cultural preservation unattainable without trade offs in investment. Why then, if neoliberal economic theory is incapable of explaining many tendencies and patterns of Navajo economic behavior is it used as the primary method of development plans, of poverty measurement, and of educational pedagogy? Clearly, a new model needs to inform decision making at political, economic, social, and educational levels in order to appropriately match Navajo needs.

Willis (1988) marks the relationship between Navajo and Anglo as one of conflict. “That conflict exists between an industrialized Anglo world armed with the self-serving momentum of orthodox economic theory and the remains of a unique traditional Navajo economic and social system...The result, then, is an adversary relationship, with the Anglo attempting to wrest resources from the Navajo and the Navajo attempting to maintain their cultural integrity” (ibid.: 130). For this reason, there is little hope for human capital endowments to create any sort of growth or other development activities on the Navajo reservation (Cornell and Kalt, 2000).

Willis' 1988 article entitled, "Navajo Economic Behavior," is likely the first attempt to understand and explain the unique characteristics of the Navajo culture and economy that blatantly reject neoclassical economic principles. In the past, it was assumed that the Navajo society and economy was no different than successful Western economies in any way outside their poor economic abilities. On the contrary, Willis suggests that the Navajo economy is radically different from Western economies, the result of a "distinct and unique cultural evolution," and because of these differences, even "well-intentioned orthodox economic activity there might not produce 'economic success'" (ibid: 120). While this new framework for Navajo economic activity is beneficial, it also gives reason for concern as Willis explains that the Navajo are likely to remain marginalized not only as long as they base their own economic exploits upon the neoclassical model, but as long as they are "locked in combat" with the mainstream American economy.

It is no surprise that the theories of neoliberal orthodoxy are applied to all societies regardless of adequate "fit" or propriety, seeing as how nearly two centuries of economic thought have been produced by a monopoly of Western economists, untrained to think in ways outside of their own industrialized worlds. The solution lies not in Western economists analyzing native societies from the outside, but in the development of contemporary indigenous economic thought and theories to explain non-traditional economies from the inside.

Navajo Nation Approaches to Development and Poverty Reduction

No other group of Americans is more economically depressed than Native Americans, and no other areas in America suffer more from inadequate infrastructure and a lack of job opportunities than do Indian Reservations and Alaska Native villages... In my lifetime I have been to many places around the world and have experienced many terrible living conditions. What is so shocking is that the social and economic conditions for

many Navajos closely resemble those of people living in Third World countries. (Senator John McCain, 1996).

Based on the aforementioned figures on unemployment, income, and education, the Navajo Nation is clearly in need of real development. In terms of economic growth and business activity, the situation on the reservation is dire. Of what little money is made on the reservation, sixty eight percent is spent in off-reservation communities (University of Arizona, 2009). In 2004, this “total leakage of Navajo dollars” was \$1.067 billion (Diné Policy Institute, 2007b).

While the economic difficulties of the Navajo Nation are quite multifaceted, the approach to economic development is one-dimensional, a classical neo-liberal approach which ignores the root causes of economic growth and poverty, and attempts to address the symptoms. These economic policies also tend to contradict traditional Navajo values (Dine Policy Institute, 2007a). Choudhary (2006) outlines the objectives of the Navajo Division of Economic Development:

1. To promote and create employment and business opportunities.
2. To recommend the enactment and rescission of laws to create a positive business environment.
3. To maintain a decentralized network of business development offices in the primary growth centers of the Navajo Nation.
4. To develop a comprehensive financing program to expand or develop new economic enterprises for the Navajo Nation.

The approach taken by the Division of Economic Development is very one-dimensional and fails to address the real problems of poverty. “This policy while worthy in its objective implicitly focuses on business development as the catalyst for economic development on the Navajo Nation” (Diné Policy Institute, 2007c). This is somewhat surprising, given that the

Division's own economic development strategy uses Nobel laureate Gunnar Myrdal's more robust definition of economic development: (1) creation of employment opportunities, (b) increasing per capita income, and (3) reducing the gap between rich and poor (Choudhary, 2006, p. 32). While this definition of economic development is mentioned in the Economic Development Strategy of the Navajo, it doesn't seem to be implemented. The majority, if not all, of the objectives and goals outlined in the report are focused on the first of these three crucial parts to economic development, while the last, and by many experts' opinions the most important, "reducing the gap between rich and poor," is all but ignored. Moreover, these two important pieces are somewhat dismissed altogether by Choudhary (2006):

In all these statements and definitions, the importance of creating employment opportunities is quite loud and clear. None of the definitions or statements, for example, implies that the purpose of economic development is to improve the quality of life by giving people free per capita money from Gaming, or by providing them with welfare checks. All these statements and definitions talk about creating employment opportunities. No wonder, creation of employment opportunities is the top priority of all the leaders of the developed countries and many of the developing countries as well. (p. 32)

In addition, the report states that the only measures of economic performance over which they have control are unemployment, inflation, and poverty rates (ibid.) The erroneous assumption here is that the only means of increasing per capita income or reducing wealth disparities is by handouts if not employment. An understanding of the capabilities approach can fill in the key piece that is missing; it is equal capabilities or opportunities, not equal income through welfare, that bridges gaps between rich and poor (Robeyns, 2006). It is education that provides the path to greater equity, income, growth, and development (Ranis, Stewart, and

Ramirez, 2006). The Report accepts education as important for the well-being of the Navajo people, even noting it as the “top priority” of the current administration, but there is no connection made between education and any type of influence on economic activity. Creating sustainable development calls for understanding education as a means to alleviate poverty, which is multidimensional, and as such, requires a multidimensional, diversified approach to poverty reduction. It is important for researchers and policymakers in developing and developed nations alike to remember the many faces of poverty and begin working to develop solutions that are multidimensionally sensitive and adaptive to various needs.

Navajo Education

In 1991, the U.S. Department of Education wrote a report entitled “Indian Nations at Risk,” similar to the 1983 “A Nation at Risk”, which criticized America’s schools and found the majority of Indian students to be socially and educationally at risk. The “Indian Nations at Risk” report identified four primary areas in which Indian Nations are at risk:

- (1) Schools have failed to educate large numbers of Indian students and adults;
- (2) The language and cultural base of the American Native are rapidly eroding;
- (3) The diminished lands and natural resources of the American Native are constantly under siege;
- and (4) Indian self-determination and governance rights are challenged by the changing policies of the administration, Congress, and the justice system. (p. iv)

While these four areas seem quite expansive, the latter three are a function of the first. That is to say, if the education of all American Native students can be improved, there will be significant results in all other areas of life. Specifically, if resources are targeted to primary education the result will be an increased quality of life for the entire Navajo Nation. This is a focus necessary for any developing region and imperative for any region seeking to revitalize its culture, traditions, and language (Geo-JaJa, 2005).

Education in the Navajo Nation, much like many other aspects of Navajo life, has a history of oppression from Western society, an education template imposed by the mainstream U.S. culture, often found to be unsuccessful for Navajo students (Platero, 1986). In other words, the Navajo system of education has long been aimed at “trying to make whitemen out of Indians” (Roessel, 1999, p. 14). Using curriculum and teaching methods designed for student success in a unilateral neoliberal society, it is no wonder that its application to a holistically balanced culture has led to high dropout, low retention, poor persistence, and low levels of overall graduation. The disregard of Navajo ideals in the education system has caused many Navajo to be raised without functional abilities in their native language. A 1996 study found that of five-year olds in Navajo Head Start programs and kindergartens, only 31% spoke Navajo fluently (Francis, 1996/1997).

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has maintained responsibility for the formal education of many of the nation’s American Indian students since the late 19th century. While increased proportions of Indian students across the nation began moving to public schools after World War II, the BIA long remained the predominant provider of Navajo education. In 1995, over half of the Bureau’s schools were located on or near the Navajo reservation (St. Germaine, 1995). Today, education on the Navajo reservation is offered by a mix of competing systems: BIA, public, and contract/grant schools (Roessel, 1999). The poor quality of many of these BIA schools is well documented. Christenson (1996) found BIA schools to be more likely than public schools to offer Title 1, remedial math, and bilingual programs, and less likely to offer academic enrichment programs (Wiseman, 2000). BIA schools are also highly centralized under federal control due to proportionally high levels of federal funding (Wiseman, 2000).

In 1995, of the roughly 6,000 teachers and administrators in the teaching force in the 242 schools on or near the Navajo reservation, less than twenty percent were Navajo (Izzo, 1995).

This means that over eighty percent of teachers in schools on or near the Navajo Nation were not properly familiar with Navajo culture, philosophies, values, pedagogies, and language, and thus inadequately prepared to work with Navajo students (Rude and Gorman, 1996). This is disconcerting, given that success for this group requires that their education is structured upon their own holistic principles of learning, philosophies, cultural values, and pedagogies rather than trying to force them into foreign ways of thinking, learning, and acting (Rhodes, 1994). This colonial approach to education delegitimizes Navajo language, culture, and traditions, enhancing the cultural values of Western society rather than their own values (Geo-JaJa and Azaiki, 2010).

Recent developments in the Navajo Nation exemplify the vision that the Navajo have for their education system. Originally Navajo Community College, Diné College was established in 1968 as the first ever tribally-controlled Native American college in the United States (Boyer, 1997; Garrison, 2007). The college is founded upon Navajo principles and philosophies of learning. The curriculum establishes students within Navajo appropriate thought processes while simultaneously teaching skills for proper activity within the mainstream labor market. The idea is a “cumulative” rather than an “alternative” approach (Sen, 1997, p. 1961), teaching students to be “Indian and American at the same time” and taking “the best from each way of life and combining it into something viable” (Roessel, 1967, p. 205-206).

In 2009, Diné College, one of only two tribal colleges in the Navajo Nation, formed its first four-year bachelor’s program. Instead of this first program focusing on producing highly skilled and productive manpower for efficient economic development with a program such as business, economics, or engineering, the first program was one to train and certify elementary school teachers—a B.A. in elementary education (Diné College, 2010). For those familiar with Diné College and its unique educational philosophy—built upon traditional Navajo principles and values—this is not surprising. The institution clearly recognized the need to increase the

number of qualified Navajo teachers to begin the transition to a primary education system completely founded and taught on Navajo ideals, traditions, and language. Not only does this demonstrate the Navajo commitment to the education of the youth as “our concern and our responsibility” (Rude and Gorman, 1996, p. 70), but illustrates the wisdom of investing in primary education as one of the most effective tools for poverty reduction and development (Mingat, 1998; Bennell and Furlong, 1998), and the need to establish it early on in the development process (Geo-JaJa, 2006; Woo, 1991). These developments also exemplify the pivotal role of tribal schools in facilitating cultural protection and playing a key role, sometimes as a “more reliable means of development” (Tilak, 2002, p. 202). Reyhner and Eder (2004) describe this influence:

Tribal schools and colleges are helping to change the negative environment on many reservations to an environment of hope. The renewal of traditional Native cultures in and out of school is reestablishing a sense of community and is fighting the materialistic, hedonistic, and individualistic forces of the popular culture. (p. 328)

These tribal schools have in the past and will continue in the future to be a vital part of cultural rejuvenation for the Navajo Nation.

In addition, the Navajo Sovereignty in Education Act of 2005 took some major steps towards cultural empowerment, granting sovereignty to the newly organized Navajo Board of Education, whereas before the control had been primarily in the hands of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) (Navajo Nation Council, 2005). This movement gives the Navajo Board of Education authority to establish curriculum, create learning standards and benchmarks for achievement, establish criteria for teacher certification, develop programs for Navajo language and cultural programs and certify teacher capacity to deliver them, as well as power to direct the Navajo Nation education system in many other areas (ibid.). In short, this act decentralized

much of the decision-making power in the Navajo Nation, transferring a great deal of sovereignty from the BIA, into the hands of Navajo people. This is a model for development that has proven effective for many developing nations and should be highly beneficial for the Navajo as well, decentralizing the decision-making power and control of educational inputs and outcomes, while unburdening the fiscal responsibility through maintenance of a centrally funded system of education (Geo-JaJa, 2006; Prudhomme, 1995). This movement will prove to be one of the first sparks to educational improvement that the Navajo Nation has seen in decades (Roessel, 1999), and start the important process of reconciling the current hodgepodge of educational delivery systems into a single Navajo-controlled school system. After many years of struggling to fit their students into the borrowed Western model, with little success, the focus will now be on a culturally relevant curriculum and system to strengthen and perpetuate, not only the skills needed for success in the workforce, but vital principles and values of the Navajo way of life and language that have been long waning.

The desire to strengthen the Navajo language within schools is a wise decision for reasons of student success in addition to cultural preservation. In the 1983 report “A Nation at Risk,” it was found that with each grade level, Navajo students fell further behind their non-Indian counterparts, averaging about two years behind average by fifth grade (Zah, 1984). However, in this same report, it was found that Navajo speaking students who were instructed in “well-defined Navajo language instruction programs” did not fall behind like the English only students (ibid.).

The solution for this at-risk Navajo system of education is a transition away from the current instrumental approach to a holistic model which embraces rather than rejects Navajo culture, and begins to teach Navajo students from culturally relevant approaches. “For students who come from socioeconomically marginalized groups, holistic multicultural education is not

only socioeconomically empowering but also physically, emotionally, ethically, and spiritually nurturing” (Mayes et al., 2007, p. 3). This education will enrich the lives of Navajo students, revitalize fading cultural norms, and improve the general quality of life for all on the reservation.

Approaches to Poverty and Development

For proper context and understanding of any poverty or development methods, one must be familiar with the paradigm on which it is based or measured. Currently, three of the most dominant paradigms and approaches to development and poverty reduction are the neoliberal/human capital, human development, and human rights-based approaches. To better contextualize and understand the issue of Navajo poverty, I address each of these approaches and outline their accompanying definitions of poverty, poverty measurement, and suggestions for poverty reduction. Accordingly, poverty studies need to address indicators of social and economic measurement and begin to focus on well-being as defined by the values of the communities themselves rather than based on a pre-determined poverty line, especially for those communities whose economies “are not based on monetary transactions” (Quispe, 2003; McNeish, 2005).

Human capital theory: The dominant paradigm of poverty conceptualized. Human capital theory has been and still remains the dominant paradigm for most international agencies—the World Bank and IMF—with interests in economic growth, national development, and poverty reduction. It has influenced the main development decisions of developing countries through loan conditionalities and technical assistance for decades (Tikly, 2004; Klees, 2002; Bonal, 2004). Human capital theory asserts that a nation’s people are its greatest asset, and thus its most productive source for promoting economic growth, and in turn reducing poverty. The trickle-down effect is said to come about through the commodification of education for skills and knowledge for functionality in the labor market (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961). With the current

salience of globalization in development, many continue to stress the necessity of markets in efficient human resource development (UNESCO, 2000). In short, the human capital approach accepts economic growth as a necessary and sufficient condition for poverty reduction and successful development (DFID, 2001). To ensure this, nations are encouraged to rapidly industrialize, liberalize trade, and privatize and commodify education (Stiglitz, 1999; Rose, 2003; Muyale-Manenji, 1998). Thus, the traditional definition of poverty is directly linked to quantitative economic indicators and other market-based measures.

Income poverty is defined by deprivation in a single dimension—income—because it is believed either that this is the only impoverishment that matters or that any deprivation can be reduced to this common denominator (UNDP, 2000, p. 17). Income poverty defines the poor by a “headcount” of those people under a particular income level or “poverty line” (Lipton and Ravallion, 1993).

Considerations from this perspective fail to see poverty as an actual “problem,” but simply as a natural bi-product of the free market system, and thus aren’t concerned with necessary short-term solutions. The result is perpetuating poverty and further deteriorating circumstances for the most destitute (Arzabe, 2001). Furthermore, as was observed by Davis (2003) and Fine (2002), human capital is unable to deal with issues of gender, culture, identity, and history. In this context, neoliberal development approaches are adjudged ineffective in many indigenous communities as per the conflict across value systems. In addition, where Western cultures and markets are naturally founded upon principles of liberalization, individualism, and competition, most indigenous cultures work within economic systems based upon personal relations and community or societal achievement rather than personal gain (Gregory, 1982). While neoliberalism produces weak results in market-based Western economies, the approach proves detrimental when applied to the indigenous economies whose

behavior often doesn't resonate with the neoclassical models.

Human Capital is incapable of explaining a person's behavior insofar as decisions are made for other-than-economic reasons. Furthermore, the theory is likewise unable to explain a culture whose values are built upon non-economic principles. "In human capital theory, as in the other parts of mainstream economics, human beings act for economic reasons *only*" (Robeyns, 2006, p. 72). Thus, if any nation, state, or community is producing low economic returns, there is something fundamentally *wrong* with the system, rather than that system possibly having different philosophies, ways of knowing, or measurements of well-being. Within this same framework, education cannot be understood to have any intrinsic value. It is good for economic productivity and functionality and nothing more, causing education to ignore its role for societal benefit, personal fulfillment, or the enhancement of cultural norms and values, only teaching skills and knowledge relevant to successful economic activity.

The answer to this, however, is not a complete rejection of neoliberal principles and instrumental educational roles, as Sen praised the understanding of human capital perspectives as a means of better understanding the capability perspective (Sen, 1999). Instead "the broadening that is needed is additional and cumulative, rather than being an alternative to the 'human capital' approach" (Sen, 1997, pp. 1959-61), otherwise referred to as the hybrid model (Altman, 2009).

The reductionist human capital approach (Rose and Dyer, 2008) to education is "economistic, fragmentized and exclusively instrumentalistic," concerned with the promotion of education only insofar as it "serves as an investment in the productivity of the human being as an economic production factor" and produces efficient returns leading to economic growth (Robeyns, 2006). Education, ignored for its intrinsic value or for the right of any citizen to its access, is stripped down to a tool for the "maximization of economic welfare" (Jolly, 2003)

measured by GNP growth, measuring educational outcomes in terms of returns to investment “at the expense of more humanistic criteria (Geo-JaJa and Zajda, 2005, p.126). Such an approach to education most often leads to a systematic privatization of the education sector, commodification of education (Morrow and Torres, 2000), a withdrawing of state support at critical stages, and becoming subject to the “normative assumptions and prescriptions of economicism” (Ball, 1998). In short, citizens are left to themselves to fight for whatever educational opportunities they can obtain, rather than the state providing equal opportunity for education as a human right (Gopinathan, 1998; World Bank, 1993), causing geographic and gender inequities (Mehrotra, 1998).

While the Human Capital approach to poverty reduction and education is potentially threatening to most nations, it is exponentially so when applied to non-Western societies. Watson (1994) astutely notes that the direct adoption of Western paradigms creates “an almost total disregard for local cultures in the transfer of technologies so long as it can be shown that GNP and GDP growth rates are rising.” Instead, it is crucial that school systems be designed to match individual need and circumstance, as “the Western school model superimposed on native societies has often been only marginally productive at best and at times devastating (Mortensen, 2000, p. 198). While education is the essential tool of all development (Geo-JaJa and Mangum, 2003), it must be an education carefully constructed to match the capabilities and reach the functionings particular to the region.

United States poverty thresholds. Current procedures for calculating and measuring poverty in the United States are based on poverty threshold measures. Used as a measure of absolute poverty, this poverty line measures the level of subsistence below which the essential living requirements for a particular household cannot be met (Hulme, Moore and Shephard,

2001, 8). People living below this threshold are termed “poor,” assumed to have an income less than can provide for their needs.

The origins of the United States poverty line, more commonly referred to as the “poverty threshold,” come from Mollie Orshansky of the Social Security Administration in the early 1960s. In these first poverty operationalizations, Orshansky calculated poverty rates by calculating the minimal costs needed for a family to live. These calculations were based on the costs of a national food plan for individual families, and multiplied by three, assuming that the typical family spent roughly one-third of its monthly income on food (Fisher, 1997; Willis, 2000).

Orshansky (1965), recognizing the need to alter poverty calculation formulas based on varying characteristics of disparate households to provide basic needs, differentiated the thresholds based on family size and farm/nonfarm status, as well as a myriad of other indicators. The result was a detailed matrix of 124 separate poverty thresholds. In 1981, these criteria were simplified, eliminating the farm/nonfarm criteria as well as other critical differentiators. These changes reduced the number of poverty thresholds from 124 to 48 (Fisher, 1997).

Today, the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is the formula used by many to calculate poverty rates across the country. It is a standardized formula for all individuals and households regardless of occupation, place of residence, or any other factors. In 2008, the Federal Poverty Level for a single person household was an income of \$10,400 per year, adding \$3,600 for each additional person in the household. Thus, the FPL was \$14,000 for a two-person household, \$17,600 for a three-person household, \$21,200 for a four-person household and so on (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008). These numbers are adjusted annually for inflation.

The oversimplification of poverty calculations today has led to a gross misrepresentation of the poor in the country as a whole as well as in particular regions. Fisher (1997) describes even Orshansky's method of measuring poverty, which is much more robust than the typical formulas used, as a "working or quasi-official definition of poverty." The method of calculating poverty explained by the Department of Health and Human Services above is not meant as a comprehensive calculation; however, it is often used comprehensively. That being said, using the standard U.S. Poverty Threshold to measure even income poverty in the Navajo Nation is inadequate, given the high percentage of farm families and considerably low living costs on the reservation. Thus, the current estimates of even income poverty—42.9 percent in the Census 2000—on the reservation are highly overestimated.

Globalization. Globalization is a major actor in development throughout the world today. Its weight is felt in every country and its effects touch economic, educational, political, and social decision-making in both developed and developing regions. The momentum of this phenomenon must be dealt with by policymakers in every developing region. Countries face the decision of how they should allow globalization to affect their countries and citizens. There are economic gains to be made, but these can often come at a high social cost. Walter Feinberg (1975) does well in explaining this catch 22 of global proportions which is as applicable to the Navajo Nation as to any developing nation:

Clearly, neither the decision not to modernize, nor the decision to modernize according to already established patterns is a very attractive alternative. To fail to modernize means to fail to create even the possibility of controlling the hazards of everyday life, such as disease and the hazards that come from being in the midst of industrialized nations. To modernize under the traditional pattern, however, means to destroy community ties, and to increase the structural violence that arises from

urban poverty, slums, and unemployment. (pp. 202-203)

The understanding is clear, globalization does carry with it significant implications, both valuable and hostile. The problem, however, is that countries and regions do not have the choice to either globalize or not. They will be affected by this giant of world change one way or another. But, they can choose some ways in which to minimize the effects.

In principle, globalization is a breaking down of national borders and boundaries. Some of these borders deal with, *inter alia*, culture, politics, technology, and education, but the main heart of this issue is that of economics. Globalization is, in turn, a breaking down of the barriers between individual state markets and economies. It is the systematic movement towards a single, global economy, with very limited obstruction between nations. Globalization accentuates the establishment of privatization and trade liberalization, and pushes governments away from any involvement in the market. The ultimate goal is the least amount of state intervention and expenditure possible (Rose 2003; Muyale-Manenji, 1998). The state is expected to withdraw from the provision of any kind of subsidies, expenditure in the social sector, or welfare system; set at odds with the market (Tabulawa 2003). Any deviation from the outlined behavior and the state is said to be “interfering” — stifling “the creative and liberating potential of the market” (Boron 1995). The result of these actions can be quite detrimental to the social sector, education being one area that is affected most (Geo-JaJa, Payne, Hallam and Baum, 2009). This ought to be a cause for concern for any developing nation, given education’s crucial role in human capabilities development. Globalization pushes aside social, cultural, and most importantly ethical goals of education in favor of market goals (Geo-JaJa and Zajda, 2005). Given the impact that globalization can have on all aspects of a nation’s growth—including education—it is essential to understand the way that a country implements important changes amidst international pressure to globalize.

Human development: Addressing functionings and human capabilities. In

recognizing the fact that a strong link might not exist between growth and well-being, and that poverty cannot be regarded as a purely economic phenomenon (Geo-JaJa and Azaiki, 2010; Alston and Robinson, 2005), the human development approach captures poverty in a multidimensional way rather than solely based on GDP. Often referred to as the “people-centered approach” (Chinsman et al., 1998), the focus instead is on enriching the lives and freedoms of ordinary people (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003), to enlarge choices and opportunities for individuals, with the ultimate goal of creating an “enabling environment for people to enjoy long healthy and creative lives” (ul Haq, 2003, p. 17). In addition, human development declares the individual to be both the means and the ends of all development efforts (Streeten, 1994). Within this model, social and economic rights, not income, are the drivers of poverty reduction efforts (Jolly, 2003), as “recent economic pressures, national and international, have led to serious neglect of the human dimension in development” (Geo-JaJa and Mangum, 2003, p. 294).

While human capital theory assumes that economic growth will trickle-down the socioeconomic ladder, human development accepts that the livelihoods, capabilities, and functionings of individuals can only be impacted through quality growth: “what matters is not the things a person has—or the feelings these provide—but what a person is, or can be, and does or can do” (Todaro and Smith, 2003; Sen, 1999). The reductionist view takes a “product-centered” development approach, placing an “inordinate amount of emphasis on creating physical infrastructure and on providing goods and services to people” (Chinsman et al., 1998); all of which are domains of great need on the reservation, but fail to capacitate individual choice and opportunity and have no effect on people’s capabilities or functionings. “The challenge of development is not merely to provide goods and services to people. Rather it is to motivate and

assist them to identify their needs and potentials, and to organize themselves to meet those needs using primarily their own local capacities and resources” (ibid: 44). Development is to create action and movement on the part of the people for active local change rather than simply providing goods for those people to consume.

Enhanced by the principles of Sen’s capability approach (Sen, 1999), human development encompasses the important characteristics of capabilities and functionings, with functionings being the outcomes or achievements desired, and capabilities being the opportunities needed to achieve those outcomes (Robeyns, 2006). The strength of this approach lies within each individual’s or each state’s ability to decide for themselves what these outcomes are, while in the human capital approach the outcome is standardized: economic growth. For each state to be able to monitor, assess, and increase well-being, a definition of those functionings needs to be established, and the corresponding capabilities distinguished by which to measure progress. Within such a model, there is no use for standardizing measures of poverty and ill-being because in each circumstance, the desired functionings and required capabilities will be unique (Watson, 1994). Some scholars suggest this process to be requisite for the Navajo to establish the essential elements of their culture and way of life for full functioning (Roessel, 1999).

The distinguishing factor between human capital and human development theories is that the latter recognizes poverty as a combination of lack of functionings, choices, and opportunities, powerlessness, voicelessness, low capabilities, and other forms of social injustices, which conspire against living a life of dignity. According to human capital scholars, poverty is conceptualized as consistent with problems of low income and low investment in education. As Sen (1999) notes, “relative deprivation in terms of incomes can yield absolute deprivation in terms of capabilities” (p. 89), depending on a person’s ability to convert income into well-being,

which is in turn based on, for example, health status, age, gender, and differences in social or ecological environment” (pp. 70-71). In contrast, however, relative deprivation in income can also lead to little or no deprivation of capabilities, as some persons may require less income for equivalent levels of well-being.

Human poverty, according to the human development approach, is defined by impoverishment in multiple dimensions—deprivations in a long and healthy life, in knowledge, in a decent standard of living, in participation (Tilak, 2002). In short, human poverty denies human beings access and ability to make choices and create opportunities for living a tolerable life (UNDP, 1997). However, rather than rejecting the significance of economic growth for development and poverty reduction, the human development approach has been shown to enhance and act as a major contributor to economic growth (Birdsall, 1993; Jolly, 2002).

Human development uses a number of indicators—life expectancy, education, health, income, and equity (United Nations, 2007)—to measure the meaning of “well-being,” recognizing the importance of monetary indicators as means rather than ends in the development process. Instead of being concerned only with the level of income of a certain individual, the real question that Chambers (2006) says should be asked is: “What can you do to reduce our bad experiences of life and living, and to enable to achieve more of the good things in life to which we aspire?” This falls in place with Korten’s (1990) concern as to whether or not a people’s quality of life is “consistent with their own aspirations” (p. 66). Under such a definition, there is no need to establish any standardized income line, because in some cases, income may not even enter into the equation. Instead it is other areas of life that are of far greater concern.

The provision of a quality basic education is fundamental in any attempt to increase the quality of life of the poor (Bennell and Furlong, 1998). A human development approach accepts the intrinsic as well as the instrumental value of education, the personal and collective, economic

and non-economic (Robeyns, 2006), and as such, supports the access of every individual to a quality education, especially at the primary level, and that failure to provide these educational opportunities represents “some culpability in the system” (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003, p. 50). A human development approach provides education as a multipurpose tool of development for economic growth (Mingat, 1998). Thus, in contrast with human capital, which delimits education to its function in promoting skills acquisition (Rose and Dyer, 2008), human development addresses education, for, *inter alia*, obtaining market-relevant skills and knowledge (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961), for poverty reduction (Geo-JaJa and Azaiki, 2010; Zachariah, 1997), for personal empowerment (ul Haq, 2003; Geo-JaJa, 2006), and for human rights (Alston and Robinson, 2005).

Human rights: Emerging patterns of responsibility in development. The human rights approach to development and poverty reduction adds a dimension of accountability for institutions, organizations, states, and individuals to recognize and protect the rights of every individual worldwide (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003). These rights have their legal foundations in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights of 1966. The human development and rights-based approaches share many similarities, but need to be discussed separately as their inception, as well as methods of implementation follow different paths. Therefore, it is crucial for developing regions not to assume that human development efforts will be accompanied by increases in human rights, but to actively ensure the promotion of human rights in all stages and facets of human development (Chinsman, et al., 1998).

As early as 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the recognition that education was a basic human right (Eicher, 2000) and should be provided to all on a universal and compulsory basis. This concept “implied

that it should be free, at least at the lower levels” (ibid.: 33). The idea of a free and compulsory education fundamentally requires a regulatory organization to provide such opportunity and to oversee proper fulfillment of these rights. And in the case of educational provision, it is the state that maintains this vital responsibility (Yu, 1997; Lee and Gopinathan, 2005; Patrinos, 2000).

Similar to the human development approach, a rights-based approach accepts the role of rights as both means and ends to poverty reduction, understanding that increasing human rights will have the direct effect of increasing capabilities necessary for development, but also that the existence of rights themselves constitutes wealth, and lack thereof constitutes poverty (Speth, 1998; Tilak, 2002). The tendency in recent decades for human rights discussions to address only civil and political rights has contributed to the maintenance of social exclusion and extreme poverty in many regions, especially developing nations and indigenous communities (van Genugten and Perez-Bustillo, 2001; Mabusela, 1998). The rights-based approach emphasizes the importance of increasing and ensuring all types of rights, including social, economic, and cultural rights, in addition to the more frequently addressed political and civil rights (Chinsman, et al., 1998). Some examples of social, economic, and cultural rights include, but are not limited to work, food, housing, health care, education, and culture (Mabusela, 1998). Economic, Social, and Cultural rights are mandated by the UN Charter, the International Bill of Rights, the UN women’s and children’s Conventions, ILO Conventions and numerous other international instruments (Paul, 1998).

The right to development. The 1986 UN “Declaration on the Right to Development” was the first ratified convention to recognize and proclaim the human right to development, meaning not that peoples, generally speaking, have a “right to develop,” but more importantly that peoples affected by development are entitled to their universally recognized and inalienable human rights as a result and medium of that development, and that it is the duty of all involved

parties, governments, agencies, and individuals alike, to provide and protect those rights (Paul, 1998). In addition to acknowledging and promoting the provision of human rights, The Declaration on the Right to Development provides what is possibly the most comprehensive and consummate definition of development by which any developing regions can measure its efforts. By this definition, development is the “comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process which aims at the constant improvement of the wellbeing of the entire population...the free and complete fulfillment of the human person” (Preamble and Article 1.2). Thus, any development strategy, economic or comprehensive, whose aim is on the production of goods only, runs contrary to this definition and is a violation of the right to development, as all people have the human right to be the means and ends of development.

The mandate of the International Law of Development (ILD) calls for a development strategy that is human or people-centered, and as such requires development that is participatory, involving those people as acting agents for their own poverty alleviation. As Paul (1998) explains: “Development must be people-centered and participatory...enabling and empowering people to initiate self-reliant, self-managed development efforts in all spheres relevant to wellbeing.” People also have the right to “decentralize and devolve powers of governance to encourage local and regional self-determined development.”

Made consistent with Human Rights and Human Development is that indigenous people lack choice and opportunities, suffer from powerlessness and voicelessness, as well as suffer from other forms of social injustice, which conspire against living a life of dignity. Founded on a desire to preserve distinct cultural concerns, needs, and values, UN conventions have declared indigenous peoples’ right to and need for autonomy in their own poverty and wealth defining processes, so as to effectively maintain their ways of life and live on the basis of their distinct cultures (Tauli-Corpus, 2005; Bamba, 2003; Fukuda-Parr, 2001). Given the inadequacy of

normed poverty measures, it is concluded that a human rights-based approach drives the actions supportive of empowerment and voice to help indigenous peoples develop their own definitions and measures of poverty to most effectively target needs, protect rights, and improve their quality of life. The human rights-based approach raises the dignity of the individual as the most important aspect of society, attempting to enlarge voice and opportunities, and promote education as a human right rather than a commodity. A discussion of human rights in terms of the Navajo is necessary because their current standard of living and the disparity that exists between them and other groups in the United States, it is not only unfortunate, but is a violation of their right to economic, social, and cultural development. This reveals a failure by the United States government, as well as U.S. citizens to fully comply with the UN Declarations of Human Rights (Maribel, 2001). Failure of the United States to equalize social, economic, and political opportunities for Navajo Nation members directly violates its ratification of the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, as well as the 1986 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to own development.

The human rights approach is critical to the structure of this study due to its role within participatory methodologies, allowing local individuals to take part in their own development. Addressing issues of poverty while simultaneously empowering and providing opportunities for participation, considering the poor as “principle actors of development” (UNDP 2003).

Historically, in the United States as in other countries, wealth and poverty have been defined “by dollars rather than by the cultural values of the people” (Kraus, 2001). The historical evolution, or rather stagnancy, of the concept of poverty has been long-ruled, arguably since its creation, by the structural functionalism of the North. In a growing globalized society where monetary affluence is the dominant, and often singular, value, goal, and concern, naturally all well-being is measured in relation to it. Stated simply, not only is this monotheistic

conceptualization of poverty incorrect, it is dangerous. Forcing this model upon the Navajo constitutes a rights violation in terms of the Navajo right to determine their own societal values. Its authoritarian assertion of a single value strips society of any supplementary or superior values. This idea is supported by the fact that strict pursuit of economic growth “harms the healthy development of a society” (Zachariah, 1997, p. 475). This because the singular pursuit towards any end inevitably transmits the transcending importance of the value behind that end.

Human rights and education. Well-being in any society, and especially in indigenous cultures, needs to incorporate cultural, religious, personal, and individual values to enhance the omnipresent economic values. Notions, philosophies, discussions, and conceptualizations of poverty are not only descriptive, but actively influential of social value construction and shaping of cultural attitudes. Education is pivotal in this process. Robeyns (2006) suggests the non-instrumental roles of education to be especially essential, providing a free primary education to every individual despite her economic potential, and including that “children learn to live in a society where people have different views of the good life” (p. 71). Assuming and perpetuating that the “good life” is the same for all cultures as for Western is a further infringement upon cultural rights. Furthermore, education has been said to only matter if it enhances well-being, strengthens respect for human rights (Geo-JaJa and Azaiki, 2010), and fosters social and economic rights (Tikly, 2004; Leher, 2008; Gauri, 2005).

In any attempt to alleviate poverty, create social justice, and improve quality of life, the strong state alone is not sufficient in the process of the betterment of society. In some instances, governments have been known to compound rather than relieve problems (Menon, 2002). This transition also requires movement away from individual goals and aspirations alone to the increase of social capital (Diener and Seligman, 2004)—awareness of and concern for other individuals and the community as a whole. In many instances, parents and families need to take

upon themselves responsibilities that have previously been delegated to governments. This is especially true in Navajo society where informal education at the household level has been the driver of cultural and traditional maintenance for centuries. “Surely individual persons, families, and communities also owe their children access to good education, even when they are not bound by any legal duty to provide any such education” (Robeyns, 2006, p. 78). Thus the relevance of viewing all rights, and in this case the right to education, as high priority goals rather than binding constraints for the states (Nickel 2002, 1987). Such thinking relieves the state of legal constraint and judicial enforcement, and instead places the duty for providing and attaining such rights in the hands of all—states, organizations, and individuals alike (Gauri, 2003).

Consequently, understanding the right to education as a high priority goal lays everyone, both organizations and individuals, with responsibility for their fulfillment. This puts education provision in the hands of the government in formal contexts, and in the hands of parents, families, and communities in informal contexts. The combination is a holistic embodiment of the educational experience required to successfully teach students and prepare them for an empowered life, facilitate the reaching of capabilities and functionings, and match the education of the individuals with the needs of their communities and individual lives. This does not relieve states from providing these crucial social services, especially at primary stages of education, but adds to the state responsibility a duty to all to be aware of the needs of their families and neighbors, that all might be granted equal opportunity for success through education by whatever means possible and necessary.

Human rights education. More recently, education is being recognized as important in the promotion of human rights, not only being offered as an end—a human right itself provided—but also as a means of further understanding and facilitating the expansion of human rights. This movement, which has been slow in its growth in the United States, but has seen

great progress in many countries around the world, assumes active instruction about human rights in the classroom. In 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 60/251, which encourages that “Member States should continue the implementation of human rights education in primary and secondary school systems,” and that “States that have not yet taken steps to incorporate human rights education in the primary and secondary school system” should do so” (United Nations, 2009).

One possible solution to Navajo poverty lies in provision of human rights education, not only on the Navajo reservation, as well as other indigenous communities, but as importantly, in all United States primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, that our society begin to recognize the need to promote growth of human rights nationwide. Historically, and currently, understanding of human rights in the United States is unfortunately narrow, generally being limited to political and civil—legal—rights (Pogge, 2002). Most often, these rights are seen as the sole responsibility of the state to provide. Consequently, in the United States, “there is little to no understanding of economic, social, and cultural rights” (Human Rights Resource Center, 2000). Within human rights discussions, it is the responsibility of all, not just the state, to ensure that these rights are provided. Human rights education teaches that all human beings have rights (Tomasevski, 2003), and that all are responsible for those rights (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2002). In this sense, every citizen of a society becomes a duty-bearer, promoting democratic values, accepting multicultural views of equality, and protecting the economic, social, cultural, and political rights of their fellow men and women (Human Rights Resource Center, 2000). Sen (2004) takes this a step further, arguing that “if one is in a plausible position to do something effective in preventing the violation of such a right, then one does have an obligation to consider doing just that” (pp. 340-341). The right to education is provided as a state responsibility

through the ratification of international conventions by supporting nations, and through individual citizens by means of human rights education.

Education for Poverty Reduction and Development

Since the World Education for All forum in Jomtien, Thailand, education has been widely accepted as a means of reducing poverty levels worldwide. Education is the crux upon which all development hangs. No country can succeed in reducing poverty, fostering economic growth, decreasing inequities, or empowering its citizens without educating them first (Hanushek and Woessmann, 2008; UNESCO, 2001), and educating them well (Samoff, 1999).

The literature is conclusive in support of education's function in reducing and eradicating poverty for developed and developing nations alike. And much of the literature suggests education to be the most effective instrument for poverty alleviation (World Bank, 1990; OXFAM, 1999). UNESCO (2000) makes this important connection between education and economic development, or any other type of development:

Education has moved from being the floor on which a country build its competitive success to being its competitive success...The single most important question for economic success is now: How smart are your people. (p. 15)

Therefore, within any poverty reduction discussion, it becomes essential to address the issues of education and how the system intends to influence these processes. Important here is not the fact that schools provide knowledge to students, but that they provide "different kinds of knowledge" to students (Mayes et al., 2007), and that economic as well as societal success depends on the *right* knowledge being provided to students. Thus, chronic poverty in the experience of the Navajo is the direct result of the powers in charge of education being concerned less with matching education to the needs of the people and community to capacitate

and empower, and more with the propagation of the “paradigm of continuous economic growth” (Kuhn, 1996).

Experts from every poverty approach acknowledge education as one of the necessary cruxes of development. Human capital experts support a strong relationship between level of education and income. For decades, investing in education has been based upon rate of return analyses, which show a positive correlation between increased education and earnings (Becker, 1964; Psacharopoulos, 1973; Becker and Chiswick, 1966; Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 2004). This relationship is said to be recognized “beyond doubt” (Blaug, 1972), “not rarely but almost universally and quite steeply and systematically” (Tilak, 2002). Not only is education proven to increase potential earnings for individuals, but has been supported for decades by reductionists for its role in creating economic growth (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964; Mincer, 1974).

In terms of a human development approach, potent poverty reduction relies on the benefits and values of education as both a means and ends of development. This idea is addressed by Tilak (2002), who explains education not as an instrumental process of development, but as development itself, and as such, “lack of the same constitutes not just a cause of poverty, but poverty itself” (p. 195). Thus, from this perspective, education is not simply a means to increase well-being and empowerment, and facilitate development, if appropriately matched to national need (Geo-JaJa and Mangum, 2003), and if the *right* knowledge is being transmitted to students (Mayes et al. 2007), education *is* empowerment, education *is* well-being, and education *is* development (Tilak, 2002). In addition, the literature suggests an inverse relationship between education and poverty, with increased levels of quality education leading to lower proportions of poor people, not to mention the above listed human capital rewards of increased wages and economic growth (Fields, 1980; Tilak, 1986, 1994). As noted by Galbraith (1994), there is “no well educated literate population that is poor, [and] there

is no illiterate population that is other than poor.” Thus, from this understanding, educational poverty *is* poverty.

Education poverty consists of, and can be measured by, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative internal efficiency indicators. Some of these indicators are, *inter alia*, enrollment rates, dropout rates, graduation rates, gender parity, and overall achievement measures. In relation to these internal efficiency indicators, it can be difficult to understand the extent of education poverty in the Navajo Nation. While some data exists demonstrating low levels of academic achievement for Navajo (e.g. the aforementioned percentages of high-school and college graduates), there is a paucity of available data in many of the other areas. The data which I was able to obtain, was sparse. Dropout rates for the Navajo Nation are predicted to be roughly 30% (Brandt, 1992; Deyhle, 1989; Office, 1988; Platero, 1986). Studies on dropout on the Navajo reservation find factors such as traditional values (Lin, 1990), Navajo as the primary language (Platero, 1986), attendance in non-BIA schools, electricity in the home, and parental support to be positively correlated with persistence (Brandt, 1992). Despite the availability of hard data, however, the education poverty that exists on the Navajo reservation is well documented.

Method

Q-Squared, Qualitative, and Participatory Approaches to Poverty

Declaring poverty to be multidimensional in nature, the study requires a methodology capable of addressing this multidimensionality for effective poverty measurement in the case of the Navajo. Recognizing the need to address poverty in many areas of life over the past few years, many poverty scholars have begun to use a Q-Squared method - a mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis, which adds a participatory qualitative aspect to the traditionally income-based quantitative perspective (Kanbur 2007). Using qualitative methods in poverty research has become increasingly popular over the last couple of decades. This movement has been largely attached to the increasingly accepted notion that poverty encompasses many more dimensions and indicators than just income (UNDP, 1997; Alston and Robinson, 2005; Rose and Dyer, 2008; Sen, 1999; Hulme et al., 2001; Tilak, 2002). These scholars assert that different peoples instead experience poverty differently, and that these people should have a voice in defining what exactly poverty is.

The Q-Squared method suggests synergy between quantitative and qualitative methods and indicators rather than the “false dichotomy” often assumed between the two (White, 2002). Specifically, within this combined qualitative-quantitative methodology, the benefits of effective measurement, generalizability, and multivariate analyses works with the “value-added” from more in-depth, qualitative data with a multidimensional perspective (Lawson et al., 2003). The Q-Squared method is also completely appropriate for a topic such as poverty, with contrasting approaches—human capital and human development—consisting of quantitative and qualitative variables, respectively. Not only does a Q-Squared method provide two different types of beneficial data, but those data are able to accurately portray the level of poverty from each approach.

Participatory methods have strong connections to a rights-based approach to development and poverty reduction, stifling decades of support for outsider expertise. Instead, human rights call for individuals to have voice as well as autonomy in the process. The result is a richer, more in-depth, and multidimensional conceptualization and operationalization of the nature of indigenous poverty and vulnerability, a more powerful measurement and generalization with consideration of multiple variables simultaneously (Howe and McKay, 2005; Lawson, McKay, and Okidi, 2003; Hargreaves et al., 2007). Desiring to empower participants in the process of understanding poverty, the data obtained from this study adds a participatory, qualitative perspective to the existing quantitative understandings of poverty, using each for its particular benefit and possible contribution to the understanding of vulnerability and the multidimensionality of Navajo poverty. This method proves to be an effective approach for the means of confirmation/refutation as well as iteration, linkage, convergence, and triangulation (Booth 2003).

In particular, the use of participatory methods regarding people's perspectives of their own poverty became popular in the 1990s (Brock, 2002). Since this time, participatory research has gained influence and is increasingly being used to affect poverty policy today (Cornwall, 2000). The most prominent usage has been in the implementation of self-proclaimed participatory methods by the World Bank within Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the publication of *Voices of the Poor: Can Anyone Hear Us?* (Kanbur, 2005).

The participatory methodologies now used in many poverty studies have their roots in the agriculturally-based methodology of Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA). Reflecting principles from international conventions on the rights of the individual (Paul, 1998), as well as ideas of scholars like Paulo Freire (1970) who began to realize that exploited peoples should be enabled to conduct analyses of their own realities, the RRAs of the 1980s were some of the first literature to

begin using the terminology “participation” and “participatory,” with initial intensions of “stimulating community awareness” (Chambers, 1994). Out of this methodology grew the Participatory Rural Appraisal of the 1990s focused on empowering local people, creating sustainable local action and institutions, and facilitating participation in own development. Specifically, PRA is defined as “learning about rural life and conditions from, with and by rural people” (Chambers, 1992, p. 953). Other similar methods with RRA or PRA origins are Participatory Action Research (PAR) and, more recently, Participatory Poverty Assessment.

The qualitative Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) responds to conditions of exclusion, poverty, and vulnerability, and acts, in part, as a strategy for addressing and compensating for some limitations of traditional research methods, enhancing the validity and utilization of research findings. Some of the purposes of PPA are to recognize and consider various “poverty dimensions within the social, cultural, economic and political environment of a locality” (Booth et al, 1998, p. 6), as well as bring new stakeholders into the development process (Levine and Roberts, 2008). This participatory approach engages those who are the focus of policies and programs to study the issues and conditions that affect their lives (Chambers, 1994; 1997), including and empowering people in their own development (Chambers, 1995). The reasons for this are outlined by UNDP (2003):

The human rights-based approach to poverty reduction espouses the principles of universality and indivisibility, empowerment and transparency, accountability and participation. It addresses the multi-dimensional nature of poverty beyond the lack of income...The notion of participation is at the centre of a human rights-based approach to poverty reduction. The poor must be considered as the principal actors of development; they can no longer be seen as passive recipients; they are strategic partners rather than target groups. (p. iv)

The importance of participant inclusion satisfies the right to own development, and, as importantly, is far more likely to lead to successful implementation of effective development and education policy (Zachariah, 1997). And if such policies are not built around economic growth and monetary affluence as the foundational principles, it will be all the more influential in those corresponding communities. “Hence, we can clearly see the outlines both of a self-oriented development strategy and of an education radically different from the borrowed model. The strategy must start with a direct definition of the needs of the [poor people], without reference to the European model” (Amin, 1975, p. 51).

The nature of these qualitative practices is to follow local indigenous community members through a process of poverty conceptualization as well as well-being discussions, definitions, and classifications, thus enabling a more thorough clarification of individual notions of own poverty and well-being against that of standardized pre-determined poverty lines. These local definitions and indicators of poverty provide an assessment and analysis of indigenous poverty at a macro-level, based on the locally determined indicators, and act as a more thorough description of Navajo poverty. The involvement of participants in the problem defining process opens up opportunities for education on the overall aims of the research as well as in giving participants a voice and central role in building their capabilities and becoming empowered stakeholders.

The result is to distinguish the needs of the Navajo poor from the needs of the Navajo wealthy, as well as distinguish between the conceptualizations of Navajo versus European or Western poverty. Within such understanding, a self-oriented strategy discovers the needs of the poor, and a self-oriented development addresses these need by means of culturally appropriate education. I point out, however, that this education needs to be “radically different from the borrowed model” (ibid) inasmuch as the needs of the poor are radically different between the

compared groups. Thus, to know what changes in education will benefit the Navajo development effort, we must know the needs of the poor.

Design

Receiving permission to perform research on the Navajo reservation is a much more involved process than required by most research activities. I received the impression that an extensive history of “helicopter research” being performed on the reservation has caused the tribe to be very cautious regarding what kinds of research are allowed, and understandably, numerous steps are now instituted to ensure the protection of the Navajo people and the integrity of their culture. For this work, that means that the results and findings be used not only to improve the scholarly community’s knowledge of poverty, but much more significantly that the recommendations and study results be given to, discussed with, and used by the Navajo to better influence policy, change awareness of individuals’ needs, and increase quality of life. In order to do that, I will present my findings to and discuss them with individual chapters in which the data was collected, the Diné Policy Institute, who may be able to use the data and findings to influence policy on the reservation, as well as other Navajo Nation officials.

The study was conducted within the established parameters and regulations congruent with research in the Navajo Nation. I obtained a Class C ethnographic research permit—permit number C1008-E—as required by the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department (Appendix C). In order to receive this research permit, I was required to also obtain permission to perform the research from each involved chapter. The process for obtaining chapter approval consisted of (1) contacting the appropriate chapter official, either the chapter manager or community services coordinator, (2) discussing the nature and intentions, along with the proposed benefits of the research project, (3) requesting permission to be placed on the chapter agenda, (4) attending the chapter meeting, (5) presenting the procedures and proposed benefits of

the study to chapter members, (6) receiving consent from the chapter members, in the form of a vote, to perform the research in the chapter, and upon approval (7) receiving a “chapter resolution,” signed by chapter officials and council delegates to perform the proposed study (Appendix D).

Upon receiving chapter permission, I worked with local contacts to determine the most effective means of completing the research tasks, including, but not limited to, deciding how to contact and recruit potential participants, where and when to hold interviews, and determining appropriate selection criteria (Narayan and Petesch, 2007). In accordance with the research permit’s stipulations, I provided five days advance written notice to the Historic Preservation Officer prior to initiation of field work, notified chapter officials familiarizing them with the proposed field work, and provided forms of consent to participants informing them that they were not required to consent to interviews.

Q-squared participatory poverty assessment. This study uses a Q-Squared Participatory Poverty Assessment to gain a better understanding of how the Navajo culture, and Navajo themselves view and operationalize wealth and poverty. While I wished to remain faithful to the methodologies used within customary Q-Squared approaches, due to the paucity of available data sets for the Navajo Nation, I was constrained to slightly alter the typical methodology of the quantitative data collection. In a typical Q-Squared approach, secondary data from existing quantitative panel, survey, and other household data sets is analyzed along with primary qualitative data obtained from interviews, focus groups, or other methods within communities and localities (Howe and McKay, 2005; Lawson et al., 2003; Chambers, 1994; Laderchi, 2001). Specifically, I was unable to obtain any type of quantitative panel data sets for the Navajo reservation. In addition, the only household survey data available for the reservation was from the previous Census (2000), in the form of summative, descriptive statistics.

Therefore, for this study, the quantitative portion of the Q-Squared methodology is limited to pre-calculated data on Navajo poverty lines, thresholds, income, employment, and education.

However, while some resignations were made in regards to the means of data collection, the integrity of both the Q-Squared and PPA approaches remained in tact. As explained above, the purpose of this methodology is for quantitative and qualitative understandings and measurements of poverty to contrast with and complement each other. While the method of data collection may differ from other studies, the quantitative and qualitative data obtained in this study provide an accurate snapshot of poverty in the Navajo Nation from the dominant development approaches—human capital, human development, and human rights. It also allows me to compare and contrast the welfare of the Navajo people from each of these perspectives. The result is a multidimensional description and a better understanding of poverty from the perspective of the outside world as well as from Navajo individuals themselves.

The qualitative data used in this study was obtained from a process of semi-structured participatory interviews. This method was deemed appropriate as semi-structured interviews are seen as the “core” of good participatory research (Chambers, 1994; Grandstaff and Grandstaff, 1987). Also, they are used often within PPA studies (Shaffer, 2002; Plant, 1998), and are understood as a means of giving a voice to the voiceless (Feagin, Orum, and Sjoberg, 1991). Also preferable for their applicability to this type of exploratory and definitional study, semi-structured interviews put the participants in the position of power (Spradley, 1979; Morgan, 1997), thus allowing them to address topics that *they* understand to be significant, with interviewers then being free to further pursue and explore any ideas of consequence. As such, a list of potential questions (Appendix A) guided the course of discussion, but participants were free to discuss and explore any related topics or ideas, and likewise, I was free to pursue items brought up by the participants. The benefit of this approach is in avoidance of “a priori

assumptions” (Jackson and Smith, 2001), in contrast with structured interviews or questionnaires, in which topics and subjects are all created beforehand by the researcher and little latitude is given to participants to discuss what they deem important. Thus, the only topics to be discussed within are those already foreseen by the researcher (Smith and Osborn, 2008), leaving the researcher on the outside of the participant’s social world, trying to understand it from his own perspective.

Participant selection. The selection of participants was based on a two-stage sample, with purposive criteria driving the selection of chapters, and convenience sampling used for recruitment of individual participants within those chapters. While a certain level of randomness was desired for participant selection, in addition to certain operational limitations for obtaining research approval, as well as finding willing participants on the reservation, the advice received from local experts and organizers suggested that obtaining a random selection within the chapters was unrealistic. It was suggested that recruiting participants on site and interviewing them upon request would better facilitate the research process and more effectively meet the objectives of the study. Thus, the sample was largely defined “by who [was] prepared to be included in it” (Smith and Osborn, 2008, 56). Ultimately, I felt that the pragmatic advantages of using a larger convenience sample outweighed the potential advantages of the few randomly selected individuals who might have agreed to participate in the study.

Selection criteria. In attempt to provide a wide view of poverty across the reservation, this two-stage sample attempted to represent Navajos from various socio-economic groups, ages, locations, backgrounds, and levels of education (Narayan and Petesch, 2007). Ultimately the purpose of the study is to provide a view of poverty from multiple perspectives rather than from any particular group or association. For this reason, the study maintained a very broad selection criteria, seeking to include a wide characteristic range in the group of participants:

1. Over the age of 30
2. Have lived on the reservation over half of their life

Regarding age, it is important to select participants that have sufficient life experience and familiarity with the community and labor force to answer questions adequately, but are not too old to be actively engaged in affairs outside the home. For this, Narayan and Petesch (2007) suggest the ideal age range for participants to be 30 to 60 years. However, based on previous discussions with chapter leaders, who indicated that the more elderly Navajo, because of shifts in cultural values from older to younger generations, may have very different ideas regarding what designates Navajo wealth and poverty, I decided to include participants over the age of 60. Widening the selection age thus, I hoped to obtain a greater understanding of some potential shifts in ideas on poverty from older to younger participants

Sample. The sample consisted of 22 participants from the chapters of Chinle, Arizona, and San Juan, New Mexico. Despite the convenience methods employed during the second stage of the sampling process, the participants included in the sample represent quite a broad range of characteristics including experience, background, social group, language, age, employment, and education. Along with the consent form, each participant was given a demographic sheet and asked to provide some basic information (See Appendix B). Some of the characteristics of the sample, from these demographic sheets, are as follows. Of the 22 participants, 13 were female and 9 were male. The ages of participants ranged from 30 years to 71 years, with a median age of 41.5 for the sample. Regarding language, when asked to name their primary language (or the language they are most comfortable speaking), 7 of the participants indicated Navajo, 5 indicated English, and 10 indicated both Navajo and English. In terms of education, 3 of the participants had not completed high school, 1 participant had not finished high school but completed a GED, 6 had finished high school only, and 12 had

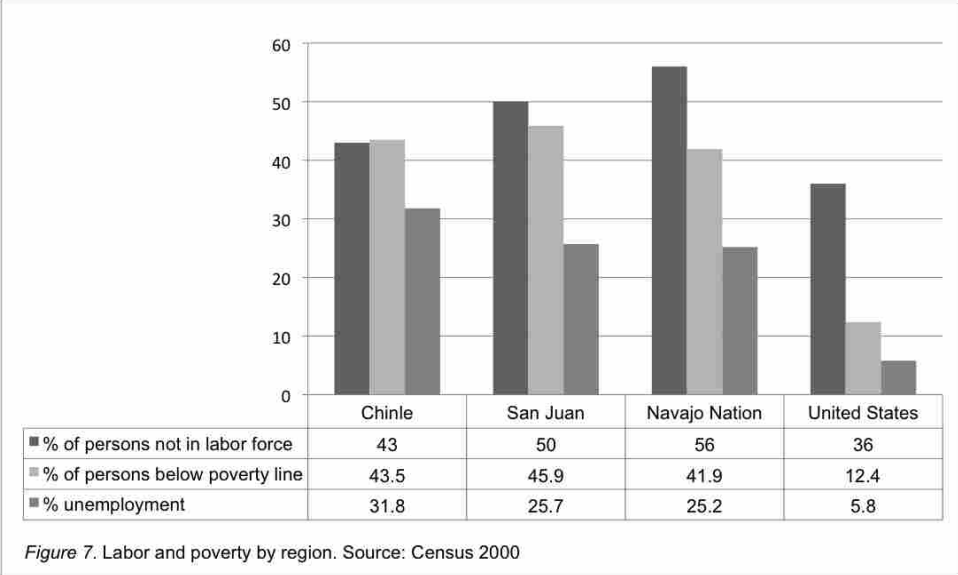
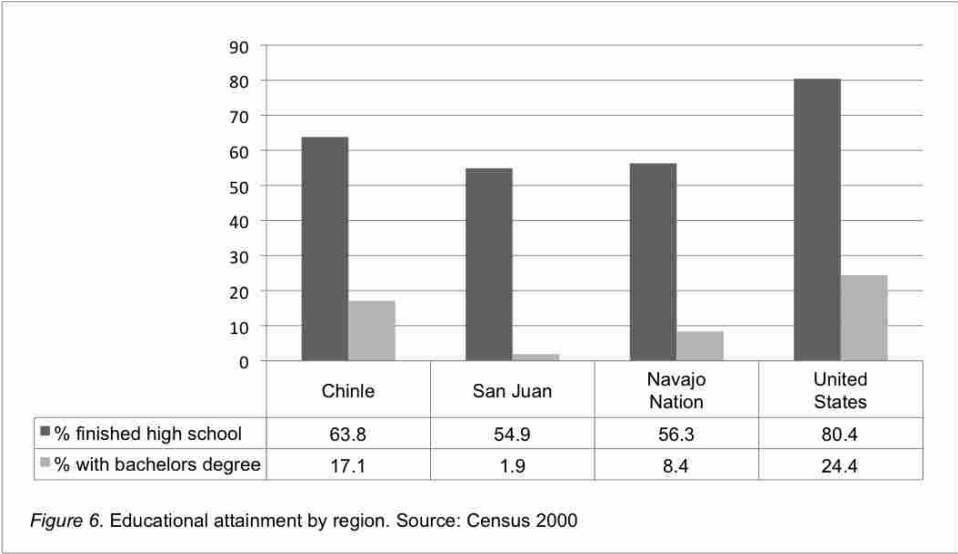
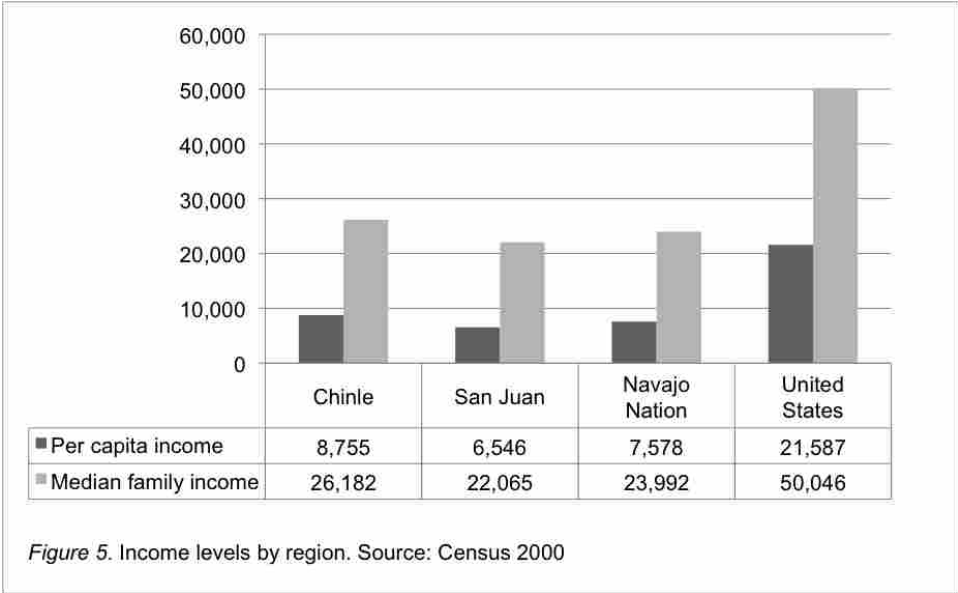
completed high school and either an Associates or Bachelors degree. If the sample failed to produce a broad range of characteristics in any area, it was that of employment. The participants included were highly employed, with 19 participants currently, if in a few instances temporarily, employed, 2 currently unemployed, and 1 retired. The type of employment maintained by characteristics seemed to be quite representative of the type of jobs held in the communities. Of the 19 employed, 9 participants are employed by the tribe, 4 are temporarily employed as Census 2010 takers, 2 work as school teachers, 2 are self employed, 1 is a bus driver, and 1 did not indicate his/her current employment.

Chapters. Interviews in the chapters of Chinle and San Juan discussed and determined what it means to be poor in Navajo households and communities and defined various levels of well-being in the community. These regions were selected to represent both small and large chapters of the reservation—The population of Chinle is nearly 9,000 while San Juan’s is around 600—and encompass different geographical areas, from New Mexico and Arizona. They also exemplify an urban/rural contrast. Although, as discussed earlier, there are no real urban centers on the reservation, Chinle is nearly as “urban” a chapter as one might find on the reservation.

The San Juan chapter is located near the four corners area of New Mexico, roughly 10 miles east of Shiprock—one of the reservation’s major population centers—and 20 miles west of Farmington—a major urban center for the area (San Juan Chapter, 2004). San Juan is a region that still maintains ties to farming and grazing, with farming providing a primary source of income for many of the chapter members. Nearby power plants—APS’ Four Corners Generating Station—and mines also provide employment for a small number of chapter members although the technical skills and education required for these jobs is typically above the level attained by the majority of chapter members (ibid.). The San Juan chapter is in a fairly isolated region with no paved roads or stores of any kind.

Possibly the most centrally located region of the reservation, in North East Arizona, the Chinle chapter is the second largest population center in the Navajo Nation, behind Shiprock (Census 2000). Chinle is an important region on the reservation due to its role in Navajo history, government, and business. Chinle was the site of the beginning of the Navajo “Long Walk” to Fort Sumner in 1864, during which an estimated 300 Navajos died. When the Navajo were finally released from Fort Sumner, Chinle became one of the principle areas of relocation for Navajos. As is common of many Navajo communities, Chinle has been typified over the years in its agricultural and grazing activities (Chinle Chapter, 2010). The area is also known for its National Monument, Canyon de Chelly, which brings thousands of tourists to the city yearly. Chinle is noted as a “primary growth center of the Navajo Nation,” acting as a hub for business, health, social, and government services (ibid.). Chinle is home to the largest, and one of the only shopping centers on the reservation.

In relation to the Navajo Nation statistics, it seems that Chinle has higher levels of income and educational attainment, but also higher percentages of people in poverty and higher unemployment. On the other hand, comparing to the Navajo Nation data, San Juan is worse off on all accounts other than unemployment, including lower levels of income and educational attainment (significantly lower in terms of college achievement) (Figures 5-7). As demonstrated in these same figures, all three regions are significantly worse off than the rest of the United States in terms of income, educational attainment, and workforce activity.



Procedures. I performed the interviews and analysis with assistance from two undergraduate students. All involved in the research tasks had either taken classes in qualitative methodologies and data collection or received specific qualitative training particular to the research activities. In the interviews, conversations were targeted towards understandings of poverty and well-being in the particular communities (Parker and Kozel, 2007). Using current methods of participatory wealth ranking (PWR), respondents were asked to identify the factors which the community defines as important in the measurement of the socio-economic position of households (See Appendix A) and identify different categories among the poor and wealthy (Howe and McKay, 2005; Hargreaves et al. 2007). If not directly addressed by the participants, questions were also asked regarding how education fits into these measurements and understandings of well-being and how education is involved in the process of poverty reduction. The format for these activities is based on similar studies of participatory poverty assessment, which methodology has been shown to be effective in identifying indicators of poverty or well-being (Chambers, 1994; Grandin, 1988; Mearns et al. 1992). After the data was collected from participants, each interview was tape recorded and then transcribed for further analysis.

Phenomenology. The epistemological approach to poverty taken in this study is based around individuals' ideas and interpretations of their own poverty. Given this approach, the research undertakes many implicit and explicit principles of a phenomenological perspective. A phenomenological approach maintains a focus on "exploring how human beings make sense of experience...how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others" (Patton, 2002, p. 105). Specifically, the goal is to understand what people think about their own experiences (Husserl, 1999). In addition to this, and subsequently informing the methods of data collection as well as analysis for this study, Van Manen (1990) suggests that "the only way for us to really know what another person experiences

is to experience the phenomenon as directly as possible for ourselves. This leads to the importance of...in-depth interviewing.” This in-depth study can then lead to pinpointing a common “essence” behind the many different experience interpretations and understandings. What is of crucial importance is the perspective of the individuals and what they find to be of significance from their perspectives.

These ideas tie in nicely with the participatory methodologies and human rights foundations, which promote understanding individuals’ realities (Freire, 1970), learning about individuals’ experiences and life conditions (Chambers, 1992), enlarging individuals’ voices (Jolly, 2002), and obtaining local individuals’ own perspectives of poverty (Brock, 2002).

Analysis. The process of analysis is an attempt to identify meaning from the data produced from the research. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) explain analysis to be “systematic procedures to identify essential features and relationships” (p. 9). Some authors prefer to avoid the word “analysis.” Regarding this, Hycner (1999) recognizes potential dangers in the term “analysis” within phenomenological studies. He explains that “the term usually means a ‘breaking into parts’ and therefore often means a loss of the whole phenomenon” (p. 161). Because of this, some scholars prefer to use the word “explicitation” (Groenewald, 2004) within phenomenological studies. For the purposes of this study, I maintain the word “analysis,” but note that I am referring to the procedures of identifying essential features, relationships, and meanings rather than a breaking into parts.

Interpretational phenomenological analysis. The analysis of the data in this study employs a synthesis of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methods as described most prominently by Smith and Osborn (2008) and Smith and Dunworth (2003). Emerging as one of the more recent methods of phenomenological analysis, the purpose of the interpretative phenomenological analysis is to get into and understand the world of the participant (Smith and

Osborn, 2004), to understand the “insider’s perspective” (Conrad, 1987), and “the way they make sense of their world in detail from their own point of view” (Tomura, 2009).

As an attempt to understand the world from the participant’s eyes, the Interpretational Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is appropriate for this type of participatory study, where the goal is to raise the voice of those being studied. IPA is also a suitable fit based on its acceptance of semi-structured interviews as the most appropriate means of data collection. As the IPA approach is an attempt to enter and understand the social world of the participant, semi-structured interviews help bring the researcher into that world to understand that world from the perspective of the participant (Clegg, 2006; Smith and Osborn, 2008). These methods of phenomenological analysis provide a framework that allow the researcher into the life world of the participants, to better understand how and what they experience in regards to wealth and poverty. The insights gained from each of these steps are combined to form a rich description and analysis of the participant’s life experience.

While other phenomenological methodologies often employ techniques of epoche, bracketing, (Moustakas, 1994) or other reflexive techniques (Heron, 1990) in attempt to remove researcher biases, IPA accepts the researcher, with his/her background, experience, and conceptions, as a crucial part of the analysis (Smith and Dunworth, 2004). Rather than considered biases, understanding that the analysis process requires interpretation, the researcher’s beliefs are accepted to be “necessary for making sense of the experiences of other individuals” (Fade, 2004). Validity is determined by interviewer trustworthiness as opposed to “reliability and validity of specific instruments” (Jackson and Smith, 2001). This approach does not so much ignore the presence of researcher bias, but instead accepts that even the typical reflexive processes fail to control for bias, and that more important than trying to limit these biases is making the process transparent, being forthright about methodology so readers

understand the means by which researchers came to the given conclusions. Stated (Laderchi, 2001):

Making sense of a complex reality as revealed by multiple outputs means that some effort of synthesising and structuring information has to be performed, and these efforts are not value free processes. It seems therefore that being aware of one's valuational load does not make an assessment value free, only more honest. (p. 13)

Given these strategies and acceptations, the analysis process consisted of the following steps:

1. The entire interview was read to get an overall sense of the whole (Moustakas, 1994), and rereading performed until we became familiar with the data (Fade, 2004; Smith and Osborn, 2008).
2. The left-hand margin was used to write notes, annotations, summaries, interpretations, or general impressions about the text (Smith and Dunworth, 2003). At this stage of the analysis, there were no rules about what was written or commented upon (Smith and Osborn, 2008). It was left as a personal process to be individually adapted. This was done throughout the entire interview.
3. The right-hand margin was used to develop themes, the gist or essence of what was being said, finding commonalities in the data from the initial comments and taking the ideas to a higher level of abstraction (Smith and Osborn, 2008; Smith and Dunworth, 2003; Smith et al., 1995; Tomura, 2009).
4. All themes from the entire interview were extracted and compiled into a list or table, with line references accompanying relevant themes (Fade, 2004), and connections and relationships made between themes, clustering common ideas.

5. Each cluster was given a name to distinguish the thematic essence of the group (Smith and Dunworth, 2003). These clusters became the overarching or “superordinate” themes of the interview (Smith and Osborn, 2008).
6. These same steps were performed for all interviews, resulting in superordinate themes from each interview.
7. The superordinate themes from all interviews were compiled into tables or lists along with line reference numbers to cite distinct quotations for future use (Smith and Osborn, 2008). The end product was a list of master themes for the group of participants, representing issues that were significant and constant to a certain degree across all interviews (Smith and Dunworth, 2003)
8. The final step was determining which of these master themes were most significant in explaining the experience of the group of participants. The essence of the themes came primarily from the rich textual data and relevancy to the issues at hand rather than frequency or iteration (Smith and Osborn, 2008). We returned to the transcript and compiled all of the corresponding quotes for each of the master themes for use in the results section.

Summary

This research used a Q-Squared Participatory Poverty Assessment to gain a better understanding of how the Navajo people understand and measure poverty. The quantitative data came from Census 2000, while the qualitative data was obtained from a process of semi-structured participatory interviews. The selection of participants was based on a two-stage sample, with purposive criteria driving the selection of chapters and convenience sampling used for recruiting individual participants within those chapters. The sample consisted of 22 participants from the chapters of Chinle, Arizona, and San Juan, New Mexico. Interviews

discussed and determined what it means to be poor in Navajo households and communities, and defined various levels of well-being in the community. The analysis used a synthesis of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methods for generation of themes and obtaining significance from participant experiences. The result is a multidimensional description and understanding of poverty and well being from the perspective of Navajo individuals.

Results

The stated purpose of this study was to facilitate Navajos in the process of determining for themselves what poverty is, what indicators determine well-being, and what factors contribute to the phenomenon of poverty. This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of the qualitative data, and discusses results, along with the already presented standardized quantitative measures of poverty. The analysis provided themes which comprised four stages of poverty description:

1. **Definitional:** Participants addressed and described the components that make up poverty and wealth, and by which they define and assess well-being for themselves and their community.
2. **Experiential:** Participants addressed, directly or indirectly, how they experience poverty and wealth, and how these phenomena affect themselves and others.
3. **Summative:** Participants applied the operationalized poverty definitions for a current assessment of poverty in their community.
4. **Derivational:** Participants discussed, directly or indirectly, the sources or causes of poverty in the community.

At each of these stages of description there are further themes and sub-themes encompassing important poverty issues. These themes will be introduced and addressed within each respective section. Overall, these four stages of poverty description resonate with but further enrich the existing research. The stages themselves may act as a contribution to the literature as possible processes for and approaches to describing poverty in future definitional studies.

The Definitional Stage

The primary purpose of this study was to understand how the Navajo define wealth and poverty. Are Navajo definitions of poverty similar to Western definitions? While Western poverty is assessed and measured by income, the subtheme delineated within the definitional stage was that wealth and poverty are subjective concepts that consist of both tangible and intangible elements and are primarily not defined by income.

Rather than income, the participants identified both non-material assets and non-income material assets as components of their own wealth and poverty. In most cases, the non-material assets were acknowledged to be stronger indicators of a person's wealth or poverty than the non-income material assets. Rather than defining wealth and poverty by income, as is standard among most societies, the participants noted little importance in this measurement.

Non-material assets. According to interview results, there are significant differences between Western poverty and Navajo poverty, as well as what constitutes wealth in these respective societies. The participants identified non-material assets—family, culture, tradition, language, religiosity, and self-sufficiency—as the most crucial determinants of wealth and well being.

Family. The indicator that was repeatedly mentioned as the primary measure of a person's success, happiness, and overall well-being, was family. What many participants mentioned as most important to them was being close to family, taking care of relatives, and developing strong family relationships. From the perspective of these participants, family equals wealth, as indicated by the following quotes:

Participant 3: I have uh, live in a single wide mobile home, I can get a double wide or [*laughs*] or even a big house, and I can get a couple of vehicles, pay for still have extra money... I don't need to do that. Why? And so that's how I look at life is that in

Navajo, in Navajo the way I think is, what are my riches? What makes me rich? And I say I have 2 boys of my own. And then I have 5 step kids, all they're on their own. Then they have their kids. And those have their own kids. And then I have my brothers and sisters their families. Those are my riches.

Another participant:

Participant 8: I have no idea, but traditionally, if you have a lot of kids you're rich. We say that.

Asked to another participant:

Interviewer: What characteristics would you say designate a person as poor in this society? Do you think it's all about money or do you think people are poor because they are missing other things?

Participant 19: I don't think there is poor-poor. I don't know if I'm answering this right, but us Indians, if we have a lot of kids, if we have children, we are rich, that's what I think. No matter what we have if we have kids that we have something you know. We're not poor.

While the majority of these comments focused on wealth in the form of children, these themes were likewise applied to all family relationships: parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, and even fellow clan members. These family relationships seem to be the critical emphasis of Navajo lives, often a source of their aforementioned non-traditional economic behavior. Where better economic, career, educational, and other opportunities may be available elsewhere, these often go unfulfilled because they require the individual to abandon the family unit. Oftentimes the reason for individuals returning from living off the reservation is to be nearer to family. Overall, the size of and closeness of an individual to his/her family is the primary indicator of well-being.

Culture, tradition, and language. An important indicator of wealth that was revealed from the data was that of culture and tradition. The Navajo tend to see themselves as wealthy as per their rich cultural heritage, and this theme was found strongly within the group. Preservation of the Navajo language also maintains value within wealth formulas. The identification with their culture and the desire to keep that culture, tradition, and language alive is also a driving force for many to stay on the reservation, despite better economic potential off the reservation. The reservation provides protection, where culture and tradition can be practiced without being “pressured by other surrounding people” (Participant 10):

Interviewer: Is it more important to stay here on the reservation and have slightly less money or do you think it’s better, would you prefer to go somewhere else and have a lot of money?

Participant 10: I prefer to stay here because of the language, culture, we can preserve it that way. Once you go off and your kids are off the reservation they don’t speak the language as often and they lose their culture. They can’t practice it out there as they can on the Navajo nation I think.

Interviewer: And that’s worth more to you.

Participant 10: That’s important to me and my family, yeah.

Interviewer: What do you think makes people poor, like in your beliefs and your values?

Participant 10: What makes them poor, um, losing their language, their culture, not knowing where they’re coming from. Not knowing their history. I think that makes them poor...And I think that has nothing to do with the money, I think that’s just how much you know about yourself, your culture, and your family.

From another participant:

Participant 21: I think a better measure for poverty; I think it's their identity. I think you can have all the money, but they always say money doesn't buy happiness. That's a guarantee, is that you know, money can lead people astray, greed, and so, that was one of the big disputes here on Navajo, is whether or not they should open those casinos. Greed can tear apart a family. It creates addiction. I think poverty to me is identity. You have to maintain your identity. If you can't live with yourself you can't love anyone else. That's very true. We have to remember who we are, where we come from, what we want in life. That's one of the things that I really try to stress is, you know, I tell my kids and my family members, you know, what legacy do you want to leave behind?"

In addition to some of the primary cultural values and traditions, which will be further discussed in the section on "generational devaluation of Navajo values," some of the factors that participants assigned high value to, in connection with Navajo culture, were freedom and openness of the land, connections to nature, and simplicity in lifestyle. The Navajo culture and history places great significance in the role of nature and land in life. The participants in the study suggested the openness and freedom of the land on the reservation to be a contribution to their cultural and personal wealth:

Participant 9: We're blessed with a lot of different, like the Canyon (*de Chelly*), Monument Valley, you know all around us, Charcoal Canyon, Mesa Verde.

Interviewer: Um, do you think that, I mean thinking in terms of poverty do you feel like many people would classify themselves as poor here?

Participant 9: Uh, I don't know how, the way they think but I don't think we're poor. It's just, you know I just look around, you know. We have this open land and we can grow all the things you want to have, you know. I don't think we're poor."

While income poverty may be high on the reservation, and residents lack many employment and other economic opportunities, the freedom and openness of the land is worth more to many of them.

Participant 16: Growing up on the reservation was free, pretty much to run the country. Do whatever you wanted, be around animals.

One respondent acknowledged the open land and nature as a reason for his returning to and remaining on the reservation:

Participant 18: Uh, I like the open space, you know, I used to walk around all over the place. That's probably what I enjoyed the most was just, you know, walking around.

Interviewer: Would you prefer to stay on the reservation and have slightly less income or would you prefer to go off the reservation and find a really high paying job?

Participant 18: Oh, I've done that before. I'd rather stay here.

Interviewer: What makes you want to stay here so much?

Participant 18: Because it's open country and, when I used to live in Phoenix I never saw the stars hardly, cause of all the smog, and, sometimes I could see it, but um, all I got to look at was just a wall, you know. A person here, a person there, you, a person everywhere and I just got tired of it. I lived there for like maybe 10 years, and, I don't know, one day I just packed up all my stuff and I just came back. I just didn't want to do that anymore, so.

For many, the simpler way of living on the reservation is valued highly, and often is valued more than living a life of high income off of the reservation. Subsistence farming, understood to be a measure of poverty in many developing nations (Handley et al., 2009; Levine and Roberts, 2007; Okidi and Mugambe, 2002), is considered an indicator of wealth to the Navajo:

Interviewer: What differences do you think there are between the Navajo Nation and like the rest of the United States, do you think that there are significant differences?

Participant 9: You know, we do a lot of things and Navajos [*pause*], it's just like a simple life for them to live out here. You know, we can eat plants, grow corn, squash, watermelon, you know, that's living, and go hunting deer, antelope, elk, you know, it's a simple life living here than out there in the city.

Rather than desiring more income, knowing how to properly survive and get by without income is a measure of success in Navajo culture:

Interviewer: Is there anything else you think is important?

Participant 10: ... As long as they have their language, as long as they know how to survive, I think people are okay with that on the Navajo nation.

Interviewer: Surviving as in...? Food and that kind of thing?

Participant 10: Surviving as in knowing your culture, knowing your language, knowing how you can live without income, knowing how to hunt for instance how to um bring in heat.

Asked to another participant:

Interviewer: Do you think there's anything else important to understand about life here in the Navajo Nation?

Participant 9: Um, I don't have a lot of things to say. That's it, you know. It's just, life is raising up, being here, being raised up here, taking care of the sheep. When I was small there was a pillow or a blanket or bed to, people had sheep skin, you know I've been raised up in that all my life is eating mutton, squash, corn, you know. I wish all that would come back, you know, living the easy way, but now it's getting hard and gotta find a good job to support your family, you know, but, you

know raising a lot of animals and things you know, it's the same thing, it equals out, selling horses, sheep, you know you get more, you get blessed with it again, you get more and more.

Religiosity. While there is no official religion of the Navajo tribe, there was an overwhelming emphasis on spirituality from the participants throughout the interviews. It seems that, for many, religion or closeness to God plays an important role in well-being in the Navajo Nation. And while the individual religion or method of worship did not seem too important, what was significant was a person's spiritual well-being as an important indicator of their happiness and success in life. Many participants felt that if they put their faith in God, their needs would be sufficiently provided for. And it is that relationship with God, intrinsically beneficial in itself, that is considered wealth rather than what assets may result.

Participant 7: What makes me wealthy, what makes my mind wealthy is my prayers, my prayers and my father sky, mother earth. I enjoy nature and I thank God for that every day, because nothing is valuable than my life to anybody else.

Asked to another participant:

Interviewer: So what would you say are requirements that are necessary for you and your family and maybe other members of this community, um, to have a happy and a good life?

Participant 2: Well, for me, and my family, for myself personally, is um, relationship with God, and be born again Christian. Because if that's in place, then all the rest will just fall, will fall in place. You know, your satisfaction with life, your content with life and, and even your hope and your dreams and all that will all come together if that's right with God, you know. So, that for me is up there, so. I think all the other stuff falls in place like a job or uh family and so on so forth, you

know, homes or livestock or whatever you know, it's just, if you take care of that then the rest is ok. The rest will be ok.

Noted another participant:

Participant 21: I think, what I know and what I see is, that people still value spirituality. That's not necessarily a religion, but they still value the spirit of every living thing. Meaning like the plants and they know that that's still life there. Or they value animals, the spirit of an animal... and the spirit of themselves taking care of their body and their mind and their physical wellbeing... their mentality and their religious side. We still have a very great strength of that to offer in people. I think we can still use that to move forward and with that I still see that we still have hope here in our community.

Self-sufficiency. One of the indicators of wealth that most strongly materialized was a person's ability to support himself by means of subsistence farming, livestock, fuel for heat, and other means. Self-sufficiency is a value that is clearly of great importance in these communities. To many, being able to provide for oneself is as important as, and sometimes more important than, receiving a steady income. Put short, it seems that wealth is being able to provide for your basic needs, whether it be by means of your own labor and provision of your own needs, or through purchasing the basic necessities from your received income. What is most important, and what makes a person wealthy, is being able to meet those needs. If income is not available, the land provides enough for individuals to sustain themselves. If this is not done, a person places himself in poverty. These themes emerge clearly from the following participants:

Interviewer: Would you say there are a lot of poor people on the reservation?

Participant 16: I guess... poor people... it depends how you define poor. You can be poor in a lot of ways. Poor and not have an income, poor.... Not having an education.... But

then again, you can be rich in certain ways if you are able to survive in these conditions where other people can't. For instance, when winter comes around, back in the olden days, people prepared for it. I was telling you earlier we store up food, we prepared. Nowadays people don't do that. When the snow comes, what do they do? They come running for help to the chapter house or whatever. "I need this and that" because they didn't prepare themselves for these hard times. So, if we had all that, you know, you're well off, you don't need handouts for day to day life situations, then I'd say you're not poor. You have all that available to you. If you can't do that, I'd say you become poor. So it's up to the individual to sustain themselves and being able to survive from day to day, from season to season. I think a lot of people see poor as when they don't have money. But that's not always the case.

Another participant:

Participant 3: And I always say, I say, you guys (*non-Navajo/outsideers*) say I'm poor, they said look at their refrigerator, full of meat, full of food. Your pantry is full of food.

Participant 3: There are still Navajo living in Hogans (*traditional living structure*), no running water, no electricity, nothing. Way out there. They're a lot happier than people who live in mansions and cities [*laughs*] and even here, because over here (*Chinle*) you just have to hurry, hurry and out there people they just subsist on what they have and that and to me that a hundred years ago that's how Navajos were but today we're completely different.

In addition to the non-material assets and non-income material assets as components of their own wealth and poverty.

Non-income material assets. In addition to the non-material assets that participants listed as measures of wealth, they also addressed some non-income material assets that contribute to a person's success and well-being: livestock, transportation, and infrastructure. While these material assets did not seem to carry as much import as the non-material assets with participants, there is still great value placed in these assets, and some of the participants considered them to be important for successful living on the reservation. In most cases, however, the non-material assets were acknowledged to be stronger indicators of a person's wealth than the non-income material assets:

Livestock. Connected with the indicator self-sufficiency, described above, livestock is one of the material assets that the Navajo consider to be a measure of wealth. Used both for food as well as possible income, livestock are "very important" (Participant 10), primarily valued as a means of meeting personal, family, and community needs:

Interviewer: So what kinds of characteristics do you think would make someone be considered wealthy in this community?

Participant 1: In this community, I would say, people who have livestock.

Interviewer: Really?

Participant 1: Yeah. Because um, people that have sheep, people that have cows, horses, because whenever they are short of money, all they can do is take them to auctions... So people who have sheep are gonna make money off of it. So, livestock and cattle would be pretty much who I would think a lot of people would consider are wealthy.

Another participant was asked:

Interviewer: I don't know if you have any opinions on it, but we wanted to see if the Navajo views of poverty or even life... do you think they are very different from the rest of America?

Participant: Yes.

Interviewer: How do you think it's different?

Participant: Like I said if you have sheep and stuff.

Transportation. Due to the spread out nature of the reservation, and the unavailability of many goods and services, most Navajo are required to travel quite extensively. As such, a means of transportation was noted by some to be an important measure of wealth, giving a person freedom to take care of health, spiritual, subsistence, and financial needs as necessary. The following participants mentioned the need for transportation in order to meet job requirements and access business services.

Participant 15: I go two hours just to shop for this and that, get this clothes and things like that. Everything's just like that, a distance a way. Here we only have one grocery store and gas stations, but with the economy, everything is so high, especially here. Prices are higher than they would be in town.

Another participant also discussed needing to travel long distances:

Participant 10: So to me it is important 'cause it's the only way we can get around and get things we need and often we have to travel 100 miles just to get to Walmart, and places like that, where we want to shop other than little stores like we have in here.

From another participant:

Participant 12: Uh we pretty much go traveling off the reservation a lot. Because I do jewelry business.

The following participant noted transportation as necessary for meeting individual health needs:

Participant 20: Well, in this area we have nothing, no clinic, we have to travel maybe about 60 miles west, to IHS, that's where we go for treatment and stuff. That's the only free clinic down there. But if we go to Farmington (*20 miles*) we have to use our insurance, so we're just right in the middle.

These long distances traveled to access basic services are quite common across the reservation. As a result of the rural nature of the reservation, many are far away from these services. In contrast with transportation as a component of wealth, some participants mentioned hitchhiking or asking for rides to be associated with poverty.

Infrastructure. The last of the three non-income material assets that contribute to wealth and well-being is infrastructure. As discussed by participants, this refers less to community and state infrastructure such as roads, and buildings, and more to infrastructure at the household level in the form of electricity, plumbing, heat, refrigeration, and other modern amenities in the home. The following participants mentioned these infrastructure factors as measures of wealth:

Participant 17: Because I'm not that poor, I'm working, I get things that I like to have, you know, I have a vehicle and back in those days we used coal and wood to keep the heat but right now we have propane, electricity, so there's a big difference there.

Another participant noted:

Participant 16: Also poor in the sense where you are not completely... the areas in the Navajo reservation are, to me, almost a third world country because they don't have running water, they don't have electricity.

From another participant:

Participant 12: Well, the hardest thing about the reservation is a lot of places don't have running water, a lot of places are still dirt floors for a lot of people, and we still have to haul water. Some places still don't have electricity, in the rural area.

The indicators that have been discussed in this section are the non-material assets and the non-income material assets that make up Navajo wealth, as described by the participants. Given that possession of these assets is considered wealth, naturally lack of these assets would be considered poverty. Overall, the findings point to the idea that, for Navajo, wealth and poverty are determined by a multidimensional set of characteristics, assets, and values, and that income is not a sufficient measurement of poverty.

The Experiential Stage

The experiential stage of the poverty description addresses how the participants themselves experience ill-being, poverty, and wealth. This part of the discussion focuses primarily on the benefits and drawbacks of living on the reservation, as discussed by participants. Interestingly, the difficulties of living on the reservation discussed relate primarily to material aspects—extrinsic factors that are generally in control of the state. The benefits of reservation living related mostly to non-material aspects—intrinsic factors and values in control of individuals.

Difficulties on the reservation. While participants typically placed the most value in the non-material assets, considering their culture to make them wealthy, they did address life on the reservation as sometimes difficult. The most significant of these difficulties mentioned were, *inter alia*, unemployment, infrastructure, housing, travel, healthcare, and education. While not each of these difficulties will be addressed individually, each had high significance in the eyes of the participants.

Unemployment. Many of the participants mentioned unemployment to be a significant issue for many on the reservation. In fact, some participants suggested unemployment to be the biggest difficulty of reservation living:

Participant 9: Well, out here you know, it's kind of hard to get a job, it's just like, just school, nurse, and you know we only have not that much stores and motels and but people go out to Phoenix and out there, you know, more jobs, it's hard to get a job out here.

Another participant suggested unemployment to be the most difficult aspect of reservation life:

Interviewer: And what's the most difficult thing about living on the reservation?

Participant 18: Uh, I think it would be employment. Yeah employment... Um, because that's what makes your family survive, move, grow. So, I think that employment would probably be our biggest issue here on the reservation

Benefits of reservation living. The benefits of living on the reservation were mostly intrinsic, strongly tied to the non-material assets, with some discussion of economic issues. Among these discussed benefits the ones of greatest significance were: family, culture and tradition, and low cost of living. In regards to the low cost of living, a number of participants discussed life off the reservation as too difficult due to the high cost of living. On the reservation, people in general do not have as much money, but cost of living is much more affordable. For many, cost of living off the reservation caused them to return home.

The Summative Stage

The summative stage of the poverty description provides a macro view of poverty in the Navajo reservation, based on the micro views of the participants discussed in the definitional and experiential stages of description, which addressed poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon, generally superseding income. This stage consists of participants' current assessments of poverty on the reservation.

I include at this summative stage an interesting finding regarding poverty in terms of the Navajo. It seems that within Navajo culture and society there are two levels at which wealth and

poverty can exist: the societal level and the individual level. The well-being of every individual is made up of aspects of societal as well as individual well-being, and often the two are inseparably interconnected. For the Navajo, the ideas of wealth and poverty seem to have far greater societal relevance than in Western society. When asked about poverty, participants overwhelmingly addressed issues of societal rather than individual well-being. Many individuals consider themselves to be wealthy simply as a result of being Navajo, acknowledging societal wealth in their culture, values, language, and history. This societal wealth can be determined on a broad scale by assessing the current state of Navajo culture and values. Economic issues also seem to hold some significance at this societal level; participants showed no hesitancy in admitting financial and material needs at a community level. Experiential descriptions of poverty seemed constrained to the societal level:

Interviewer: What do you think the reservation needs most? Like if someone were to come and offer help... What would be the best thing that they could do?

Participant 14: The best thing that they could do is probably, [*laughs*] gosh we need a lot of things. I mean just the road itself needs [*laughs*], I mean, this town needs everything. It will be a miracle if somebody does come in and try to do something for them. Not only the, um, job wise, but as far as kids goes, as well.

Individual poverty: Lack of poverty in the Navajo Nation. While this study had originally intended to provide an operationalized description of who the poor are in the Navajo Nation, the data instead revealed an interesting finding. When discussing issues of ill-being at the societal level, participants freely discussed problems of unemployment, healthcare, education, and at times even lack of money, but when asked to consider what would designate an *individual* to be in a state of poverty, participants expressed a great deal of hesitancy; and this hesitancy was

extreme when concerning issues of income. Instead, it is understood that poverty is a subjective phenomenon, one that can only be decided within oneself:

Interviewer: Do you think there are a lot of poor people around here?

Participant 14: Poor people? Financially?

Interviewer: Well in any way. Do you think when someone is poor, do you think it's because of money or do you think it's because of other things?

Participant 14: Financially, probably because of that, but as far as poor people, I don't look at anybody like that.

Interviewer: So, you feel like you shouldn't use income to judge people?

Participant 14: No. Because they decide within them, they're very nice people. And so it's what's inside... It's what's inside that counts. They are not poor in their heart... It's not right to say poor people. And they might not have an income coming in, but you know. I myself have a nephew at home and, you know, I don't want to look at him that way.

Another participant expressed similar feelings:

Interviewer: Do you feel like in the reservation there's a lot of differences in, like there's some poor people, some more wealthy people, do you think there's a lot of differences like that?

Participant 12: Well... I wouldn't really know if there is any wealthy people because I look at everybody the same.

Such feelings make it difficult to operationalize and determine specific measurements by which to assess poverty. While other Participatory Poverty Assessments use methods of wealth ranking to establish distinct social groups within communities, this process depends upon participants placing various households and individuals into certain categories. This process was

unsuccessful, and I would suggest it to be inappropriate for future purposes due to the resounding discomfort in consigning any to a defined state of poverty. However, this finding itself provides important information regarding Navajo culture and how poverty is understood and experienced therein. Given this understanding, it should be clear that levels of income poverty traditionally provided for the Navajo Nation are culturally inauthentic and statistically inaccurate. Thus, it should be no surprise that the Navajo do not see themselves to be in poverty:

Participant 9: Uh, I don't know how, the way they think but I don't think we're poor. It's just, you know I just look around, you know. We have this open land and we can grow all the things you want to have, you know. I don't think we're poor. I think we're a nation called the Navajo Nation and you know, we're the one that helped the United States with the Navajo code talking. Code talkers that won the war for us.

To this participant, the rich cultural heritage of the Navajo and the land makes the Navajo wealthy. To him, as well as to others, level of income is irrelevant in regards to quality of life.

Another participant had similar thoughts:

Participant 7: I [*pause*], we don't consider ourselves as poor. We consider ourselves as a valuable person on this earth that can [*pause*], that have 10 fingers that could have a heart and a voice to speak among our people.

Finally, one other participant agreed:

Participant 10: Like I said, knowing yourself is good enough. For me that's good enough. Money and everything is just extra stuff. To me, and I think a lot of families feel that way. They don't feel poor, they don't feel like they're limited. As long as they have their language, as long as they know how to survive, I think people are okay with that on the Navajo nation.

The overall theme here is that the participants do not believe themselves or the Navajo Nation to be in poverty. While income may not be particularly high for many individuals, this is not the indicator by which poverty ought to be measured for the Navajo Nation.

Generational devaluation of Navajo values. While participants strongly opposed the idea of an impoverished Navajo Nation, basing well-being instead upon higher cultural values, there did seem to be some consensus on a current transition away from, or devaluation of these Navajo values. And if we are to measure Navajo well-being based on these same values, this would constitute a kind of “cultural recession,” in which well-being on the reservation is currently decreasing and poverty is increasing. While participants recognized great wealth in Navajo culture and tradition, many acknowledged this devaluation of important Navajo values in a short period of time; for many families, this cultural transition has occurred within a single generation. This devaluation is significant, given that the principles losing significance make up some of the most critical values of Navajo culture. These values discussed by the participants were self-sufficiency, work ethic, social capital, tradition, and language. These devaluational processes are occurring as a result of globalization and imperialistic education, which will be discussed in the derivational stage of description. This generational devaluation is accompanied by, or is a result of, an identity crisis between generations.

Self-sufficiency. While highly valued within Navajo culture, it seems that the reservation is experiencing trends away from self-sufficiency. A number of participants discussed a persistent decline in self-sufficiency on the reservation within only the last two or three decades:

Participant 3: Well life compared to when I was growing up, it was way way different. Because I really believe at that time our people were more self-sufficient... With my family we grew melons, corn, and all kinds of vegetables and then we either sold them, we didn't take the stuff out there, people came to the farm and they either

paid money or they traded with different things. And what my brother and I did all the way through high school, all we did was farming and during the summer took care of the plants, hoed, and that's how we grew up and a lot of the families down this way, if you're here during the summer there is hardly any families planting down this valley. When we were young almost everyone planted down the valley and in the canyon also, but not anymore.

Another participant mentioned similar experiences:

Participant 6: And then we had a farm up the road about 10 miles, and we grew crops, and feed the horses and cows, and course raised corn, melon, all that stuff and...Navajo, we raise cows, and sheep, and horses.

Asked to another participant:

Interviewer: Do you think that life on the reservation is different now for kids than it was for you when you were a kid?

Participant 14: Very different.

Interviewer: What are the main differences?

Participant 14: There, see, long time ago we used to live on what we have. You know, food we got, sheep, meat and stuff you know, and for vegetables it's working out in the fields. Now there's none of that. We do have a corn field, but, you know it isn't. And the kids are not into it. So, that's why I think there's a big difference there.

Fewer Navajo families today are participating in farming and livestock activities. While the value of self-sufficiency has been one of great importance in Navajo tradition, it is losing import and expanse in today's Navajo society.

Work ethic. Sharing some connections with the issues of self-sufficiency, participants also noted a decrease in work ethic for the younger generations on the reservation. There seems

to be a growing sense of entitlement to certain services and amenities rather than desire to work for them:

Participant 21: Kids these days, I think don't go back to their roots to where they are hardworking. They don't know the concept of earning their keep. I think now kids are given things more or less, it's easily available for them so I think in that sense, that's not a positive. I think it's a little more of the negative side."

Another participant noted the difference in his/her own childhood and those of youth today:

Participant 15: It's not like it used to be. What we had to go through was difficult, but we liked it. We hauled water; we had to haul wood and things like that. Now, for my girls its like going to the woods is boring. I'm trying to get them into that more.

From another participant:

Participant 3: You have to get the parents involved, otherwise it's useless. Because if you go to maybe a family that's kind of well-to-do and look in the living room they have all these [pause] shows stacked in stacks and the parents go to Gallup and they buy all these movies and so on for them. And the kids watch those things day and night. And most parents that are at home are very liberal with their kids. They don't tell them to study, they don't tell them to go to bed, most homes the kids are in control. So, a lot of families even well-to-do families are dysfunctional, they just a mess.

Another participant:

Participant 16: And, it used to get cold around September and we'd go down there and take out the dirt and drive spikes into the coal and then stock pile. That was the norm back then.

Some participants suggested that this transition has had an effect on many people's relationship with the government, desiring only to live off of social services rather than their own means.

Participant 5: And some just have no, no, they don't want to work. They'd rather get assistance from the state or what not.

Participant 3: And I always say that a family can move into one of these lower rent housing and they're subsidized by the federal, so a family, maybe even a family of 6 can move into a 3 bedroom house, maybe pay \$15 a month for it. And there in the winter months if they can't, don't have enough money for heat, then other welfare programs help them through. So, if a man gets all these free benefits, why work? I mean just sit in their house and get these things free...And a lot of our people are in debt. That's the situation.

According to these participants, the decreases in this important Navajo value have led to an increase in poverty, not as a result of less income from less work, but instead in the intrinsic value of work itself being lost.

Social capital. Another value that seems to be decreasing from older generations to young is that of social capital—awareness of and concerns for other individuals and the community as a whole. As explained above, when asked about experiences and definitions of poverty, participants tended to address community level poverty, referring to “we” as a society instead of “me” as an individual. Navajo culture traditionally focuses more on the group rather than the individual. In the past, this has translated into doing work on individuals' farms as a community, sharing food, livestock, and other resources, and just generally being concerned with one another's welfare. However, along with many of the other values, participants discussed the devaluation of social capital within the community:

Participant 3: If you go back a hundred years, over a hundred years, what I hear is Navajo people all really took care of one another. Because when I was little, and livin' on the canyon, or even when we lived down here, people would, we used to eat horse, horse meat. Or, even sheep. A family would butcher a sheep or a horse and then they would tell all their near relatives or all the people who live around here and they would all come over and get a piece of whatever they had... I said back there, we didn't have refrigerators, and we didn't have much but it all was shared with other people.

Participant 3: Nothing's free anymore. I remember, we had all these farms down this way. At this time of planting season, even now while people are irrigating. People just didn't look at each other. A whole bunch would get together and they would irrigate one field, then they would move to another field. When it's planting time they all bring their plows and they plant then they would move to another, helping one another harvest the same way. Today if you ask somebody: help me. Money! [*laughs*]... I think that's what got more and more poor 'cause we don't have one another anymore.

One participant noted that money doesn't matter as much as having one another to rely on and share what you have:

Interviewer: Do you think money plays a big role in people's happiness and well-being or do you think other things are more important?

Participant 20: No, I don't think so, I don't think money is. It is how you support each other, not money wise.

While this group mentality may make it easier for the Navajo to live off of fewer resources and income, it seems that the trend is a general movement away from this mindset:

Participant 18: Uh, I think just too much greed now. And everybody wants to do things on their own, they don't want, they want to get ahead of the next person, and that's the way it is now...A long time ago, when a person needed help the people came, you know, helped them. Now a days, it's like, how much you gonna give me?

Key to this discussion is the movement away from a non-formal community welfare network, where individuals took care of one another, and provided for community needs, to a Western model: a formal, state-run welfare system. This type of transformation in a short period of time calls for the welfare system to be analysed along with issues of globalization, in which the state is the only recognized provider of social services.

Tradition. One of the most troubling transitions that seems to be rapidly occurring is the devaluation of Navajo tradition and culture. Especially when considering that traditional values and cultural heritage are the primary indicators of wealth, the devaluation of these on the reservation constitutes an increase in poverty by the definitions of the Navajo themselves. The participants discussed both the wealth within these traditional values (see definitional stage) and the current devaluation of them:

Participant 12: I was raised very traditionally, going to a lot of ceremonies with my parents, so we did a lot of that and that's what we've been taught to do a lot of ceremonies... Uh, with my family now in these modern days, they sort of don't really want to know about it, the traditional ways...I think it's because of my father was very traditional. And he was also raised traditionally, so that was mostly passed on. But I tried, I tried to teach my kids the traditional ways. And some of them agree with it and I think two of them they rather be much um, do modern world stuff like being into computers, they like more of school actually.

[*laughs*] They want to be successful and just leave the reservation when they're done with school.

Another participant was asked:

Interviewer: How important is culture to you? Is that something you feel is important to your children? And traditions and things?

Participant 15: It helps them. The culture I think is kind of fading out but I try to teach them what I know. It's not being practiced a lot... Now they are studying their culture and some of this stuff that I should know but I don't. I think it started from back then, it's just kind of faded.

From another participant:

Participant 9: Cause right now, you know, our culture's barely dying out. You have all these generations of kids coming out and, you know, they don't want to speak their Navajo language.

One participant addressed the same issue along with her efforts as a teacher to preserve some of those values within her students:

Participant 13: And, I tell my students, you remember who you are even though you're going to move on to cities, remember who you are. Don't be ashamed of who you are, don't forget your culture and your traditions. So that is very important to us because now it's fading away. It's fading away and in my generation it's handed down to us and we're trying to keep it alive, keep it going. It's like that. To me I think it's kind of fading away and now the young generation they say, oh, that was then, this is now. We're a different generation. Back then was different. But I say, you know what, your skin is not gonna change, it's always been there, so your culture is not going to change. If you're a grandma or a father or a

mother and they've been brought up with cultural traditions they're gonna keep you on track ... The reservation is where you keep your traditions and where you keep your culture alive. And that's the best thing about it. The language, you can't lose your language.

This statement carries great relevance coming from a local teacher, given the past, and still present, role of the education system in facilitating and supporting this process of cultural devaluation, and its potential role in restoring those values.

Language. The devaluation of the Navajo language is interconnected with devaluation of culture and tradition in general. These two processes affect one another as well as devalue together in response to other phenomena. Whatever the connection, the understanding is clear, that with each new generation there is a decrease in native and even functional Navajo speakers, and a decrease in importance that the language holds for individuals. For many, there exists a conflict between the Navajo language and English, with some individuals feeling that they must choose between the two; and naturally, in a globalized world where learning English is necessary to succeed, it is the native language that suffers:

Participant 10: Right now my kids are struggling with the language. They don't really understand the language, but they're learning! Because at school, all they speak is English, and they have limited language classes. And at home we try to speak all Navajo all the time but it's not always...not always um, easy to because they're so used to the school, they spend most of their time at school during the day and when they get home they're doing homework and then by the time that everybody settles down it's time to go to sleep.

From another participant:

Participant 11: But I know that it's important to keep it. 'Cause everybody's speaking English. There's maybe just a third or a quarter left that speaks Navajo. The rest aren't...My dad he was really traditional. And moved out there they spoke a lot of English and I wasn't really sure what they were talking about and so what my dad did was to make sure we learned English really well. So I could finish high school and stuff. I was kind of, really taught the traditional way. And now that I'm growing up because of the whole English thing. Cuz everything's in English I kind of lost out. And now I'm really getting back into it.

As a result of this transition, many younger Navajos speak Navajo as a second language, if at all, while English is their first language:

Participant 13: Yes, but if their Navajo language is their second language, you see here on the reservation the majority of the students their 2nd language is Navajo. Their first language is English. So it is hard, so nowadays, they tell us, you gotta teach them both at home. The language should be spoken, their first language should be Navajo. But it's vice-versa.

From another participant:

Participant 16: And the kids, our children the way our mom and dad taught us, to teach them the language the culture the tradition. I think a lot of the time we never really lived up to that promise because, I'm not sure why it happened but a lot of the time as parents we do tend to talk to our kids in the English language and kind of forget about our language until we come to a point when we say hey, why are we talking in English to our kids? We should be talking to them in Navajo.

The ultimate conclusion comes from one final participant, who discusses the need to change the situation:

Participant 21: We are at an era where so much is changing and it's changing so fast that we are losing the culture, we are losing the language, and we have to preserve it in one form or another.

This participant gets to the heart of this issue; something needs to be done to preserve the culture and the language. The following section, the derivational stage of poverty description, discusses what has caused the devaluation in these values and the final chapter will address possible solutions to the problem.

The Derivational Stage

During this final stage of the poverty description, the understandings and definitions of poverty and well-being previously described are used to evaluate the causes of Navajo-defined poverty on the reservation. These causes include factors of formal and non-formal education in addition to globalization influences. While these causes of poverty weren't always directly addressed by participants, the items examined were indirectly mentioned or otherwise referred to, and themes emerged from the interviews.

Current formal education. From the interviews emerged an overwhelming feeling of educational mismatch on the Navajo reservation culturally, economically, linguistically, and traditionally. Understanding already education's potential for poverty reduction, what is more apparent in the Navajo case is education as poverty derivation. Specifically, the items that are addressed pertaining to the current formal education system are (1) education valued only for instrumental purposes, (2) education as imperialistic and culturally corrosive, and (3) the need for Navajo philosophies and approaches within the formal education system. Also of note, but not addressed, is that the current education system fails to effectively build human resources.

The Navajo education system as overly instrumental. While the primary purpose of this paper was to reach some definitional understandings of poverty, recognizing education's

important role to foster poverty reduction and development, another important aspect of the study was understanding what role education currently plays in the Navajo context. If participants didn't address education on their own accord, each was asked about the importance of education in Navajo culture. In regards to the formal education system on the reservation, it is clear that Navajo people value the institution. However, when looking at the reasons why this education is valued, much is revealed in terms of the Navajo education system as well as the current role of formal education in Navajo society. Formal education seemed to hold value in the eyes of the participants; however, this value was exclusively instrumental (Robeyns, 2006). It seems that the Navajo people primarily see education to be beneficial only in its role for potential employability on and off the reservation:

Participant 17: Education, you gotta go to school to have a job. People are looking at people that graduated or with more education, that's what they're looking for these days...My parents were uneducated, but it's my mom that forced me to go to school. "It's for our own good. Go to school so that you can find a job." So I listened to her and I did and I've been working since I got out of high school.

Another participant shared similar thoughts:

Participant 4: Now days on the reservation they require, if you have a degree, to get a job, that's what they prefer right now

Finally, another participant noted education as necessary for employability:

Participant 16: I think education is very important, because for me education brought me a job, a good paying job. In order to, feed, support my family, I would need a good paying job to pay all the bills. But its what's required nowadays. It's what required to be able to pay for a truck, a car, utility bills, buying household belongings or whatever. I think it's important to get a good job.

While education ought to be important for its intrinsic as well as instrumental benefits, on the reservation, there doesn't seem to be any recognized intrinsic value in the current formal education system. The reason for this is discussed in the next section.

The Navajo education system as imperialistic and culturally corrosive. Formal education on the reservation is generally not valued by the people intrinsically because the system has been stripped of Navajo values. Far from teaching and promoting Navajo values, culture, and language, the Navajo education system perpetuates Western ideals and culture, promoting globalized neoliberal curricula and encouraging English only, causing devaluation of Navajo values for Navajo students:

Participant 3: In a way, maybe not now, but back there education is the one that mess up Navajo. 'Cause the more education you get, the further we drifted away from your family, or from the old tradition and practices, you just drift away from there.

The result is the creation of an educated group of Navajo who could be vital assets in preserving and promoting the culture, but instead promote Western culture and ideals:

Participant 21: Now I see people with degrees, doctorates, they, I see them losing that respect. Those that don't have that education or who are considered in poverty, they're more respectful, they are more humble, they are the ones with more compassion for others. They are more empathetic to someone's needs. They are the ones that will go out of their way to help someone. Whereas these other people, you know, I think they kind of forget their roots. They forget the camaraderie of helping one another, they're forgetting clanship, they are forgetting those basic values and so I see that difference there. Just in the personality and also in the way of life. Just like, um you know when, when this group here they get money, they share

among themselves, like the family. They get 100 dollars and they'll buy food and have a little cookout. But if you compare it to the other side, 100 dollars, they are always the ones getting new cell phones, the latest versions. That's where I see the difference. So, I think in that sense I think we need to come back and find a middle ground.

Participant 16: For some reason, we learn a lot of things as we were growing up, white man's way of doing things. We grew accustomed to that, kind of left traditional culture behind. I know it's sad, but that's just how it happened.

This happened as a result of a Navajo system of education teaching from the perspectives and values of Western culture. While detrimental to culture, its damaging effects are possibly most salient in the loss of Navajo language:

Participant 10: Right now my kids are struggling with the language. They're don't really understand the language, but they're learning! Because at school, all they speak is English, and they have limited language classes.

Another participant shared similar concerns:

Participant 16: I'm not sure why it happened but a lot of the time as parents we do tend to talk to our kids in the English language and kind of forget about our language until we come to a point when we say, hey, why are we talking in English to our kids? We should be talking to them in Navajo. It's probably because we think about our kids going to school and when they go to school they will have to learn English anyway. So it's maybe for parents so they can get their kids to school, so we talk to them in the English language. Then amongst ourselves, the parents who speak Navajo, and older folks, we talk Navajo when we come together. But when we are with younger kids we talk to them in the English language.

Because of the understood instrumental value of education for employability, and the fact that decades of formal education has taught Navajo that in order to be successful one needs to focus only on English, many Navajo youth reject their own culture, traditions, and language. The result is increasing levels of own poverty on the reservation.

Need for Navajo philosophies and approaches in formal education. The participants, in agreement with the literature, recognize the need for a change in the current education system. This change entails a transition away from Western ideas, values, and philosophies in the education system, and towards a more holistic, Navajo-appropriate pedagogy. Participants suggest that this type of learning for Navajo students is more conducive to success and will play an important role in rejuvenating and preserving cultural values. The following participant, a teacher, discusses the importance of Navajo language for academic achievement:

Participant 13: Well, here on the reservation there's a lot of what I overview as that, if you have your language, if you know your language, I notice that the data and everything, the statistics, if they know their language when they do their tests their scores are higher. Only a few schools have Navajo immersion and they're doing a lot better than other schools. I see the difference on their test results.

One participant noted the Navajo-based pedagogies of Diné College to be more conducive to her own success in college:

Participant 21: When I was growing up and through high school... because I was able to go off res during high school I always figured that would be the best opportunity. So when I left I went and when I got to Arizona State there was a different classroom setting...So I felt that disconnection right off the bat. As to where, coming from a small high school and going into that university setting was very different. So I didn't like that and so I already knew that that wasn't the type of

education that I wanted and I did come back here and went to school at Diné College and that was totally a unique experience because I got to learn about the culture, the history

Finally, as a possible result of increasing Navajo values in the education system, one participant addresses the potential benefits of the people retaining their culture, thus agreeing with the need to ensure this culture within education:

Participant 21: Just through my work with the Navajo nation I see that the central agency, this agency that you're in here is pretty much still culturally versed. We hold true to our ceremonies, we still wear our hair buns, and we still try to maintain that culture. So I can't really say that's what creates happiness, but just from living it I think that it creates a balance, of harmony, in that you know I can only speak on that level, is that we try, we try to maintain to the values and try to preserve the language. We try to remember the history of our people, the long walk, a lot of the trials and errors that our people went through, and we're still healing from some of those things that we encountered from generations passed. It's still my generation, we're still dealing with that, the aftermath of the stock reduction, from the BIA, from trying to eliminate our languages, its still, we're barely trying to come to terms with some of those things. I think it is our culture and our tradition that gives us our strength.

Informal and intrinsic education. Accompanying discussions from participants about the nature of the formal education system, issues were also raised of a need to revitalize informal education and bring back the value of intrinsic education, both at the formal and informal levels.

Need revitalization of informal education at the household level. Understanding that Navajo values and ways of life are currently threatened, informal education at the household

level is recognized as a way to regenerate these values. Navajo culture has been characterised for centuries by informal education: grandparents and parents teaching children Navajo principles and values, tradition, and history. With the increasing instrumental importance of formal education, and the responsibility of the state to provide that service, many Navajo families have turned away from the traditional methods of education in the home.

Participant 3: And then if students get in trouble at school and their parents are called in, the parents' position is, I put my kid on the bus. From there 'til he comes back, that's your problem. School problem. And the parents when they're called to the school that's all they say, that's not me it's him [*laughs*]. Very dysfunctional.

Participant 3: The trend is now [*pause*] you see, hear people speak, and they don't talk Navajo at home, so they say, the school teach our kids Navajo! So they have the all these Navajo programs at schools and then, and then when the kid comes home they talk English. You send them to school, they may learn some Navajo but you don't continue that at home! And the parents always point to the school and say, teach our kids Navajo! To me, I always said, teaching Navajo and all these tradition, culture teachings should be at the home. And that's how we, we got away from all that.

For most traditionally, it was the responsibility of the parents, not the school, to instill those Navajo values, to teach the Navajo culture and language. Today, parents expect the schools to do it all:

Participant 16: And the kids, our children the way our mom and dad taught us, to teach them the language the culture the tradition.

From another participant:

Participant 21: I think it's really up to parents that they take more control over their homes. We used to reside in Hogans, the way that we live is so much different now, because now we have these little suburb complexes and we have these homes where our kids are no longer in a Hogan, its just in one setting. Now they have different rooms and kids go back to their rooms. There is a breakdown in that communication between the parents and the child. And like I said, the activities nowadays, parents are trying to provide, they are trying to be contributors to their home where they have to work. They have to make a living and so a lot of these kids are latchkey kids, where they are left at home after school and there's not really that interaction with parents until maybe late in the evenings. So there is a breakdown in that family communication too.

In order to be able to restore the Navajo traditions, language, and culture, those Navajo values need to be instilled in the young people, included in all facets of life, in the home as well as in school.

Need to reestablish intrinsic value in education. In addition to the changes made to the formal and informal educational institutions, there needs to be a change in the overall value of education. While education is currently seen as beneficial only for instrumental purposes, restoring the intrinsic value within education will help to revitalize some of those fading Navajo values:

Participant 21: For myself, this is my own personal opinion, is that just because people go to school, they have a piece of paper, they have a doctorate or masters, doesn't necessarily mean that they're more educated. I always tell that to my kids. I tell them, you know, your grandparents, your Nali, she has all this extensive knowledge and wisdom. She knows about mathematics through the astronomy,

astrology of the stars. We have those stories. And then through her rug weaving, talking about geometry. So there is, I tell them, there is a lot of western concepts that are in there. And then going out, picking herbs for maybe healing a person, I say, western medicine is still researching some of those things but our grandparents, they already knew all of that. Or even, you know, going into a sweat ceremony, those are healing. I tell them about that. I tell them, you know, it doesn't mean that just because they didn't finish school or they never went to school doesn't mean they don't have that knowledge already.

In a culture where a primary pursuit is an achievement of balance in one's life (Benally, 1994), there is much to be gained from a more holistic approach where education is seen as beneficial for both instrumental and intrinsic purposes, as opposed to the current situation where instrumental stands alone.

Globalization. The transition in values has occurred in a very short period of time for the Navajo, for some within a single generation. While only a few decades ago emphasis was placed on self-sufficiency, hard work, community camaraderie, and wealth in culture, today, many Navajo live in a globalized world, with modern conveniences, Western education and economic markets, while many of their traditional values have been lost. Sub-themes that emerged from the data in regards to globalization were, (1) conflict between Navajo language and English, (2) inability to reconcile Western and Navajo cultures, (3) belated attempts to re-establish Navajo values, (4) belief in traditions without practice, and (5) disconnect and identity crisis created between generations. While some of these themes have been addressed previously, some will be addressed in this section.

The following participant addresses the difference in upbringing between herself and her children, and addresses the ramifications for traditional practice:

Participant 12: Well, when I was growing up we lived in a Hogan, it wasn't dirt floor but it was all tile. And there was like 6 people living in one Hogan. So it was pretty much a, not a lot of space but it was a good home... We didn't have TVs, we didn't have electricity. So, now we have everything. Electricity, TVs, games, so we're pretty much in a sort of modern world.

Participant 12: I was raised very traditionally, going to a lot of ceremonies with my parents, so we did a lot of that and that's what we've been taught to do a lot of ceremonies so that's good teaching for us. Uh, with my family now in these modern days, they sort of don't really want to know about it, the traditional ways.

For many who face this generational disconnect, problems arise from an inability to reconcile the two cultures:

Participant 12: I think it's because of my father was very traditional. And he was also raised traditionally, so that was mostly passed on. But I tried, I tried to teach my kids the traditional ways. And some of them agree with it and I think two of them they rather be much um, do modern world stuff like being into computers, they like more of school actually. *[laughs]* They want to be successful and just leave the reservation when they're done with school.

For some participants, the choice to maintain those traditional ties is ultimately a choice of poverty while choosing the westernized lifestyle leads to improved economic opportunities:

Participant 17: Traditional, I really didn't get into traditional that much. I don't know what traditional is *[laughs]*. I think it's work and try to build myself for me, that's what I did, if I wanted to go traditional I probably wouldn't have a ride. Traditional is when they have a wagon and being on foot. But I don't have that.

Another participant felt the same, that she is forced to choose a life of tradition or a western life with greater economic opportunities, and that the two can't be combined:

Participant 20: Like I was saying, living on the reservation is more like, you have to go with your culture, traditional way of living out there. Living in the city is more easy because everything is just there for you.

This sort of feeling likely arises from the instrumentally-focused view of education that exists on the reservation, the globalized education that allows for instrumental value only.

Whatever the cause, the result is clear, that the younger generations are losing many of the important values that were held sacred just one or two generations earlier:

Participant 21: I think that at this point there are so many things as far as our generation with my father and my mother they went through that whole boarding school era, and from that they knew that western education is very important. And then, from their point they kind of set the way from the traditional perspective. But through my ties with my grandparents I was able to hold onto the traditional side and then it was really up to me to learn my own language and about my culture, the ceremony. But now with my son and my daughter I see that there's a great delineation. I see that kids within their groups are... I think they are more desensitized because of technology. I know that they take a lot of things for granted. They have like the ipod touch, the computer, the internet, and so I think that with that they're losing a little bit of their self identity because they don't... kids these days I think don't go back to their roots to where they are hardworking

For those who grow up and are not taught the traditional ways, many of them reach a desire to learn those traditions and even language later on in life, and the process is much more difficult:

Participant 11: I know English but I don't know the path that I was born and raised in. I wanna see if I can get back to the Navajo way

Participant 12: I think being off the reservation for a lot of Navajos, they don't know where they come from, they don't know their clan, most of them come back to find out who they are, where they came from.

Globalization in the school system, in the home, and in Navajo society in general has led to a devaluation of Navajo culture and language, causing increases of poverty on the reservation. If something is not done to counteract these forces at work in the Navajo Nation, the Navajo people could be threatened with a complete loss of their cultural values, societal norms, and wealth in culture, not to mention high incidence of their own defined poverty on the reservation.

Summary

This chapter has presented the findings from the analysis of the qualitative data, and discussed results in relation to the established research purposes of the study. The analysis provided themes which comprised four stages of poverty description: definitional, experiential, summative, and derivational. The main findings of the analysis and description process were as follows:

1. Wealth and poverty are defined by non-material assets—family, culture/tradition, religiosity, self-sufficiency—and non-income material assets—livestock, transportation, infrastructure—rather than income, and that the most important of these are family and cultural values.
2. Based on these established indicators of well-being, the Navajo do not see themselves as poor. Levels of income poverty typically provided for the Navajo Nation are culturally inauthentic and statistically inaccurate.

3. The difficulties experienced on the reservation include extrinsic factors in control of the state, while the benefits of reservation living are primarily intrinsic factors at the individual level. The greatest difficulty of living on the reservation is unemployment while the greatest benefits are family and culture.
4. There is a generational devaluation of Navajo values occurring on the reservation. Navajo consider themselves wealthy on account of their rich cultural heritage, but this decline in cultural values constitutes a “cultural recession” and an increase of poverty on the reservation.
5. This cultural devaluation and increase of poverty is caused by factors of education and globalization. The formal education system is exclusively instrumental, imperialistic, and culturally corrosive. The institution of informal education at the household level is on the decline and needs to be revitalized along with education for intrinsic value. A process of globalization at all levels of society has created conflict between cultures and a disconnect between generations.

Discussion

The stated purpose of this study was to facilitate Navajos through a process of determining for themselves what poverty is, what indicators determine well-being, and what factors contribute to the phenomenon of poverty on the Navajo Indian reservation. These locally derived definitions and descriptions of poverty are then used to assess the current situation of poverty in the Navajo Nation, comparing to the measures of income poverty currently used to describe well-being on the reservation. Rejecting the idea that income alone constitutes well-being and happiness, this method is driven by the human development and rights-based approaches to development and poverty reduction which recognize the right of individuals to be involved in their own development, define their own measures of well-being for empowerment, participation, with the ultimate goal of increasing capabilities and reaching functionings for the improvement of individual lives.

Summary

The income-based description of poverty paints a dire picture of the Navajo reservation, with a general population poverty rate of 42.9 percent. The chapters included in this sample, Chinle and San Juan, have income poverty rates of 43.5 and 45.9 percent respectively. However, this study revealed a general feeling of existing wealth on the reservation. The perspective of societal versus individual notions and views of poverty influenced the thoughts that many have regarding poverty on the reservation. While outsiders look in on the Navajo and deem them to be “impoverished,” it seems that they would disagree. Based on the interviews with participants, indicators of well-being were established wherein the Navajo do not see themselves as poor. The Navajo do not measure poverty in the same manner, by the same indicators, or at the same level—societal versus individual—as Western society. Instead of by income, wealth and poverty are defined by non-material assets—family, culture/tradition, religiosity, and self-sufficiency—

and non-income material assets—livestock, transportation, and infrastructure. Thus, the Navajo themselves do not agree with the traditional poverty data, and actual poverty levels in the Navajo Nation are much lower, based on locally produced definitions of poverty.

Poverty and well-being are experienced in various ways on the reservation. As discussed by participants, reservation life consists of both difficulties and benefits. The difficulties experienced on the reservation include extrinsic factors in control of the state, while the benefits of reservation living are primarily intrinsic factors at the individual level. The greatest difficulty of living on the reservation is unemployment while the greatest benefit is family and culture. There is a generational devaluation of Navajo values occurring on the reservation. Navajo consider themselves wealthy on account of their rich cultural heritage, but this decline in cultural values constitutes a “cultural recession” and an increase of poverty on the reservation. This cultural devaluation and increase of poverty is caused by factors of education and globalization. The formal education system is instrumentally-focused, imperialistic, and culturally corrosive. The institution of informal education at the household level is on the decline and needs to be revitalized along with education for intrinsic value. A process of globalization at all levels of society has created conflict between cultures and a disconnect between generations.

Contributions for Addressing Poverty: Causes and Solutions

As the previous chapter fulfilled the primary purposes of this study—establishing indicators that determine well-being for the Navajo, addressing what factors contribute to the phenomenon of poverty, and analyzing the current state of the Navajo Nation based on these developed indicators—this chapter proposes and discusses potential solutions for the growing problem of poverty on the reservation, as defined by the Navajo. And whereas the causes of poverty on the reservation were determined to be largely related to education, in addition to education’s accepted importance for poverty reduction, education will act as the primary focus of

discussion. This includes Geo-JaJa and Mangum's (2003) suggestion for "a policy redirection that reaffirms education as the essential tool of all development."

The issue of poverty on the Navajo reservation is an interesting topic that must be analyzed from multiple angles and lenses. On first view, by using the typical indicators of poverty assessment, and as an outsider with experience on the reservation, it seems clear that the Navajo Nation suffers from issues of poverty and marginalization, and is subject to various conditions of ill-being. However, upon further discussion with Navajo individuals—and this emerged from the formal qualitative portion of this thesis as well as from informal conversations with individuals on the reservation—it becomes apparent that the Navajo do not consider themselves to be poor. They do not consider themselves to be in poverty individually or collectively. On the contrary, despite what seem to be apparent fourth world conditions in areas such as available resources, infrastructure, goods and services, and economic activity, the Navajo consider themselves to be wealthy. So what is meant when Navajo individuals adamantly insist that they are not poor? It means that they have a different notion of what is necessary for the good life. When they define wealth for themselves, among others, they list factors such as family, culture, religiosity, self-sufficiency, tradition, and language. It is possible for a Navajo individual or family to live a full, content, and capacitated life without any access to financial benefits. While the reservation may not offer much in terms of economic opportunity, it provides enough for many to enjoy happy and successful lives.

However, there are causes for concern as, even by their own standards, the level of wealth on the reservation seems to be deteriorating for many Navajos. Understanding wealth to consist of many intangible assets connected with Navajo culture, language, and traditional values, there is a recognized process currently occurring in which these values are losing their worth, replaced instead with Western ideals, values, and practices. This is the result of

globalization influences in all facets of Navajo life, specifically within educational institutions, and if something is not done to mitigate the current downward movement, the Navajo Nation will continue to see devaluation of culture and tradition and increases in own poverty on the reservation.

In general, what is needed to address, and hopefully improve the current state of poverty, the devaluation of Navajo culture, values, and tradition, on the reservation is a new framework for development, with priority placed upon educational change, at all levels of society, that is based upon principles of human development and human rights.

Locally constructed development models. There is a great need for the Navajo Nation to develop a unique development strategy given the regions unique cultural heritage and circumstances. This issue is discussed by Chinsman (1998):

The culture of a society reflects its patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting as well as its collective aspirations and expectations...The values, consumption patterns, work organization, technology and modes of production of goods and services in a society derive their roots from the culture of that society. Culture therefore plays an essential part in the innovative and creative capacity of a society as an effective agent of change and human development. (p. 47)

For decades, planning within economic and educational institutions in the Navajo Nation has been dominated by globalized Western models, attempting to focus all efforts towards utility maximizing activity and behavior. Conflicting with traditional Navajo philosophies about harmony and balance, the normative values that guide the mainstream American economy and society have long imposed themselves upon the Navajo context with negative results. As movements of self-determination continue to place greater autonomy in the hands of Navajo leaders in political, educational, and economic institutions, there is a call for some locally

constructed development models to fight against forces of globalization and restore many of the weakened Navajo values. Discussed earlier, education's role is essential in this process: a facilitator of either poverty reduction or poverty proliferation. Where education in the past has primarily been a cause of poverty proliferation, this impact can be reversed with the right kind of education. As explained by Bennell and Furlong (1998), "universal access to better quality basic education has been singled out as being of fundamental importance in any concerted attempt to improve the standard of living of the poor" (p. 45). In the case of the Navajo, I propose that "quality basic education" entail a holistic education model that provides equal access to a culturally relevant education in both formal and informal contexts, for both instrumental and intrinsic purposes.

Relevant to the case of Navajo education for Navajo development and poverty reduction, using a rights-based approach to development entails responsibility by numerous entities to preserve the cultural rights of individuals and societies. As explained by Kandel (1973):

Indigenous children have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State. All indigenous peoples also have this right and the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own language, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. (p. 225)

While more autonomy is continually being gained by the Navajo tribe in regards to educational control, issues relevant to Navajo development consist of struggles for power or control in the education sector, as well as the development of a culturally appropriate curriculum supportive of the Navajo Nation's goals for cultural preservation and individual rights to own culture.

Stage theory: Targeting resources and planning for Navajo need. As no government has unlimited resources to meet their particular educational needs, the resources that are available have to be effectively used. Mcpherson (2005) explains the reasons for this:

It is a well-known fact that no government in the world, not even those in the Western industrialized democracies, can meet all the needs of the education systems. Hence the need to plan for the provision and determine the top priorities to receive the funding from the scarce resources made available. (Mcpherson, 2005)

Education, if properly planned, will provide a human right in itself, promote development of human capabilities, as well as enhance human capital formation and socioeconomic mobilization. The “Asian Tigers” exemplify this process of government planning in education for human resource development (World Bank, 1993), coordinating the development and utilization of human resources in manpower planning and job placement (Geo-JaJa and Mangum, 2003). The Navajo Nation has the means to follow similar processes.

Unlike many developing nations, who face similar situations of poverty as a result of poor quality education, the Navajo seem to have means available to them to overturn many of the current setbacks. The Navajo have the power, both in available resources and in educational autonomy, to create a system of education that appropriately matches their needs. The Navajo Nation has a great advantage in the many funds available for education. According to Choudhary (2006), in 2005 the Office of Navajo Scholarship and Financial Assistance awarded a total of 6,201 scholarships, for a total of \$12.8 million to Navajo students attending a number of different colleges and universities across the country. While the availability of such resources could be of great benefit to the Navajo Nation, little is done to tie these funds to any sort of resource or manpower planning for the reservation. In fact, while college and university degrees should be important assets to the region, instead college experiences off the reservation often

contribute to the phenomenon of brain drain experienced by the Navajo Nation, where many students receive financial assistance from the tribe, and choose not to return home upon completion of their education.

The Navajo Nation must focus financial and manpower resources on the areas of education that are most critical for social and tribal development, contributing generous funds to the areas of greatest need until those needs have been met, and other needs can then be targeted. In the case of the Navajo Nation, the focus needs to begin on quality education at the primary and tertiary levels. Increasing the quality of education, focusing on culturally relevant curricula, would strengthen cultural and traditional values, restore Navajo language, and decrease poverty on the reservation, as well as increase human capabilities and build up citizens with skills to contribute to society. With availability of scholarship funds, these resources can be targeted to attract highly skilled manpower to industries of greatest present and future need. Scholarships should, as much as possible, be used to support students at tribal colleges, at other culturally sensitive institutions, and for particular degrees which are focused on economic activity and societal improvement on the reservation rather than in the rest of the country. In addition, more funds should be supportive of Diné College's expansion of its Bachelor's degree programs, focused on the greatest demands for labor on the reservation, and concerned for instilling traditional Navajo beliefs and values back into students.

Understanding that poverty in the Navajo Nation consists primarily of cultural and traditional factors, the wisdom is even greater in investing in primary education early on in the development process (Geo-JaJa, 2006; Woo, 1991), as primary education provides the foundational educational experiences that shape a child's learning future and establish educational norms. Focusing to instill cultural values within the primary sector will allow for a cultural rejuvenation and will attack the source of poverty.

Tribal schools such as Diné College, as a tribally-controlled institution, also have an important role to play in the development process of the Navajo Nation and in the improvement of Navajo well-being, “fighting the materialistic, hedonistic, and individualistic forces of the popular culture” (Reyhner and Eder, 2004, 328). These tribal schools have in the past and will continue in the future to be a vital part of cultural rejuvenation for the Navajo Nation. It is the development of the higher education system that can give students a balanced education, interweaving and controlling the mix between Navajo ways of knowing, thinking, tradition, values, and culture with those of Western ideas, ways of knowing, and values. “After all, analyses of the relationship between higher education and poverty also reported significant contribution of higher education to reduction of poverty” (Tilak, 2002b). In some cases, higher education is recognized as a “more sustainable means of reduction of poverty and also a more reliable measure of development than mere basic education” (Tilak, 2002, p. 202).

The development of the tertiary sector ought to include expansion of the Diné Policy Institute, or Dine College itself, into a research institution, as well as a creating of more technical schools, colleges, universities, and research institutions, enabling local peoples to more actively create policy and address societal and cultural issues with enhanced skill sets. The development of reputable higher education institutions within the reservation will also allow more Navajos to remain at home to become trained and prepare for careers on the reservation. Scholarship resources could then be targeted to on-reservation educational opportunities which build Navajo manpower resources rather than facilitating the growth of the Western American workforce with Navajo dollars. This expansion would also open faculty, researcher, and policy analyst positions for brain gain to counteract decades of Navajo education emigration. These institutions would be leaders in innovating Navajo based research methodologies, methods of analysis and collection, philosophies, economic theories, and so forth. Dine College has a vision of such

occurring, with its first bachelor's degree added in 2009, and a goal of continuing to expand its advanced degree capabilities. Overall, the growth of Navajo higher education experiences will provide a springboard into own development for the Navajo people to more effectively address their own issues of poverty and well-being.

Globalized and imperialistic formal education as poverty derivation. As defined in the title of this work, education can be understood as poverty derivation, as a direct and indirect cause of income and human poverty, or can be used for poverty reduction, for decreasing income and human poverty, and increasing individual capabilities. Bonal (2004) discusses why education is so crucial:

In the struggle against poverty, education appears as one of the key mechanisms for facilitating the social insertion and employment of excluded communities, providing them with the abilities that they require to be individually independent. (p. 650).

Currently, the formal education system in the Navajo Nation opposes Navajo values and instead promotes blindly the pursuit of neo-liberal ideals by overtly instrumental education. Historically, and still currently, the struggle against poverty has also been a struggle against the federal government in Navajo schools, with a majority of federal decision making, outsider faculty members, and human capital-based curricula and pedagogies. The result is a system of education that marginalizes students, belittles Navajo history, culture, and language, promotes only neoclassical ideals and creates poverty on the reservation.

The current instrumental system of education primarily used in the Navajo Nation fails to meet the standards of balance and harmony, or Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hozhoo, so important in Navajo culture, meeting only one of the important criteria for learning and well-being: (1) the development of the mind, (2) skills to enable survival, (3) appreciation of positive relationships, and (4) relating to one's home and environment (Benally, 1994). This instrumental human

capital approach to education is concerned with the promotion of education only insofar as it “serves as an investment in the productivity of the human being as an economic production factor” and produces efficient returns leading to economic growth (Robeyns, 2006). The result is pervasive poverty in the experience of the Navajo as the direct result of the “paradigm of continuous economic growth” (Kuhn, 1996) rather than a matching of education to the needs of the people and community to capacitate and empower.

If the Navajo desire to use education as a means of eradicating rather than creating poverty, the region must move away from its focus on instrumental education, as well as education as only a formal activity, and towards an understanding of education for intrinsic value, at non-formal levels, for “self-confidence, self-esteem and critical thinking” (Rose and Dyer, 2008, p. 12). The message here is clear: the region cannot liberate itself from decreasing cultural values and increasing levels of poverty while maintaining “blind faith in imperialist neo-liberal education designed to socialize people into global values,” and instead has to match education “to the circumstances and surroundings in which people live to make it relevant and meaningful to their culture, aspirations, and needs” (Geo-JaJa and Azaiki, 2010, p. 59).

Holistic education for poverty reduction. In accordance with the Navajo definitions of poverty and well-being determined in this study, development approaches on the Navajo reservation needs to maintain a human development and human rights perspective, with the ultimate goal of increasing capabilities and quality of life rather than economic growth. Diener and Seligman (2004) point out the need to maintain proper perspective in regards to human outcomes and certain societal values:

Policy decisions at the organizational, corporate, and governmental levels should be more heavily influenced by issues related to well-being—people’s evaluations and feelings about their lives. Domestic policy currently focuses heavily on economic outcomes,

although economic indicators omit, and even mislead about, much of what society values.

(p. 1)

Such is the case in the Navajo Nation, where societal values are based around cultural wealth, familial assets, and traditional knowledge, but economic, educational, and political planning is focused on traditional, rational, hedonistic economic activity. Instead, policy, especially economic and educational policy, needs to be redirected towards matters of well-being according to what the members of this community actually value, and are pertinent to their quality of life. I also propose that this be a new model of holistic development strategy, that the intellectual, theoretical, and academic be infused with the practical, actual, accountable, and beneficial to meet the needs and restore the values of the Navajo people and society. In order to improve the situation of poverty on the reservation, a holistic system of education that embraces intrinsic and instrumental, formal and informal education, and Western and Navajo values, but is based on Navajo ways of knowing and philosophies, needs to be used.

Navajo philosophies and approaches to education. The reason that culturally mismatched education is ineffective in influencing the life of the individual as well as effecting change in the society, was understood by Dewey (1916), as said by Mayes et al. (2007):

Deep and durable learning—the kind that will stay with and influence a person throughout his or her lifetime and will not be forgotten after the next test—occurs only when a student finds the curriculum relevant to his or her life situation. (p. 3)

This is significant, given that the current education system provides curriculum relevant to the life situations of very few Navajo students. As discussed before, Navajo education is relevant primarily to off reservation life as well as non-Navajo life.

The need to provide a meaningful, holistic education to each and every individual student can be made from numerous perspectives, but within each, most important is the inherent ability

of education to improve lives. This study suggests a holistic education as the most appropriate means of reaching Navajo students, based on the notion that “for education to have profound, healthy, and lasting effects in a student’s life, [it] must try—to the extent practical in any given educational setting with its political and institutional constraints—to address various aspects of that student’s being” (Mayes et al., 2007, p. 3). For a Navajo student, that being consists of a combination of Navajo and Western characteristics which are, at times, difficult for students to reconcile. Currently, the system of education attempts to instill those lasting effects on students by means of Westernized educational norms and practices, causing problems in Navajo education in terms of learning outcomes, attainment, transition, and more. A more effective approach on the reservation would be a method of teaching and learning that “involves beliefs and values, ways of seeing the world, and ways of knowing, thinking, doing” which resonate with Navajo traditions (Spronk, 2004, 171).

Within this study, the need to provide a meaningful education experience to every student is based on evidence of increased human capital, increased capabilities, and reduced poverty, but most important as the fulfillment of a deep and personal human right to education, the existence of which, as an intrinsic value itself, constitutes wealth.

The Navajo Sovereignty in Education Act of 2005 gave the Navajo Board of Education authority to establish curriculum, create learning standards and benchmarks for achievement, establish criteria for teacher certification, develop programs for Navajo language and cultural programs and certify teacher capacity to deliver them (Navajo Nation Council, 2005). In short, while the globalized human capital approach has been the driver of education on the reservation for decades, the autonomy of school control now lies within the hands of the tribe, and they have the right as well as the responsibility to provide a meaningful holistic learning experience for

their Navajo students. This holistic education needs to come from Navajo teachers, in the Navajo language, in line with Navajo philosophies and ways of knowing and learning.

In order to understand the connection between culture and education, education and development, and education and poverty reduction, one must understand the connections between language and education, and language and social activity, as human beings experience their subjective world as a derivative of the language they speak (Sapir, 1929). Often when discussing relationships of dominant and subservient language, “education mismatches exist by privileging the languages of the dominant ethnic group” (Geo-JaJa and Azaiki, 2010, p. 59). Crucial to the discussion of development and poverty as well, especially in the case of the Navajo, is the fact that the choosing of a dominant language over a minority language is always accompanied by the choosing of that language’s accompanying culture, ways of knowing, philosophies, and values.

Harmony of instrumental and intrinsic, formal and informal. While many of the suggested changes for the Navajo education system to influence poverty reduction have focused on the need for Navajo traditions, values, and languages to be instilled in Navajo pedagogies, the suggestion is not for a complete rejection of all things Western. Rather, the best means of increasing well-being on the Navajo reservation is by supporting a holistic education that teaches Navajo students to reconcile these two cultures and prepares them to live successfully within each or between both. Any education that fails to teach students both mainstream curriculum, along with the “language of power,” and cultural curriculum which includes teaching about and from those minority cultures, cannot consider itself to be “politically realistic and culturally responsive” (Mayes et al., 2007). And although limited neo-liberal approaches to education are existentially inauthentic, constricted cultural approaches could be considered to be socially irresponsible. Besides, in the current American political education system, of which the Navajo

Nation is a part, federal funds for education require that even Navajo schools meet basic requirements of standard curriculum which support normative American values. Again, the model for a successful Navajo education system is a “cumulative” rather than an “alternative” approach (Sen, 1997, p. 1961), teaching students to be “Indian and American at the same time” and taking “the best from each way of life and combining it into something viable” (Roessel, 1967, p. 205-206). “Since the adult Navajo world also includes interaction with the non-Navajo world in many aspects, the job of schooling is complicated by having to enable students to be successful in these encounters as well” (Rhodes, 1994). Within the dichotomy between Western and Navajo, citizens need to be taught from an early age how to reconcile the two cultures within which they inescapably live (McNeley, 1994; Willetto, 1997). The importance of a holistic method of education also more appropriately matches the Navajo philosophy of Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hozhoo, in which an achieved balance and harmony are the ultimate goals of any worthy pursuit. Thus there is importance, even to the Navajo, in learning to balance Navajo and Western ways of life for a peaceful and happy way of life (DPI, 2007).

The role of education for poverty reduction for the Navajo needs to include both its instrumental and intrinsic value: instrumental to produce greater skills and knowledge to the body of the Navajo educated for improving economic facility and capabilities on the reservation, and intrinsic to perpetuate and deepen Navajo philosophies, principles, traditions, and language for the strengthening of the culture. The importance of this is exemplified in that “students who come from socioeconomically marginalized groups, holistic multicultural education is not only socioeconomically empowering but also physically, emotionally, ethically, and spiritually nurturing” (Mayes et al. 2007 p. 3). Overall, quality education can improve the life of the individual at all levels of being, in addition to the instrumental benefits therein derived.

While the strong state is generally recognized for its role in providing education, state provided schooling may not be the automatic facilitator of development and poverty reduction often assumed. Furthermore, social safety nets, while designed to minimize social disparity, may be ineffectual in reaching actual goals. In terms of the Navajo, public assistance income provides money to some of those who are considered to be under the absolute poverty line. However, this assumption entails income as the only indicator of poverty. Offering a temporary wage to a low income family does nothing to increase functionality, empower individuals, or improve involvement in essential life activities. Education is the means of providing these services. And for those who do not measure poverty in dollars, all welfare does is breed dependency and actually reduce empowerment. This finding is consistent with many of the comments of participants who suggested that self-sufficiency and social capital indicate individual wealth as opposed to level of income.

The Navajo recognize and support dependence on social services from community and individual sources more so than state provided social services. Furthermore, considering the rights-based approach upon which this study assumes educational access, when we consider the right to a quality education to be a high priority goal rather than binding constraint for the state, we assume all individuals, not just governments, to be responsible for providing education to all. “Surely individual persons, families, and communities also owe their children access to good education, even when they are not bound by any legal duty to provide any such education” (Robeyns, 2006, p. 78). This understanding from the human rights approach can be vital to restoring some of the social capital and informal education values that have been lost on the reservation within communities and especially within the home. From this understanding, we recognize that it is not the tribe’s role to fix all of the problems in connection with increasing poverty and devaluation of Navajo values. It is up to individuals, particularly parents, families,

and communities to restore the important informal and intrinsic value of education in addition to community awareness and social capital on the reservation. This puts education provision in the hands of the government in formal contexts, and in the hands of parents, families, and communities in informal contexts. The combination is a holistic embodiment of the educational experience required to successfully teach students and prepare them for an empowered life, facilitate the reaching of capabilities and functionings, and matching the education of the individuals with the needs of the community.

These discussions bring me to a key finding and conclusion of this study: “a neo-dependency theory for development” or “the governmentalization of informal community and individual education responsibilities.” While typically seen as the key for development, the strong state, when acting as the sole provider of education and other social services, actually breeds dependency in education and other crucial poverty reduction processes. In addition to state provision of crucial social services, effective development desperately needs institutions for informal education at the household level (Rose and Dyer, 2008 *Chronic Poverty and Education*). It is detrimental to assume education, as well as other social services to be only a duty of the state. Given the established right to education, as well as to numerous other designated social, cultural, and economic rights, all individuals are responsible for providing education and other social services for all those in their community. Parents are responsible for the education of their children. This is true especially within communities that hold distinct values separate from the standard dominant values. Those values must be taught at home if not in the school. Individuals are responsible for teaching the traditions and cultures that they wish to be perpetuated. What is needed in the Navajo case is a revolution of Navajo traditions to be taught in both the formal and informal education sectors, and a revitalization of social safety nets at community levels to accompany the state provided social services.

Reconsidering Navajo and Western values for development. Another contribution of this paper is a discussion of the Navajo Nation as a developed nation. The purpose here is to question our understanding of what distinguishes a nation as “developed” or “developing?” In regards to the Navajo Nation, this advanced level of development is measured by the well-being of its people. The Navajo Nation, if we are addressing it as an autonomous state, which we have mostly done in this study, is advanced in its value system, a nation that places emphasis not so much upon economic prosperity, but much more on community well-being, on social awareness, solidarity, and fellowship. The Navajo Nation understands that development requires more than social safety nets. It requires a general concern of all people for other individuals and the group as a whole. The mission statement of Dine College exemplifies this: “In fostering social responsibility, community service and scholarly research that contribute to the social, economic and cultural well being of the Navajo Nation.” The purpose of education is not for individual preparation, success, and affluence, but rather the purpose is to uplift the whole: the whole group, the whole community, the whole nation. If a people and nation can establish themselves as wealthy, by their own means of poverty and well-being definitions, they can likewise determine their own status of development. I would argue that based on the established Navajo definitions of wealth, they would consider themselves to be a developed nation.

Recommendations for Future Work

The approach of this work was to use a Q-Squared method, combining the already existing quantitative poverty data, with newly obtained qualitative perspectives on poverty. However, past poverty statistics use consumption data only from a single year, giving a shallow description of even income poverty on the reservation. In the future, survey panel data could be used in combination with qualitative poverty data for a more thorough understanding of chronic poverty, and potential upward movements out of poverty in the Navajo Nation (Howe and

McKay, 2005; Mehta and Shaw, 2003). There is also a need for more educational data to be available pertaining to reservation schools and students.

To further the understanding of poverty in the Navajo Nation, I would also suggest the creation of a “national well-being index that systematically assesses key well-being variables for representative samples of the population” (Diener and Seligman, 2004, p. 1).

Conclusion

This study has analyzed the situation of poverty on the Navajo Indian reservation. Despite current data, based on income, that suggest high levels of poverty in the Navajo Nation, based on the data from the Q-Squared Participatory Poverty Assessment, this study determined the Navajo to be generally wealthy. More important than income and economic prosperity to the Navajo are cultural factors that provide a distinguished cultural identity. However, despite, the defined wealth by the participants, there is a current process of devaluation in Navajo values occurring that indicates an increasing level of poverty on the reservation. The cause of this poverty has been found to be forces of globalization in connection with an instrumental formal education system. A holistic development model as well as educational approach suggests that increasing the incidence of Navajo teachings in formal and informal contexts will have the result of reducing poverty and increasing quality of life in the Navajo Nation.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

1. Can you tell me a bit about your life growing up on the Navajo Nation (e.g. where did you live? where did you go to school? what activities were you involved in?)
2. Have you always lived on the Navajo reservation? What factors are involved in the decision to live on or off the reservation?
3. Can you tell me a little about what life in this community is like? What do most people do for a living? What is important to people in this community?
4. How is this community similar to or different from other communities on the Navajo Nation? What are the major needs for people in this community? What are the major obstacles in the way of reaching these needs? What are the most common reasons why people move out of this community permanently? What can be done to reduce any bad experiences of life of those in this community?
5. What would you say are the necessary requirements for a happy and fulfilling life for your community, for you and your family?
6. What role does education play in the well-being and happiness of this community?
7. How important is income or money to yours and your family's happiness and well-being?
8. What differences do you think there are in the Navajo vs. the typical American views of poverty?
9. What characteristics would designate a person as "poor" in this community? What characteristics would designate a person as "wealthy" in this community?
10. What characteristics, assets, or experiences separate the poor from the non-poor?
11. How do you think the Navajo Nation should measure poverty?

Appendix B: Demographic Information Sheet

Interviewer: _____

Participant Name (Optional) _____

Gender: Male Female

Age: _____

Number of years lived on reservation: _____

Primary Language (which are you more comfortable speaking): Navajo English

Participant's Education History

Elementary School(s) _____

Middle/Jr. High School(s) _____

High School(s) _____

Year of Graduation _____

College(s) _____

Year of Graduation _____

Current Occupation _____

Years in this occupation _____

Contact Information (Optional)

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Appendix C: Navajo Nation Research Permit



THE NAVAJO NATION

JOE SHIRLEY, JR.
PRESIDENT

NAVAJO NATION
CULTURAL RESOURCES INVESTIGATION PERMIT

BEN SHELLY
VICE-PRESIDENT

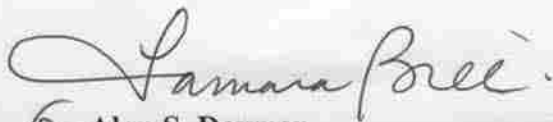
PERMIT NUMBER C1008-E

Pursuant to the authority of Section 302 of the Navajo Nation Cultural Resources Protection Act (CMY-19-88), permission is hereby granted on DONNY BAUM, BYU, 1070 QUAIL SUMMIT, PROVO, UTAH 84604 to conduct an RESEARCH IN LOOKING AT NAVAJO PERCEPTIONS OF WELL-BEING AND POVERTY IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, IN THE VICINITIES OF CHINLE, RED MESA, AND SAN JUAN, NEW MEXICO

1. Name and Title of Person in:
 - A. General Charge: MACLEANS GEO-JAJA
 - B. Direct Charge: DONNY BAUM, LAURIE BLASIDELL, SUZIE RICHARDS, MACLEANS GEO-JAJA
 - C. Project Members: AS ABOVE
2. On Lands Described as Follows: CHINLE, RED MESA, AND SAN JUAN CHAPTERS, CHINLE AGENCY, ARIZONA
3. Permission is Granted for a Period of: NINE MONTHS BEGINNING APRIL 01, 2010 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2010
4. Standard Stipulations: This permit is granted subject to the Permittee adhering to the following stipulations. Failure to conform strictly to these conditions may result in suspension or revocation of this Permit and may affect the Permittee's ability to obtain similar Permits from the Navajo Nation in the future.
 - A. The Permittee will provide five days advance written notice to the Historic Preservation Officer prior to initiation of any of the activities authorized under this Permit. The Permitted will also provide written notice to the Historic Preservation Officer upon the completion of field work authorized under this permit. **THIS IS NECESSARY ONLY FOR NON-SECTION 106 CLASS C ETHNOGRAPHIC PERMITS**
 - B. A copy of this Permit must be in the possession of field workers at all times when they are conducting field work under the authority of this Permit.

- C. The Permittee will exclusively employ Navajos for all positions to the extent that qualified Navajos are available.
- D. This Permit is not a grant of authority.
1. Prior to initiating field work, the permittee must notify Chapter Officials (President, Vice President, Secretary, or Manger) to familiarize them with the proposed field work and the provisions of the Permit.
 2. The Permittee must inform any potential interviewee that he/she is not required to consent to interviews or to cooperate otherwise with the Permittee.
 - (a) If the interviewee does consent to be interviewed, the researcher must get the signed consent of the interviewee for publication and other use of the information, use of their name, and how they are to be given credit for providing information. **THIS IS NECESSARY ONLY FOR NON-SECTION 106 CLASS C ETHNOGRAPHIC PERMITS**
 - (b) Reports and publications will follow conditions set by the interviewees on publication of information, use of their names, and how they are to be credited. **THIS IS NECESSARY ONLY FOR NON-SECTION 106 CLASS C ETHNOGRAPHIC PERMITS**

PERMIT GRANTED,



Alan S. Downer

Historic Preservation Officer



THE NAVAJO NATION

JOE SHIRLEY, JR.
PRESIDENT

BEN SHELLY
VICE-PRESIDENT

March 22 , 2010

Donny Baum
BYU, 1070 Quail Summit
Provo, Utah 84604

Dear Mr. Baum:

Enclosed is the Navajo Nation Cultural Resources Investigation Permit No.: C1008-E for a period of NINE MONTHS, BEGINNING APRIL 01, 2010 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2010, to conduct in LOOKING AT NAVAJO PERCEPTIONS OF WELL-BEING AND POVERTY IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, IN THE VICINITIES OF CHINLE, RED MESA, AND SAN JUAN, NEW MEXICO.

If you have any questions, please call Ron Maldonado or Judy Arviso at (928) 871-7147. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alan S. Downer".

Alan S. Downer
Historic Preservation Officer

Appendix D: Chinle Chapter Resolution

Chinle Chapter Government

THE NAVAJO NATION

LEONARD H. PETE
PRESIDENT

BRUCE C. DRAPER
VICE PRESIDENT

PRISCILLA M. CLARK
SECRETARY / TREASURER

ANDY R. AYZE
COUNCIL DELEGATE

HARRY CLAW
COUNCIL DELEGATE

HARRY H. CLARK
COUNCIL DELEGATE

NELSON GORMAN, JR.
COUNCIL DELEGATE

EUGENE TSO
GRAZING REPRESENTATIVE

RESOLUTION OF THE CHINLE CHAPTER NAVAJO NATION CHIN-APR-10-026

SUPPORTING BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY (BYU) IN PERFORMING A RESEARCH ON "POVERTY" AMONG SELECT/GROUPS OF THE NAVAJO PEOPLE IN THE CHINLE COMMUNITY.

WHEREAS:

1. The Chinle Chapter, a recognized local government of the Navajo Nation, vested with the power and authority to advocate on behalf of its constituents for the improvements of health, safety, general welfare; AND
2. Mr. Donald R. Baum under the advisement of Dr. Maclean A. Geo Ja Ja of BYU well do a study among groups of Chinle Chapter residents on poverty which will be defined and measured by indicators established by the Navajo themselves (exhibit A); AND
3. The study/research, which will be kept private, will provide new insight into Navajo poverty discussions to be used for greater understanding and policy purpose on the Navajo Nation. AND

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

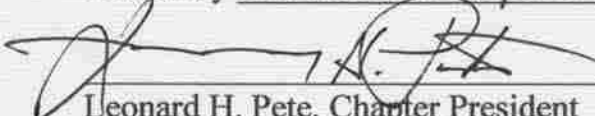
1. The Chinle Chapter supports Brigham Young University in performing a research on "Poverty" among a select groups of the Navajo People in Chinle Community.

CHIN-APR-10-026

CERTIFICATION

We, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Chinle Chapter at a duly called meeting at Chinle, Navajo Nation, Arizona, at which a quorum was present and that the same was passed by a vote of 35 in favor, 02 opposed, and 02 abstained, this 25th day of April 2010.

Motion by Francis Draper

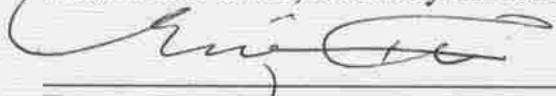

Leonard H. Pete, Chapter President

Bruce C. Draper

Bruce C. Draper, Vice-President

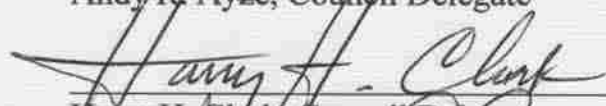
Priscilla M. Clark

Priscilla M. Clark, Secretary/Treasurer


Eugene Tso, Grazing Representative

Second by Joyce V. Nley


Andy R. Ayze, Council Delegate


Harry H. Clark, Council Delegate


Harry Claw, Council Delegate


Nelson Gorman Jr., Council Delegate